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A

COMMENTARY

ON THE

NEW TESTAMENT,

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GENERAL REFLECTIONS

UPON

SAINT PAUL'S EPISTLES.

THE Epistles of St. Paul form so important a part of the Holy Scriptures, as to be in themselves almost sufficient, under divine grace, to impart a clear and distinct knowledge of all the truths necessary to salvation, and to form our hearts to devotion. They exhibit more particularly an intimate acquaintance with the books of the Old Testament, and of the mysteries of the ancient dispensation: and the proofs drawn from that sacred source, for the confirmation and illustration of the doctrines of the Gospel, are so very numerous, and are set in so clear a light, that we cannot fail to admire the conformity of the New Testament with the Old, and fully to acknowledge the inspiration of the former, when already satisfied of the divinity of the latter. But the more grandeur and sublimity we see in the proofs and reasonings of St. Paul, the greater difficulty does the understanding sometimes find in keeping pace with him; and the profundity of these matters, great and difficult in themselves, occasions a degree of obscurity, upon a slight perusal of the Epistles of this Apostle, which however clears away by degrees, if we continue to read with attention and in a spirit of faith. This is the remark of St. Peter in his Second General Epistle: *Account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction; 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.* It appears from the testimony of St. Peter, that he possessed a high opinion of the deep knowledge of St. Paul; and that what is hard to be understood in his Epistles arises from the nature of the subjects themselves, and not from the manner in which they are treated. Neither are these difficulties found throughout the whole of any one Epistle, so as to render it unintelligible to the understanding of any person who seeks solely for instruction and consolation:

consolation: they occur only in a few places, where the subject is not susceptible of the same clearness as in all the rest: and here the profundity, rather than the obscurity, ought to humble our conceit of ourselves, and awaken our attention and zeal in the perusal of these incomparable Epistles. According to St. Peter, none but minds full of ignorance or of prejudice, or wholly given up to the world, can fail of edification in reading them. But St. Paul tells us himself, (Titus, i. 15.) that *unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled, and unbelieving, is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled.* Even those who envied him, and were jealous of the high esteem in which he was held by all the churches, and who laboured with all their might to lessen his reputation, dared not attack his Epistles, nor attempt, on any pretence of obscurity, to prevent Christians from reading them. They acknowledged them to be *weighty and powerful*, 2 Cor. x. 10. two words which convey a high eulogium: the first shews that their subject is grand and important; and the second, that it is handled with a force of understanding and strength of reasoning capable, through grace, of convincing the most obstinate.

We have fourteen Epistles by this Apostle, including that to the Hebrews, which, though not bearing his name, is certainly his, as we shall shew when we come to that excellent piece. As it is of little importance to the edification of the church, in what order these Epistles are placed in the collection which has been made of them, much less attention has been paid to the order of time in which they were written, than to the arrangement of the subjects which they contain. (See the Introduction to the Epistle to the Romans.) Thus the Epistle to the Romans has always been placed first, on account of its excellence, which has ever caused it most justly to be regarded as one of the noblest productions of inspiration, and most useful to the church of Christ.

THE EPISTLE
OF
PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE
ROMANS.

P R E F A C E.

WHILE St. Paul was labouring with indefatigable application and zeal in the conversion of the people in most of the provinces of Asia, and throughout all Greece, the church at Rome became daily celebrated on account of the purity of its faith, and the progress made by the Gospel in that capital of the world. Rom. i. His joy at seeing the kingdom of God strengthening itself in a city which then gave laws to the whole earth, and his wish to contribute all his zeal and knowledge to the same end, had often made St. Paul form a design of going to Rome, thence to visit all Italy, and to pass on into Spain; chap. xv. 23, 24. But Providence having hitherto prevented him, and he being desirous to give the Romans a testimony of his apostolic zeal, he addressed to them from Corinth, about four years previous to his first imprisonment, this excellent Epistle, in which he has collected together, with the divinest art, the most profound doctrines of the Christian religion.

He treats expressly and at length of *our justification* before God, and of the *calling of the Gentiles*, as connected with the rejection of the Jews: subjects high and momentous in themselves, and which required from the Apostles every exertion to place them in a clear point of view, both to confirm Christians in their faith, and, if possible, to withdraw the Jews from their erroneous ideas on those two important points. With regard to the first, it is certain, that the Jews in general, little instructed in the intention or end of the law, and the meaning of the prophets, knew no other means of being justified before God, than by keeping the law of Moses. This, then, was the grand error, against which St. Paul had to contend. And, to do this with the greater effect, and at the same time in a most methodical way, he first shews that all men are sinners, and consequently under a curse; this he begins to lay down from the 17th verse of the first chapter; he then proceeds to prove, that the Gentiles are

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not only finners, but deserving of God's severest judgments. After which he comes immediately to the Jews, and shews, in the second chapter, and in the third, as far as the 19th verse, that their condition in this respect is very little different from that of the Gentiles; that they are all, like them, finners, and merit the condemnation which the very law that they have received, and in which they pride themselves, denounces against the guilty. And hence he draws this evident inference, that *by the deeds of the law, or by his own righteousness, there shall no flesh be justified*; chap. iii. 10. so that, either no man can be justified and saved, or there must be some other means of justification besides that of works, or the personal righteousness of sinful man. Now, as we cannot affirm the former position without injuring the mercy of God, and annihilating the covenant which he had made with mankind in Adam through the seed of the woman, we must conclude that God, in his word, has opened a real source of justification and salvation for the faithful. This source is, *the righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ, being witnessed by the law and the prophets*; chap. iii. 21, 22. And because this righteousness is a spontaneous favour of God towards man, to which the sinner among the Jews has no more right than the sinner among the Gentiles, the Apostle proves that God has imparted it to Jews and Gentiles indifferently, and that both are justified by faith in Christ, the author and principle of that righteousness.

Herein St. Paul taught two things which gave offence to the Jews: first, that the uncircumcised Gentile was justified by the same means as the circumcised Jew; and secondly, that the Jew who was under the yoke of the law could only be justified by grace: but he clears up these difficulties in the following chapter, which is the fourth. The first he explains by the example of Abraham, whose faith *was counted to him for righteousness*, before he had yet received circumcision; and the second, by the express declaration of David, who makes the blessedness of man in general (and consequently of the Jews, of which he was one) to consist in the grace of God, who has provided a propitiation for their sins, which conceals them from the eyes of his justice; and St. Paul had already said, chap. iii. 24, 25. that this *propitiation* set forth by God was Jesus Christ. The remainder of the chapter is employed in establishing the same truth.

The fifth chapter contains an excellent parallel between Christ and Adam, tending to shew that sin and condemnation flow from Adam unto all mankind, and that justification flows equally from Jesus Christ.

The sixth chapter replies to an objection against the doctrine of grace and justification, through faith in a Mediator: the objection is, that we have only to follow our own inclinations, and the vicious bent of our nature, without confining ourselves to practise the duties set forth in the law, since we are not to be justified by fulfilling the law. This objection contained something specious, especially for minds prejudiced against the Gospel, and eager to blacken it by the vilest imputations: but the Apostle defends it against this
 envenomed

envenomed dart ; and throughout this chapter he shews, that justification by faith in Christ, and the sanctification or holy life of the believer, are things inseparable.

But because the Jews had too high an opinion of themselves, and of the importance of the law, and falsely conceived that a man's righteousness was from the law, St. Paul in the seventh chapter opposes these phantoms raised by self-love, and the illusions of the Jews upon the subject of the law of Moses, by shewing throughout this chapter, and to the 16th verse of the following, that our sanctification, as well as justification, proceeds from the Lord Jesus Christ, and is wrought by the Spirit of grace. The rest of the eighth chapter, which is one of the finest and richest in all Holy Writ, is taken up in describing the happiness and glory to which sanctification joined with justification leads ; and here St. Paul concludes the explanation of the first point that he had proposed in this Epistle ; which was, *justification by faith.*

He now comes to the second point, the rejection of the Jews, and *the calling of the Gentiles* into the peculiar covenant of the Messiah, chap. ix. ; and, because the subject was odious to the Jews (Acts, xxii. 22.) and since St. Paul, who was particularly and emphatically called the Apostle of the Gentiles, was supposed by the Jews not to be well-affected towards their nation, he endeavours, from the beginning of this chapter, to do away these unjust suspicions, by the strongest assurances of his zeal for that people ; so far indeed, that if it would ensure their salvation, he would subject himself to a curse. But, because the error of the Jews in this matter arose, on the one hand, from an opinion which they entertained, that, as God had once honoured them by his alliance, they had thereby gained a perpetual title, an unalienable right ; and on the other, that, as God had *in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways*, Acts, xiv. 16. there was no probability that he would hereafter alter his conduct in regard to them ;—St. Paul in this chapter treats generally upon *election* and *reprobation*, as they relate to nations, and to the peculiar privileges of the different dispensations ; shewing by two well-known examples in the families even of the patriarchs, the first of Isaac and Ishmael, the other of Jacob and Esau, that God is free to bestow his gifts and privileges as he pleases.

Towards the end of this chapter, and in the following, he shews the Jews, that their dire misfortune arose from their pride, obstinacy, and wilful blindness in not understanding that the law was not given them for their justification, but that its intent was, to lead them to Jesus Christ ; nevertheless, on the contrary, they had rejected him, and adhered obstinately to the law : whereas the Gentiles, having no such prejudices, received Christ when he was declared to them, and embraced his Gospel with joy.

The eleventh chapter continues to treat of the fall and rejection of the Jews ; but it concludes with assurances, founded upon the oracles of the ancient prophets, that they should one day be recalled into the church.

The twelfth and following chapters are filled with serious and powerful lessons of morality, exhorting Christians to edify one another in their whole life and conduct. For it is St. Paul's

method to begin his Epistles with *doctrine*, and to conclude them with *instruction*; that we may learn to *hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience*. 1 Tim. iii. 9.

After what has been said on the design and execution of this Epistle, it will not be difficult to comprehend in what sense we are to take the words *law*, *faith*, *justification*, and some others which often occur in the argument.

The *law* then is to be generally, though not always, taken for the Mosaic dispensation; and *the works of the law* are those performed in execution of God's ordinances, whether moral or ceremonial. See the Critical Notes.

Faith is a true and right knowledge of Jesus Christ, a profound sentiment of the soul, embracing him as its Saviour and Redeemer.

As for the term *justification*, it can be no otherwise understood, in a work treating of *culprits*, of a *law*, a *tribunal*, a *judge*, an *accuser*, a *surety*, a *redemption* (as these are all treated of), than in the common acceptation of the bar, of *pardon*, or of discharging a criminal, through special favour, from the punishment that he had merited. And hence, *justification* and *remission of sins*, are indiscriminately used in the fourth chapter as synonymous terms, meaning absolutely the same thing in this controversy; and for the same reason St. Paul, in chap. vi. distinguishes *justification* from *sanctification*, which he needed not to have done, if *justification* had meant the same thing as *making holy*.

THE EPISTLE
OF
PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE
ROMANS.

INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

THE sum and substance of the Christian religion is contained in the history of the life and death, the doctrine and discourses of our Lord in the four Gospels. The epistolary writings of the Apostles were occasional, being intended to confirm the several churches to which they are addressed, in the rules of Gospel faith and practice wherein they had before been instructed; and are accommodated to the disputes and controversies, errors and false notions, which prevailed among them. The general method observable in these apostolical letters is, first, to discuss the particular point debated in the church, or among the persons to whom they are addressed, and which was the occasion of their being written: and in the next place to give such exhortations to every Christian duty, grace, and virtue, as would be at all times, and in every church, of necessary and absolute importance; paying a particular regard to those graces and virtues, which the disputes that occasioned the Epistle might tempt them to neglect.

The former part of these epistolary writings cannot be properly understood, but by attending carefully to the state of the question there determined: therefore, the errors and vain disputes concerning faith and works, justification and sanctification, election and reprobation, and the like, which have so much vexed and distracted the minds of Christians, have all arisen from one grand mistake, of applying to themselves, or other particular persons, now, certain phrases or passages which plainly referred to the then state and condition, not of particular persons, but of whole churches, whether of Jews or Gentiles.

Of the Epistles, fourteen are written by St. Paul, which are not placed in our Bibles according to the order of time in which they were written, but according to the precedence, or supposed rank of the churches and persons to whom they are addressed. We will here subjoin a brief chronological order, according to Michaelis and some others.

Epistle to	Places where written.	In the Year
Galatians - - -	Jerusalem - - -	49
1 Thessalonians - - -	Corinth - - -	52
2 Thessalonians - - -	Corinth - - -	52
1 Corinthians - - -	Ephesus - - -	57
2 Corinthians - - -	Macedonia - - -	58
1 Timothy - - -	Macedonia - - -	58
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Epistle to	Places where written.	In the Year
Romans	Corinth	End of 58
Philemon		61
Coloffians	Rome	62
Ephesians		
Philippians		
Hebrews		
Titus	Nicopolis	Uncertain.
2 Timothy	Rome	67

It will be unnecessary to say any thing concerning St. Paul, and the proofs arising to our common Christianity from his wonderful conversion, after what has been offered in the notes on the foregoing book: to which, therefore, we refer our readers, particularly to the notes and inferences on the ninth chapter.

That St. Paul was the author of the celebrated Epistle before us, appears, first, from the inscription; secondly, from his usual salutation at the end; thirdly, from the style and matter, both which are correspondent with the rest of his writings; and fourthly, from the consent of the most early fathers, and the universal church. It was written from Corinth, when St. Paul was setting out for Jerusalem with the supplies which had been collected in Macedonia and at Corinth; that is, in the year 58, which was the fourth of the emperor Nero. Paul had never been at Rome when he wrote this letter; and therefore it cannot turn upon some particular points, to revive the remembrance of what he had more largely taught in person, or to satisfy the scrupulous in some things which he might not have touched upon at all. But we may expect a full account of his Gospel, or those glad tidings of salvation which he preached among the Gentiles, seeing this Epistle was intended to supply the total want of his preaching at Rome.

He understood perfectly well the system of religion that he taught; for he was instructed in it by the immediate revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ; (Gal. i. 11, 12. Ephes. iii. 3. 1 Cor. xi. 23. ;) and being also endowed with the most eminent gifts of the Holy Spirit, and quite unbiassed by any temporal considerations, we may be sure he has given us the truth, as he received it from our Lord. On the other hand, he was also well acquainted with the sentiments and system of the religion that he opposed; for he was thoroughly skilled in Jewish literature and Jewish controversy; and therefore we may very reasonably suppose that the questions and objections, which in this Epistle he puts into the mouth of the Jew, were really such as had been advanced in opposition to his arguments. He was a great genius and a fine writer, and he seems to have exercised all his talents, as well as the most perfect Christian temper, in drawing up this Epistle. The plan of it is very extensive; and it is surprising to see what a spacious field of knowledge he has comprised, and how many various designs, arguments, explications, instructions, and exhortations he has executed in so small a compass.

This letter was sent to the world's metropolis, where it might be exposed to all sorts of persons, Heathens, Jews, Christians, philosophers, magistrates, and the emperor himself: no doubt the apostle kept this in view while he was writing, and guarded and adapted it accordingly. However, it is plain enough that the Epistle was designed to confute the unbelieving, and instruct the believing Jew; to confirm the Christian, and to convert the idolatrous Gentile. These several designs St. Paul reduces to one scheme, by opposing and arguing with the infidel, or unbelieving Jew, in favour of the Christian, or believing Gentile. Upon this plan, if the unbelieving Jew escaped, and remained unconvinced, yet the Christian Jew would be more inoffensively, and more effectually instructed in the nature of the Gospel, and the kind brotherly regard that he ought to have to the believing Gentile, than if he had directed his discourse plainly and immediately to him. But if his argument should fail, in reference to the believing Jew, yet the believing Gentile would see his interest in the covenant and kingdom of God as solidly established, by a full confutation of the Jewish objections, (which were the only objections that could, with any show of reason,

reason, be advanced against it,) as if the Epistle had been written for no other purpose: and thus it is of the greatest use to us at this day.

Both ancients and moderns make heavy complaints of the obscurity of this Epistle, though all agree it is a great and most useful performance: but we shall have a tolerable idea of it, if we observe that it consists of four great parts or divisions. The first division contains the first five chapters; the second, the sixth, seventh, and eighth; the third, the ninth, tenth, and eleventh; the fourth, the last five chapters.

Part I. displays the riches of divine grace, as free to all mankind; Jews and Gentiles were equally sinful and obnoxious to wrath; and therefore there was no way for the Jew to be continued in the kingdom of God, but by grace through faith; and by grace and faith the Gentile might be admitted into it. To reject this way of justification, was to reject the very method in which Abraham himself was justified, or interested in the covenant made with him; in which covenant believing Gentiles were included, as well as believing Jews; and had now as great or greater privileges to glory in. But if the Jew should pertinaciously deny that, he could not deny that all mankind are interested in the grace of God, which removes the consequence of Adam's offence. Through that offence all mankind are subjected to death, and through Christ's obedience unto death, all mankind shall be restored to life at the last day. The resurrection from the dead is therefore a part of the grace of God in the Redeemer; and if all mankind have an interest in this part of the grace of God, why not in the whole of it? If all mankind are subject to death through Adam's one offence, is it not much more reasonable, that through the opposite nobler clause,—the goodness and obedience of the Son of God,—all mankind should be interested in the whole of the grace which God has established upon it. And as for law, or the rule of right action, it was absurd for any part of mankind to expect pardon, or any blessedness upon the ground of that, seeing all mankind had broken it; and it was still more absurd to seek pardon and life by the law of Moses, which condemned those who were under it to death for every transgression.

Part II. Having proved that believing Jews and Gentiles were pardoned, and interested in all the blessings and privileges of the Gospel, through mere grace, St. Paul next shews the obligations laid upon them to a life of holiness and piety under the new dispensation; and upon this subject he adapts his discourse to the Gentile Christians, in the 6th chapter; and in the 7th and part of the 8th he turns himself to the Jewish Christians; then from ver. 12. to the end of the 8th chapter he addresses himself upon the same head to both Christian Jews and Gentiles; particularly giving them right notions of the sufferings to which they were exposed, and by which they might be deterred from the duties required in the Gospel.

Part III. gives right sentiments concerning the rejection of the Jews, which was matter of great moment to the due establishment of the Gentile converts; concerning which see particularly the first note on chap. ix.

Part IV. Is taken up with a variety of practical instructions and exhortations; the grand design and use of all which is, to engage Christians to act in a manner worthy of that Gospel, the excellency whereof he had been illustrating.

It will be of great advantage to the reader, to have this sketch of the Epistle ready in his thoughts: he cannot, however, enter entirely into the spirit of it, unless he enter into the spirit of a Jew in those times, and have some just notion of his utter aversion to the Gentiles; his valuing and raising himself upon his relation to God and to Abraham, upon his law, and pompous worship, circumcision, &c. as if the Jews were the only people in the world who had any manner of right to the favour of God. And it should be well noted, that St. Paul, in this Epistle, disputes with the whole body of the Jews, without respect to any particular sect or party among them, and in opposition to the whole body of the Gentiles: for the grand proposition, or question in debate, is, "Are we Jews better than they Gentiles?" See chap. iii. 9, 29. In consequence of this, we observe farther, that we cannot have clear conceptions of the argumentative, or contro-

versal part of the Epistle, unless we are clear in this point,—that the justification for which the Apostle argues, is the right which we believing Gentiles have, through the favour and gift of God in Christ, to the blessings, honours, and privileges of his evangelical kingdom in this world: Not so as thereby to have possession of the heavenly and eternal kingdom absolutely secured to us, but so as to be blessed with the assurance of pardon, the promises and hope of the eternal kingdom, and all proper light and means to prepare us for it, if we do not wickedly despise and abuse it. It is this notion of justification alone which corresponds to the above-mentioned general collective notion of Jews and Gentiles, and to the end and design of the Epistle.

We observe once more, that the whole Epistle is to be taken in connection, or considered as one continued discourse, and the sense of every part must be taken from the drift of the whole. Every sentence or verse is not to be regarded as a distinct mathematical proposition or theorem, or as a sentence in the book of Proverbs, whose sense is absolute, and independent of what goes before or comes after; but we must remember that every sentence, especially in the argumentative part, bears relation to, and is dependent upon the whole discourse, and cannot be understood, unless we understand the scope of the whole; and therefore the whole Epistle, or at least the eleven first chapters of it, ought to be read over at once, as the most closely-connected piece.

With respect to the Apostle's manner of writing, it may be proper to take this opportunity to remark, that it is spirited, clear, and perspicuous; for it will not be difficult to understand him, if our minds are unprejudiced, and at liberty to attend to the subject he is upon, and to the current scriptural sense of the words that he uses: for he keeps very strictly to the standard of Scripture phraseology. He takes great care to guard and explain every part of his subject, in which he is particularly cautious and exact; sometimes writing notes upon a sentence liable to exception, and sometimes commenting upon a single word. He was studious of a perspicuous brevity. See chap. v. 13, 14. He treats his countrymen the Jews with great caution and tenderness; he had a natural affection for them, and was very desirous of winning them over to the Gospel. He knew their passions and prejudices were very strong for their own constitution; therefore, in his debates with them, he avoids every thing harsh, introduces every kind and endearing sentiment, and is very nice in choosing soft and inoffensive expressions, so far as he honestly could; for he never flatters; or dissembles the truth. His transitions and advances to an ungrateful subject are very dextrous and apposite, as chap. ii. 1—17. viii. 17. He often carries on a complicated design, and while he is teaching one thing, gives us an opportunity of learning one or two more. So chap. xiii. 1—8. he teaches the duty of subjects, and at the same time instructs magistrates in their duty, and shews the true grounds of their authority. He is a nervous reasoner, and a close writer, who never loses sight of his subject, and who throws in every colour which may enlighten it. He writes under a deep and lively sense of the truth and importance of the Gospel, as a man who clearly understands it, and in whose heart and affections it reigned far superior to all temporal considerations. But concerning St. Paul's manner of writing, you will see more in the note on 2 Pet. iii. 16.

We hope that what has gone before will enable our readers to peruse this Epistle with greater profit. However we may subjoin, in the course of the annotations, a more particular detail of the contents of each part of it; while we refer those who are desirous of a more accurate analysis to Taylor's "Key to the Apostolic Writings," and his preface to the Epistle to the Romans, Locke's Synopsis, Michaelis's Introduction, p. 339. Turretin's Prælectiones, Calmet, and Doddridge.

CHAP. I.

Paul commendeth his calling to the Romans, and his desire to come to them. What his Gospel is, and the righteousness which it sheweth. God is angry with all manner of sin. What were the sins of the Gentiles.

[Anno Domini 58.]

PAUL, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

^a Acts, ix. xiii. xvi. Gal. 1. 13-23. Phil. 3. 5, 6. Acts, 13. 9. ^b Phil. 1. 1. James, 1. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 1. Jude, 1. ver. 9. Eph. 4. 1. ^c Heb. 5. 4. Acts, 9. 15, & 11. 2, 3. & 22. 14, 21. & 26. 16-18. 1 Cor. 1. 1. & 9. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 1. 1. & 11. 5. & 12. 11, 12. Gal. 1. 1, 15. Eph. 1. 1. & 3. 8. Col. 1. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 1, 11. & 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 1. Titus, 1. 1. ch. 11. 12. ^d Luke, 2. 10, 11. ver. 9. Acts, 23. 24. ^e Gal. 3. 8. Gen. 3. 15. & 22. 18 & 26. 4. & 29. 10. Deut. 18. 15-18. 2 Sam. 7. 12. Pf. 132. 11. 1f. 4. 2. & 7. 14. & 9. 6, 7. & 40. 9. Jer. 33. 5, 6, 15, 16. & 31. 22. Ezek. 34. 23, 29. & 37. 24. Dan. 9. 24. Micah, 7. 20. see Luke, 24. 27, 44. Acts, 10. 43. ^f Mat. 1. 1. & 9. 27. & 12. 23. Luke, 1. 32. 69. & 2. 5, 6. Acts, 2. 30. & 13. 23. 2 Tim. 1. 8. ^g Gr. determined. ^h Pf. 2. 7. John, 10. 30. Acts, 2. 22. & 13. 32. Heb. 1. 5. & 5. 5. Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5. ⁱ 2 Cor. 13. 4. 1 Tim. 3. 16. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Heb. 9. 14. John, 10. 18. & 5. 26. Acts, 17. 31.

CHAP. I.

THE unbelieving Jews having violently opposed the Gospel because it was preached to the uncircumcised Gentiles, and because *Jesus*, whom the Christians called *the Christ*, was not such a one as they expected; the Apostle, in the inscription of this epistle, affirmed, that the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles in fulfilment of God's promise made by the prophets in the Scriptures, ver. 1, 2; and that *Jesus*, whom the apostles called *the Christ*, was, as to his flesh, sprung of the seed of David, ver. 3; but as to his divine nature, he was with the greatest power of evidence, declared to be the Son of God by his resurrection, ver. 4. And because St. Paul was personally unknown to most of the Christians in Rome, he assured them that he was made an apostle by Christ himself, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, ver. 5; of which class of men, most of the inhabitants of Rome were, ver. 6. He was therefore authorized to write this letter to all the inhabitants of Rome.—So many particulars crowded into the inscription, has made it uncommonly long. But they are placed, with great judgment, in the very entrance, because they are the foundations on which the whole scheme of doctrine contained in the epistle is built.

Because it might seem strange, that St. Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, had not hitherto visited Rome, the most noted Gentile city in the world, he assured the Romans that he had often purposed to come to them, but had hitherto been hindered, ver. 13, 14.—However, he was still willing to preach the Gospel in Rome, ver. 15; being neither afraid, nor ashamed, to preach it in that great and learned city; because it reveals the powerful method which God has devised for bestowing salvation on every one who believeth; on the *Jew* first, to whom it was to be first preached, and also on the *Greek*, ver. 16.—In this account of the Gospel, the Apostle insinuated, that no Jew could be saved by the law of Moses, nor any Gentile by the law of nature. For, if the Jews could have been saved by the one law, and the Greeks by the other, the Gospel, instead of being the *power of God for salvation to every one who believeth*, would have been a needless dispensation; and the apostle ought to have been ashamed of it, as altogether superfluous.

2^d (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)

3 Concerning his Son *Jelus* Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

4 And * declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

To prove that the Gospel is the power of God for salvation to every one who believeth, the apostle first observes, that therein the righteousness of God by faith is revealed: in the Gospel, the righteousness which God will accept and reward, is revealed to be a righteousness not of works, but of faith. And this being the only righteousness of which sinners are capable, the Gospel which discovers its acceptableness to God, and the method in which it may be attained, is without doubt the power of God for salvation, to all who believe, ver. 17. Here an essential defect, both in the law of Moses and in the law of nature, is tacitly insinuated. Neither the one law, nor the other reveals God's intention of accepting and rewarding any righteousness, but that of perfect and immaculate obedience.—*Secondly*, To prove that the Gospel alone is the power of God for salvation, the Apostle observes, that both in the law of nature, and the law of Moses, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven, &c.; that is, these laws, instead of granting pardon to sinners, subject them to punishment, however penitent they may be; consequently, these laws are not the power of God for salvation, to any one. But the Gospel, which promises pardon and eternal life, is the effectual means of saving sinners. In short, any certain hope of mercy which sinners entertain must be derived from revelation alone, ver. 18. And as the apostle wrote this epistle to the Romans for the purpose of explaining and proving these important truths, the declaration of them, contained in verses 16, 17, 18. may be considered as the *proposition of the subjects* to be handled in this epistle.

Accordingly, to shew that no person living under the law of nature has any hope of salvation given him by that law, the Apostle begins with proving, that, instead of possessing that perfect holiness, which is required by the law of nature, in order to salvation, all are guilty before God, and doomed by that law to punishment. To illustrate this proposition, St. Paul took the *Greeks* for an example, because, having carried the powers of reason to the highest pitch, their philosophy might be considered as the perfection both of the light and of the law of nature; consequently, among them, if any where, all the knowledge of God, and the method of salvation, discoverable by the light of nature, and all the purity of manners, which men can attain by their own powers, ought to have been found. Nevertheless,

5 By whom ¹we have received grace and apostleship, ²* for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name :

6 Among whom are ye also the ¹called of Jesus Christ :

7 To all that be in Rome, ² beloved of

¹ Ch. 12. 3. & 1c. 1c. 16. ² Cor. 3. 6. Gal. 2. 9. Eph. 3. 2, 7, 8. ¹ Cor. 15. 10. ¹ Tim. 1. 12. John, 1. 16. ² Ch. 16. 26. Acts, 9. 15. & 26. 17. 18. & 13. 46. & 22. 21. & 28. 28. ch. 11. 13. & 15. 16, 19. ² Cor. 10. 4, 5. Gal. 1. 16. ¹ Tim. 2. 7. ² Tim. 1. 11. Col. 1. 6, 23. Mat. 28. 19. Mark, 15. 15. 16. ch. 3. 29, 30. ² Theff. 1. 12. * Or to the obedience of faith. ¹ Cor. 1. 2, 9. Heb. 3. 1. ¹ Peter, 2. 9. ² Tim. 1. 9. ch. 8. 28, 30. ² Peter, 1. 3, 10. ¹ Theff. 4. 7. ch. 9. 24. Phil. 3. 14. ² John, 3. 1. & 4. 9, 10, 19. ¹ Cor. 1. 2. Eph. 1. 1. Rev. 17. 14.

the Jews, that people, so intelligent in other matters, were in religion foolish to the last degree, and in morals debauched almost beyond belief. For, notwithstanding that the knowledge of the being and perfections of the one true God subsisted among them in the most early ages, ver. 19.—being understood by the works of creation, ver. 20.—their legislators, philosophers, and priests, unrighteously holding the truth concerning God in confinement, did not glorify him as God, by discovering him to the people in general, and making him the object of their worship: but, through their own foolish reasonings, fancying *polytheism and idolatry* more proper for the people in general than the worship of the one true God, they themselves at length lost the knowledge of God to such a degree, that their own heart was darkened, ver. 21.—Thus the wise men among the Greeks became fools in matters of religion, and were guilty of the greatest injustice both towards *God and men*, ver. 22.—For by their public institutions, they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image of corruptible man, and of birds, &c. which they held up to the people as the objects of worship. And by their own example, as well as by the laws which they enacted, they led the people to worship these idols with the most impure and detestable rites, ver. 23.—For which crime, God permitted those pretended wise men, who had so exceedingly *dishonoured* him, to *dishonour* themselves with the most brutish carnality; of which the apostle gives a particular description, ver. 24—26.; and observes, that those proud legislators and philosophers, who thought they had discovered the highest wisdom in their religious and political institutions, thus received in themselves the recompense of their error, which was meet, ver. 27.—So that the abominable uncleanness, which was avowedly practised by the Greeks, and which was authorized by their public institutions, as well as by the example of their great men, was both the natural effect and the just punishment of that idolatry, which, in every state, was established as the *national religion*.—Farther, because the *Grecian legislators* did not approve of the true knowledge of God as fit for the people, the great men, as well as the generality of the people whom they deceived, lost all sense of right and wrong in their general behaviour towards one another, ver. 28.—most of them being filled with all manner of injustice, fornication, wickedness, &c. ver. 29—31. Nay, although by the law of God, written on their hearts, they knew that those who commit such crimes are worthy of death, to such a degree did they carry their profligacy, that they not only committed these things themselves, but encouraged the people at large to commit them, by the pleasure with which they beheld their debaucheries in the temples, and their revelings on the festivals of their gods, ver. 32.

Such is St. Paul's account of the manners of the Greeks :

from which it appears, that their boasted philosophy, notwithstanding it enabled them to form excellent plans of civil government whereby the people were inspired with the love of their country, and good laws for maintaining the peace of society, it proved utterly ineffectual for giving the legislators the knowledge of salvation, and for leading them to establish a right public religion;—defects which entirely destroyed any influence which their political institutions might otherwise have had, in aiding the people to maintain a proper moral conduct. In short, the vicious characters of the false gods whom the legislators held up to the people as objects of their worship, and the impure rites with which they appointed them to be worshipped, corrupted the morals of the people to such a degree, that the Greeks became the most debauched of mankind, and thereby lost all claim to the favour of God. But if this was the case with the most intelligent, most civilized, and most accomplished heathen nations, under the tuition of their boasted philosophy, it will easily be admitted, that the light of nature, among the barbarous nations, could have no greater efficacy in leading them to the worship of the true God, and in giving them the knowledge of the true method of salvation. The most civilized heathen nations, therefore, equally with the most barbarous, having, under the guidance of the light of nature, lost the knowledge of God, and become utterly corrupted in their morals, it is evident, that none of them could have any hope of a future life from the law of nature, which condemns all to death without mercy, who do not give a sinless obedience to its precepts. Wherefore, both for the knowledge of the method of salvation, and for salvation itself, the Greeks were obliged to have recourse to the Gospel, which teaches, that because all have sinned by breaking the law of God, God has appointed for their salvation, a *righteousness without law*, that is, a righteousness which does not consist in immaculate obedience to any law whatever;—even *the righteousness of faith*; and at the same time declares that God will accept and reward that kind of righteousness through Christ. These inferences, indeed, the apostle has not drawn in this part of his letter, because he intended to produce them, (chap. iii. 20—28.) as general conclusions concerning all mankind, after having proved the insufficiency of the law of Moses for justifying the Jews. Yet it was fit to mention them here, that the reader might have a complete view of the apostle's argument.

I shall finish this illustration with the following remarks.

1. The picture which the apostle has drawn of the manners of the Greeks, is by no means aggravated. It was given by the unerring inspiration of the Holy Ghost. And we may add, that the intercourse which he had with the philosophers, and more especially with his own disciple, Dionysius

God, called *to be saints*: "Grace to you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

8 First, "I thank my God" through Jesus Christ for you all, "that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

* 1 Cor. 1. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 2. Gal. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 2. Phil. 1. 2. Col. 1. 2. 1 Thess. 1. 1. 2 Thess. 1. 2. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 2. Titus, 4. 4. * 1 Cor. 1. 4. Eph. 1. 16. Phil. 1. 3. 5. Col. 1. 3. 1 Thess. 1. 2. 2 Thess. 1. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 3. Phil. 4. 5. * Heb. 13. 15. Eph. 5. 20. 1 Peter, 2. 5. * Ch. 16. 19. 1 Thess. 1. 3. Luke, 2. 1. ch. 17. 6.

Dionysius the Areopagite, enabled him to form a just judgment of the learning and religion of that celebrated people; as his long residence in Athens, Corinth, and other Greek cities, made him perfectly acquainted with their manners. But though his description is not exaggerated, we must remember that it does not extend to every individual. It is an image of the manners of the *Greek nations* in general.

2. My second remark is, that although the revelation of the wrath of God from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, mentioned by the apostle, Rom. i. 18. certainly implies, that no sinner can have any hope of salvation from the law of nature, it does not follow, that the pious heathens had no hope of salvation. The heathens in general believed their deities placable, and in that persuasion offered to them propitiatory sacrifices, and expected to be pardoned and blessed by them even in a future state: nay, many of them believed they were to regenerate their bodies. But these hopes they did not derive from the law or light of nature, but from the promise which God made to the first parents of mankind. For that promise being handed down by tradition to Noah and his sons, they communicated the knowledge thereof, together with the use of sacrifice, to all their descendants. So that the hope of pardon and immortality, which the pious heathens entertained, was the very hope which the Gospel has more clearly brought to light, and was derived from the same source, *namely*, from divine revelation. Withal, being agreeable to the natural wishes of mankind, and the only remedy for their greatest fears, these circumstances contributed to preserve it in the world.—Since then the hope of pardon and of a future state, which the heathens entertained, was derived not from the light of nature, but from the primitive revelations, the Apostle's reasoning in this chapter is clear and evident, and this conclusion stands firm; *namely*, that the light and law of nature hold out no method in which a sinner can be saved, and that it is the Gospel alone which has brought the important secret to light, by explaining and enlarging the primitive revelations, and by teaching in the clearest manner, that God will accept men's faith for righteousness, and, at the judgment, reward it for the sake of Jesus Christ, as if it were a righteousness which fulfilled the law of innocence.

3. My third remark is, that the description which the Apostle has given of the national manners of the Greeks, however disagreeable to human nature, being perfectly true, merits attention; because it is a complete confutation of those who contend, that natural reason has always been sufficient to lead mankind to just notions in religion, and to a proper moral conduct. For after the weakness of human reason, in matters of religion and morality, has been so clearly demonstrated by experience in the case of

the Greeks, who, of all mankind, were the most distinguished for their intellectual endowments, the futile pretence of the sufficiency of the light of nature, set up by modern infidels, for the purpose of rendering revelation needless, should be rejected with a contempt due to so gross a falsehood. And all who are acquainted with the actual state of the world under the guidance of the light of nature, ought thankfully to embrace the instruction contained in the Gospel, as the most effectual means of training ignorant sinful creatures to holiness and heaven; and should humbly submit to the method of salvation by Christ, therein revealed, as of divine appointment, and as the only method in which sinners can be saved.

Ver. 1. Paul, a servant, &c.] From this to the fifteenth verse we have the introduction to this epistle, in which St. Paul asserts his commission as the apostle to the Gentiles; throws in such reflections concerning the Gospel and our Lord, as were proper to arrest the attention of the Jews; and testifies his sincere affection to the Christians at Rome, and his earnest desire to preach the Gospel among them. The first seven verses of this chapter are but one complete period, every member of it representing to the mind of the devout reader some august mystery and edifying moral of our holy religion. The original word *δουλος* is a *bond-servant*, or *slave*, who is the absolute property of his master, and bound to him for life. He terms himself *a called* or *invited* apostle, and therefore *a true* apostle,—as an invited guest is a true and proper guest. See on chap. viii. 23. Concerning his separation to the Gospel, as the judaizing teachers disputed St. Paul's claim to the apostolical office, it is with great propriety that he asserts it in the very entrance of an epistle, in which he proposed an entire refutation of their principles. See Taylor, Locke, Calmet, and Blackwall.

Ver. 2. Which he had promised afore, &c.] The Apostle, it is likely, asserts this to insinuate a good idea of the Gospel into the mind of the Jews at first setting out, and to put them upon inquiring; for even an unbelieving Jew, if at all disposed to think, could not overlook or slightly regard this sentiment. Taylor.

Ver. 3. According to the flesh] That is, with regard to his human nature. Both the natures of our Saviour are mentioned in this and the following verse. This too regards the Jew, and puts him in mind that Jesus, whom Paul preached, was of the royal stock, whence they expected the Messiah would spring. See Taylor and Locke.

Ver. 4. With power] See on ver. 16. He who will read in the original what St. Paul says, Ephes. i. 19, 20. concerning the power which God exerted in raising Christ from the dead, will hardly avoid thinking that he there sees St. Paul labouring for words to express the greatness

of

9 For ' God is my witness, whom ' I serve
* with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, ' that
without ceasing I make mention of you always
in my prayers ;

10 Making request, " if by any means now

at length I might have a prosperous journey
by the will of God to come unto you.

11 For I long to see you, * that I may
impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the
end ye may be established ;

† Ch. 9. 1. Job, 16. 19. 2 Cor. 1. 23. & 11. 31. Gal. 1. 20. Phil. 1. 8. 1 Theff. 2. 5. 10. * Acts, 27. 23. John, 4. 23. Phil. 3. 3. 1 Cor. 15. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 2. * *Or in my spirit.* † 2 Tim. 1. 3. Col. 1. 3. 1 Sam. 12. 23. 1 Theff. 5. 17. Phil. 4. 6. 2 Theff. 1. 11. † Ch. 15. 23, 32. 1 Theff. 3. 10. & 2. 17. James, 4. 15. * Ver. 12. 15. 1 Theff. 3. 2. 1 Peter, 5. 10. & 2. 1, 2. 2 Peter, 1. 12. & 3. 17, 18. Eph. 4. 12, 13. ch. 15. 1, 23, 29. & 16. 17, 18.

of it. The word *declared* does not exactly answer the original, nor is it perhaps easy to find a word in English which perfectly answers to the Greek word *κηρυχθη*, in the sense the Apostle uses it here. The original word *κηρυχθη* signifies properly to *bound, terminate, or circumscribe*; by which termination the figure of things sensible is made,—and they are known to be of this or that species, and so distinguished from others. Thus St. Paul takes Christ's resurrection from the dead and entering into immortality to be the most eminent and characteristic mark whereby Christ is certainly known, and as it were *determined*, to be the Son of God; and undoubtedly his resurrection amply *rolled away all the reproach* of his cross, and intitled him to the honour of the first-born among many brethren. The phrase *according to the Spirit of holiness*, says Mr. Locke, is here manifestly opposed to *according to the flesh* in the foregoing verse, and so must mean his divine nature; unless this be understood, the antithesis is lost. Dr. Doddridge, however, and others think, that it appears little agreeable to the style of Scripture in general, to call the divine nature of Christ the *Spirit of holiness*, and therefore they rather refer it to the operation of the *Spirit of God*, in the production of Christ's body; by which means the opposition between the *flesh* and the *Spirit* will be preserved, the one referring to the materials acted upon, the other to the divine and miraculous agent. Compare Luke, i. 35. The sense of the verse may be expressed thus: "But determinately, and in the most convincing manner marked out to be the Son of God, as to that spiritual part in him, which remained perfectly holy and spotless under all temptations, by his being raised from the dead to universal dominion."

Ver. 5. *We have received*] This is a modest way of expression; the Apostle meaning himself by the word *we*. *Grace* or *favour*, and *apostleship*, some think mean the favour of being made an apostle. Hence *χρησις*, *grace*, is put for the apostolic office; ch. xii. 3. xv. 15. 1 Cor. iii. 10. Ephes. iii. 8. and in general *grace* or *favour* may signify any benefit, office, or endowment, which is the gift or the effect of favour. But others would keep the clauses distinct, "as it is certain, say they, that Paul did receive grace to subdue his heart to the obedience of Christ, and fit him to the ministry of the Gospel, before he received his apostolical commission, whenever we suppose that commission to be dated." Wells renders the next clause, *to the obedience of faith concerning his name among all the Gentiles*. Dr. Heylin's translation, though rather paraphratical, seems to express the apostle's meaning: *that I may, for the glory of his name* [2 Theff. i. 12.] *reduce to the obedience of faith* [or of the Gospel] *some among all nations*.

Ver. 6, 7. *The called of Jesus Christ, &c.*] *Called of Jesus Christ*,—*called to be saints*,—are but different expressions for professors of Christianity. Any nation or people is *called* or *invited* of Jesus Christ, *called to be saints*, who have in fact received the Gospel, by what means soever it has been conveyed to them. In order to understand the Apostle aright in this first part of his introduction, all from the word *Lord*, in the middle of ver. 3. to the beginning of ver. 7. should be read as in a parenthesis. The attentive reader will observe with great pleasure what a variety of proper and important thoughts are suggested in these verses; particularly the views which the Jewish prophets had given of the Gospel,—the descent of Christ from David,—the great doctrine of the resurrection and divinity of Christ,—the sending of the Gospel to the Gentiles,—the privileges of Christians, as the called and beloved of God, and the faith, obedience, and sanctity to which they are obliged by their profession. See Locke, Taylor, Doddridge, and Turretin.

Grace—and peace] *Grace*, the peculiar favour of God; and *peace*, or all manner of blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, *from God the Father*. This is the usual way wherein the apostles speak:—*God the Father*,—*God our Father*: nor do they often, in speaking of him, use the word *Lord*, as it implies the *Jehovah*, the proper name of God. In the Old Testament, indeed, holy men generally said *the Lord our God*; for they were then as it were *servants*, whereas now they are *sons*; and sons so well known to the Father, that they need not frequently mention his proper name. It is one and the same *peace*, and one and the same *grace*, which is from *God* and from *Jesus Christ*. Our trust and prayer fixed on God, as he is the Father of Christ; and on Christ, as he presents us to the Father. Bengelius.

Ver. 8. *First, I thank, &c.*] In the very entrance of this epistle are the traces of all spiritual affections; but of thankfulness above all, with the expression of which almost all St. Paul's epistles begin. He here particularly thanks God, that what otherwise himself should have done, was done at Rome already. *My God*, expresses faith, hope, love, and consequently all true religion. The goodness and wisdom of God are remarkable, in that he established the Christian faith in the chief cities, such as Jerusalem and Rome, whence it might be diffused throughout the whole world. Bengelius.

Ver. 9. *With my Spirit*] "Not only with my body, but with the whole bent, the greatest integrity and ardour of my soul."

Ver. 11. *Some spiritual gift*] That the Jews were the outward worshippers of the true God, and had been for

12 That is, ¹ that I may be comforted together ² with you, by ³ the mutual faith both of you and me.

13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that ⁴ oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might ⁵ have some fruit ⁶ † among you also, ⁷ even as among other Gentiles.

14 ⁸ I am a debtor both to the Greeks and

to the barbarians; both to the wife, and to the unwise.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

16 For ⁹ I am not ashamed of the ¹⁰ gospel of Christ: for it is ¹¹ the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to ¹² the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

¹ John, 15. 3. Col. 1. 6, 10. Phil. 4. 17. & 1. 11. ² Titus, 1. 4. ³ Peter, 1. 1. ⁴ Ch. 15. 22, 23. ⁵ 1 Thess. 2. 18. or Acts, 16. 6, 7. & 19. 21. ⁶ John, 15. 3. Col. 1. 6, 10. Phil. 4. 17. & 1. 11. ⁷ † Or in you. ⁸ Ch. 15. 18, 19. ⁹ 1 Cor. 4. 15. Acts, xiii—xix. ¹⁰ 1 Cor. 9. 16—22. ¹¹ 2 Cor. 11. 23, 19. Acts, c. 15. & 13. 2. & 22. 21. & 26. 17, 18. ¹² 1 Cor. 1. 24. Col. 3. 11. ¹³ Pf. 40. 9, 10. ¹⁴ 2 Tim. 1. 8. ¹⁵ 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. & 2. 2. & 9. 16. ¹⁶ Mark, 8. 13. Acts, 5. 41. ¹⁷ 2 Cor. 2. 2. Col. 1. 27. Luke, 2. 10, 11. Heb. 2. 3. ¹⁸ 1 Cor. 1. 18, 24. & 15. 2. ¹⁹ 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. Titus, 2. 11, 12. ²⁰ Acts, 15. 26. Eph. 1. 13. ch. 10. 4, 10, 17. Pf. 110. 2. ²¹ Ch. 2. 9, 10. Acts, 3. 26. & 13. 46. & 28. 28. ch. 9. 24.

many ages his people nominally, could not be denied by the Christians; whereupon the former were apt to persuade their convert Gentiles, that the Messiah was promised and sent to the Jewish nation alone, and that the Gentiles could claim or have no benefit by him; or if they were to receive any benefit by the Messiah, they were yet bound to observe the law of Moses, which was the way of worship prescribed by God to his people. This in several places very much shook the Gentile converts. St. Paul makes it his business in this epistle (as we have observed in the introduction) to prove that the blessings of the Messiah were intended for the Gentiles as well as the Jews; and that to make any one partaker of the benefits and privileges of the Gospel, there was nothing more required than to believe and obey it: and accordingly here, in the entrance of the epistle, he wishes to come to Rome; that, by imparting some miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost to them, they might be established in the true notion of Christianity, against all attempts of Jews, who would either exclude them from the privileges of it, or bring them under the law of Moses. So where St. Paul expresses his care that the Colossians should be established in the faith, it is visible by the context that what he opposed was Judaism. The Corinthians, who had enjoyed the presence of St. Paul, abounded in spiritual gifts. See 1 Cor. i. 7. xi. 1, &c. xiv. 1, &c. So did the Galatians likewise; and indeed all those churches, which had enjoyed the presence of any of the apostles, had peculiar advantages in this from the laying on of their hands; for it was the particular office of the apostles to bestow miraculous gifts by this method (Acts, viii. 17, &c. xix. 6.). But as yet the Romans were greatly inferior to other churches in this respect; for which reason the Apostle, in the 12th chapter, makes a very beautiful mention of their spiritual gifts. He therefore desires to impart some, that they might be established; for by these the testimony of Christ was strongly confirmed among them. See Locke, Bengelius, and Bos.

Ver. 12. *That is, that I may be comforted*] St. Paul, in the former verse, had said, that he desired to come among them, *to establish them*. In these words *that is*, he explains, or as it were recalls, what he had said, that he might not seem to think them not sufficiently instructed or established in the faith; and therefore he turns the end of his coming

to them, to their mutual rejoicing in one another's faith, when he and they should come to see and know each other. This thought, so full of respect to his Christian friends at Rome, is suggested with great delicacy and address; and it is reasonable to suppose that every new instance, in which miraculous gifts were communicated by the laying on of hands of any of the apostles, would be a source of new edification and comfort to these holy men, as being so evident a token of the divine presence with them, and a new and solemn seal set to the commission which they had received. This verse would be more properly translated, *That is, that while I am among you, we may be comforted together by the mutual faith*, &c. See Locke, Doddridge, Calmet, and Beausobre and Lefant.

Ver. 13. *But was let*] Hindered.

Ver. 14. *I am a debtor*] As the Gospel was committed to his trust, he was a trustee, and so a debtor to dispense it freely to all, as he should have opportunity, 1 Tim. i. 11. 1 Thess. ii. 4. St. Paul includes the Romans under the term *Greeks*; for the Jews called all foreigners *Greeks* or *Gentiles*, as the Greeks and Romans called all foreigners barbarians; so that this division comprises all nations. The last clause should be rendered, *both to the learned and the ignorant*; for as the original word σοφοι often signifies *learned* (see 1 Cor. i. 20, &c.); consequently the other, ἀνοητοι, must signify *ignorant*, or those whose understandings had not been improved by cultivation. See Bengelius, and Beausobre and Lefant.

Ver. 15. *I am ready*, &c.] The Greek word εὐθυμῶ not only expresses *readiness*, but in some cases an *eagerness of desire*. "I am ready and desirous to preach the Gospel even at Rome, though it be the capital of the world, a place of the greatest politeness and grandeur, and a place where it might seem peculiarly dangerous to oppose those popular superstitions to which the empire is supposed to owe its greatness and felicity: yet still, at all events, I am willing, I am anxious to come and publish this divine message among you, though it should be at the expence of my reputation, my liberty, or life." See Doddridge and Raphellius.

Ver. 16. *For I am not ashamed*, &c.] The Apostle here enters upon his subject, by affirming the excellency of the Gospel, as a scheme of goodness calculated for the salvation of mankind, ver. 16, 17. and then shews what need the

C

Gentile

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17 For therein is the ¹righteousness of God revealed ^k from faith to faith : as it is written,
^lThe just shall live by faith.

18 For ^m the wrath of God is revealed from

heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who ⁿ hold the truth in unrighteousness ;

19 ^o Because that which may be known of

¹ Ch. 3. 21—26. & 5. 15—21. & 10. 3, 4. ² Cor. 5. 21. Phil. 3. 9. ² Peter, 1. 1. ² Cor. 3. 9. * Pf. 84. 7. ² Cor. 3. 18. Rev. 22. 11. ¹ Habak. 2. 4. Gal. 3. 11. Heb. 10. 38. Gal. 2. 20. & 3. 11. ch. 5. 1, 2. Acts, 10. 43. ² Cor. 1. 24. & 5. 7. Heb. 11. 6, 7. ^m Gen. 6. 5—7. & 19. 13, 24. Exod. 15. 7. 11. 3. 10, 11. Ezek. 28. 4. ch. 2. 8, 9. ⁿ John, 12. 42. Luke, 12. 47. Job, 24. 13. John, 3. 19, ver. 23. ^o Acts, 14. 17. & 17. 24—30. ch. 2. 15. ver. 20.

Gentile world had of the mercy of God, as they stood obnoxious to his wrath for their idolatry, and abominable wickedness, which are described at large, ver. 18—32. This was proper to convince and awaken the *Gentile*, and to engage *his* attention ; for this was proof enough, even to the wisest philosopher, how defective and erroneous he was in the knowledge of divine things, and how ineffectual any thing that he had framed was to reform himself or the rest of mankind. But the Apostle has his eye too upon the *Jew*, and it is his design to point this black description at his conscience. Nothing would enter more readily into the thoughts of the Jew than the corruption of the Gentile world, which he would immediately and strongly condemn, and so would be duly prepared for the application in the next chapter : for what if his nation was not a whit better in their morals than the heathens ? How could they, with any conscience or modesty, arrogate all the divine mercy to themselves, or pretend that other men were unworthy of it, when they had done as much or more to forfeit it than others. See on chap. ii. 1. St. Paul calls the Gospel *the power of God*. The original word *Δύναμις* signifies frequently a moral power ; either, first, *objectively*, as the power of evidence and motives to effect and influence the mind, Mark, ix. 1. Acts, iv. 33. 1 Cor. i. 18. Secondly, *subjectively* it signifies capacity, virtue or good dispositions in the subject acting, Matt. xxv. 15. Luke, i. 17. Acts, i. 8. Hence we may conclude, that the Gospel is the power of God to salvation, either as it is the effect of his great love and goodness [*his divine Power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness*, 2 Pet. i. 3.], or as it is admirably adapted to enlighten our minds and sanctify our hearts, or both. There is a noble frankness, as well as a very comprehensive sense, in the last words of this verse ; *to the Jew first*, &c. by which St. Paul, on the one hand, strongly insinuates to the Jews their absolute need of the Gospel in order to salvation ; and on the other, while he declares to them that it was also to be preached to the Gentiles, he teaches the politest and greatest of these nations, to whom he might come as an ambassador of Christ, both that their salvation also depended upon receiving it, and that the first offers of it were every where to be made to the despised Jews. See Doddridge.

Ver. 17. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed, &c.] The term *δικαιοσύνη* *Qe* plainly signifies here, and in several other passages of this epistle, not the essential righteousness of God's nature, but the manner of becoming righteous which God has appointed and exhibited in the Gospel (compare chap. iii. 21, 22. x. 3. Philip. iii. 9. Matt. vi. 33.) ; and the phrase may perhaps have the same sense in many passages of the Old Testament. See Isai.

xlvi. 13. li. 5, 6, 8. lvi. 1. In this sense it seems better to render the original by *justification* ; for *righteousness*, both in the sense and sound, is too remote from *justified*. In those places where it signifies moral rectitude in general, the word *righteousness* properly answers the sense of the Greek word. *The justification of God revealed*, in this verse, is plainly in opposition to *the wrath of God revealed* in the next, and therefore *justification* must be understood in a sense opposite to *wrath*. Some read this clause, *the justification of God by faith is revealed to faith* ; but Vorstius, and after him Mr. Locke, seem rightly to judge the sense to be, “ that the righteousness of God is all through from one end to the other, *by faith* ; for the Gospel salvation is indeed from first to last of faith on our part.” By faith we are admitted into our present state of grace and favour, chap. v. 2. ; by faith we continue in it, chap. xi. 20. ; by faith we duly improve it, Jude, ver. 20. ; and the faithful are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, 1 Pet. i. 5. But then a progression or increase is at the same time implied ; for this mode of speaking is applied to things measurable or improveable, and denotes a succession, accession, or improvement ; *ex*, *from*, signifying the point whence the progress or increase begins ; and *us*, *to*, signifying the point to which it tends. Thus, first, in things measurable, Exod. xxvi. 28. *The bar shall reach from end to end*. Secondly, in things improveable, Psal. lxxxiv. 7. *They go from strength to strength*, that is, with a still greater degree of strength. Jer. ix. 3. *They proceed from evil to evil* ; that is to say, grow worse and worse. 2 Cor. iii. 18. *From glory to glory* ; that is, from one degree of glory to another : and so here the salvation which God has provided the Gospel is *from faith to faith*, or wholly of faith on our part, by way of progress and improvement from the first faith to a still higher degree ; signifying the advances that we ought to make in this grand principle of our religion. And this agrees very well with the Apostle's quotation, Habak. ii. 4. *the just shall live by his faith* ;—that is, he who believes, and improves his faith into a constant principle of righteousness, and through faith continues to work righteousness, shall live ;—*But if ye draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him*. *But we are not of them that draw back unto perdition*,—having cast off their first faith,—*but of them that believe*, by a progressive faith, *unto the saving of the soul*, Heb. x. 38, 39. Mr. Locke thinks, that the design of the quotation from Habakkuk is to prove, that, whoever are justified either before, without, or under the law of Moses, or under the Gospel, are justified not by works, but by faith alone. See Gal. iii. 11.

Ver. 18. For.] “ There is no other way of obtaining life and salvation.” Having laid down his proposition, the Apostle now enters upon the proof of it. His first argument

God is manifest * in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

20 ^o For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; † so that they are ^a without excuse :

21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, ' neither were thankful; but ' became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

22 ' Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

23 ^u And changed the glory of the uncor-

* Or *to them*. ^p Pf. 19. 1—6. & 148. 3—6. Acts, 14. 17. & 17. 24, 27. † Or *that they may be*. ^q Luke, 12. 47. ver. 18, 21. ch. 2. 14, 15. Job, 24. 13. John, 3. 19. ^r With Acts, 14. 17. Pf. 106. 13. 2 Tim. 3. 2. ^s Deut. 28. 28, 29. & 29. 4. 2 Kings, 17. 15. Jer. 2. 5. 1 Cor. 3. 20. & 1. 10, 21. Eph. 4. 17, 18. 1 Thess. 4. 7. ^t Jer. 10. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 19—22. Prov. 25. 14. & 26. 12, 16. ch. 11. 25. ^u Deut. 4. 15—18. 2 Kings, 17. 16, 29. Pf. 106. 20. Il. 40. 17, 18. Jer. 2. 11. 1 Cor. 12. 2. 1 Thess. 1. 9. 1 Peter, 3. 4.

gument is, "The law condemns all men, as being under "sin; none therefore are justified by the works of the "law." This is treated of to chap. iii. 20. And hence he infers, "therefore justification is by faith." The *wrath of God* signifies the vengeance of God, the destruction and punishment which he will inflict upon sinners. This is revealed not only by the general light of nature, (if I can use the expression, when every thing good is from grace,) and by frequent and signal interpretations of the divine providence, but likewise in the sacred oracles, and particularly by that same Gospel which reveals God's manner of justifying men. See Acts, xvii. 30, 31. chap. ii. 5. 2 Tim. i. 10. *Ungodliness*, seems to comprehend the atheism, polytheism, and idolatry of the heathen world; as *unrighteousness* their other miscarriages and vicious lives; according to which they are distinctly treated of by St. Paul in the following verses. The same appropriation of these words may be observed in other parts of this epistle. *Of men*, means of men of all nations, *all men every where*. Before, it was only to the children of Israel that obedience and transgression were by revelation declared and proposed, as terms of life and death. The word rendered *held*, signifies to *retain or hold fast*; and then the Apostle's meaning will be their *holding fast*, or *retaining*, or knowing the truth in speculation, though they violate it in their lives. They are not wholly without the truth, but yet do not follow what they have of it; living contrary to what they do know, or neglecting to know what they might. This is evident from the next words, and from the same reason of God's wrath, given chap. ii. 8. in these words, *who do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness*. See Locke, Bengelius, and Hammond.

Ver. 19. *Is manifest in them, &c.*] *Is manifest among them, for God hath manifested it unto them*. See the next verse, and chap. ii. 15.

Ver. 20. *For the invisible things, &c.*] *For from the creation of the world these things of him which are invisible, are (being duly attended to) clearly seen by the things which are made; even his eternal power and divinity*. Those invisible things of God, of which the Apostle here speaks, lie within the reach and discovery of men's reason and understanding; but yet they must exercise their faculties, and employ their minds about them: they are and can be *discovered* only if they be attentively considered: and yet the whole must be accompanied by divine light and divine grace (which are offered to all) in order to the production of any genuine good. Bishop Warburton has a peculiar remark upon the last words of this verse, and those in the next, wherein he

observes, that the apostle evidently condemns the foolish policy of the Gentile sages, who when they *knew God*, yet *glorified him not as God*, by preaching him up to the people; but, carried away in the *vanity of their imagination*, by a mistaken principle of politics, that a vulgar or general knowledge of him would be injurious to society,—shut up his *glory* in their MYSTERIES, and gave the people in exchange for an *incorruptible God*, an *image made like corruptible man, &c.* wherefore God, in punishment for their sins, thus *turning his truth into a lie*, sufficed even their *mysteries*, which they erected (though on these wrong principles) for a school of virtue, to degenerate into an odious sink of vice and immorality;—*giving them up unto all uncleanness and vile affections*. That this was the Apostle's meaning, appears not only from the general tenor of the passage, but from several particular expressions; as ver. 23. where he speaks of *changing the glory of God to birds, beasts, and creeping things*: for this was the peculiar superstition of Egypt, and Egypt was the first inventress of these *mysteries*. Again, he says, *They worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator*, ver. 25. This was strictly true with regard to the MYSTERIES: the CREATOR was there acknowledged by a small and select number of the participants; but the general and solemn worship in these celebrations was to their natural *idols*. See Div. Leg. b. ii. sect. 4. and Pearson on the Creed, Art. 1.

Ver. 21. *Neither were thankful*] It is worthy our observation, that gratitude to God is here put for the whole of religion; and as no principle can be nobler, so none can be stronger or more extensive. Mr. Locke illustrates the next clause by the stupid folly and vanity of their idolatry. See 2 Kings, xvii. 15—17. Acts, xiv. 15. But the word *διαλογισμοις*, *imaginings*, or rather *reasonings*, seems more properly to refer to the sophistry of the philosophers. They did violence to their judgments, and became void of judgment: they lost their understanding, because they would not follow its direction. They put the candle of the Lord under a bushel, and the candle went out. The case is unhappily the same under any, even the clearest dispensation. The word *αυνοτος*, rendered *foolish*, signifies *inconsiderate*, in the highest and most culpable degree, as opposed to a sincere use of what means and knowledge of God they had. *Their heart was inconsiderate*; that is, they made no serious, conscientious use of their understanding. See Locke, Sykes's Connection, chap. xiv. p. 364. and Cudworth's Intellectual System, ch. iv. sect. 10—31.

Ver. 22. *Professing themselves to be wise*] The original seems

ruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

24 * Wherefore God also gave them up to

uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts to dishonour their own bodies between themselves :

25 Who † changed the truth of God into

* Deut. 10. 4. Pf. 88. 12, 13. Acts 7. 42. & 14. 16. & 17. 29. 30. 1 Cor. 6. 15, 18. Eph. 4. 14, 19. 1 Theff. 4. 5. 2 Theff. 2. 11. 1 Peter, 4. 3. † Ver. 18—21. with 23. If. 44. 22. Hab. 2. 13. Jer. 10. 8, 14, 15. & 13. 25. Jonah, 2. 8. Pf. 115. 4—8. 1 Theff. 1. 9.

seems equivalent to that term of Xenophon,—*φύσικους φιλοσοφοί*,—*professing to philosophise*, which so evidently refers to the pride they took in the title of *lovers of wisdom*. See Raphetus.

Ver. 23. *And changed the glory*] As their folly was evident in a variety of other vices, in which the philosophers of heathen nations joined with the people in general, so, particularly, in the early and almost universal prevalence of idolatry among them; by which they *changed the glory of the immortal, incorruptible, and eternal God, even all the majestic splendours in which he shines forth through earth and heaven, into the representing image of mortal and corruptible man*; which, how elegantly soever it might be traced, was a great and insufferable degradation, had their folly proceeded no farther: but, not content with this, they set up as an emblem of Deity, and objects of worship, brutes, and their images, *birds, and four-footed animals, and even such vile reptiles as beetles, and various kinds of serpents which creep on the dust*. See Acts, xxviii. 6. It is a curious speculation, and has employed the thoughts and pens of many, what could be the original of animal worship,—of a worship so degrading as that referred to in the present verse, and which, though prevailing in almost all nations of the earth, was yet in a great measure peculiar to the Egyptians. Bishop Warburton urges, and with great shew of reason, in his very learned discourse on the ancient hieroglyphics, that symbolic writing [through the universal corruption of mankind] was the origin of animal worship: for, says he, in those improved hieroglyphics called *symbols*, in which it is confessed the ancient Egyptian learning was contained, the less obvious properties of animals occasioned their becoming marks of analogical adaption for very different ideas, whether of substances or modes; which plainly intimates that physical knowledge had been long cultivated: now these *symbols* I hold to be the original of animal worship: for, *first*, this kind of idolatry was peculiar to the Egyptian superstition, and almost unknown to all the casts of paganism, but such as were evidently copied from that original. *Secondly*, The Egyptians not only worshipped animals but plants, and, in a word, every kind of being which had qualities remarkable, singular, and efficacious, because all these had found their place in symbolic writing. *Thirdly*, Besides the adoration of almost every thing existing, the Egyptians worshipped a thousand chimeras of their own creation, some with human bodies, and the head or feet of brutes, &c. For besides the simpler methods in hieroglyphic writing of expressing their hero-gods by an entire plant or animal, there were two others, which the more circumstantial history of these idol deities brought in use. Thus when the subject was only one single quality of a god or hero, the human shape was only partially deformed, as with the head of a dog, &c. But where the subject re-

quired a fuller catalogue of the hero's virtues, there they employed an assemblage of the several parts of various animals, each of which, in hieroglyphic writing, was significative of a distinct property; in which assemblage that animal more particularly representative of the god was most conspicuous. *Fourthly*, That animal which was worshipped in one city, was sacrificed in another. Thus at Memphis they adored the ox, at Thebes the ram; yet in one place each of these animals was used in sacrifice. The reason of this can only be, that at Memphis the ox was in hieroglyphical learning the symbol of some deity, and at Thebes the ram: for what else can be said for the original of so fantastical a diversity in representative idol-deities within a kingdom of one national religion? *Fifthly*, Brute-worship was at first altogether objective to their hero-gods, of whom animals were but the representatives. This is seen from the rank they hold on ancient monuments, from the unvaried worship of some few of them,—as the *Apis*, which still continued to be worshipped as the representative of Osiris;—and from the testimony of Herodotus, who says, “That when the Egyptians addressed the sacred animal, their devotions were paid to that God to whom the beast belonged.” *Sixthly*, To make the matter plainer, it may be observed, that the most early brute-worship in Egypt was not an adoration of the living animal, but only of its picture or image. Were indeed the original of brute-worship any other than what is here supposed, the living animal must have been first worshipped, and the image of it would have been only an attendant superstition. These considerations are sufficient to shew, that *hieroglyphics* were the origin of brute-worship, which was consequently begun in Egypt, and was propagated from thence. There the method of the learned was to record the history of their hero-gods in *improved hieroglyphics*, which gave birth to *brute worship*. For the characters of this kind of writing, being the figures of animals, which stood for marks of their *elementary* gods, and principally of their *heroes*, soon made their hieroglyphics sacred. And this in a great space of time, introduced a *symbolic worship* of their gods under hieroglyphic figures. But the people presently forgot the *symbol or relation*, and depraved this superstition still farther by a *direct* worship; till at length the animals themselves, whose figures these hieroglyphic marks represented, became the objects of religious adoration. Which species of idolatry, by the credit and commerce of the Egyptians, and their carriers the Phœnicians, in course of time spread amongst other nations. See Div. Leg. b. iv. sect. 4. p. 176.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore God also gave them up*] There are three degrees of ungodliness and of punishment described in these verses: the *first* in ver. 21. to 24.; the *second* in ver. 25. to 27.; the *third* in the 28th and following verses.

The

a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is ² blessed for ever. Amen.

26 For this cause ^a God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust

one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.

28 And, ^b even as they did not like ^{*} to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to † a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

29 ^c Being filled with all unrighteousness,

^a Ch. 9. 1 Cor. 11. 31. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 17. & 6. 15. ^b Ver. 24. Lev. 18. 22, 27. Eph. 5. 12. Jude. 7. Gen. 19. 5. Judges, 10. 22. 1 Cor. 6. 9. ^c Ver. 18. 21. Jhn 12. 42. Luke, 12. 47. Job, 24. 12. John, 3. 19. ^{*} Or to a knowledge. † Or a mind void of judgment. Jer. 17. 23. 27. 8. Mat. 15. 19. & 12. 35. Mark 7. 20-23. Eub. 2. 1-13, 12. & 4. 18, 19. Titus, 3. 3. 1 Peter, 4. 3. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 19-21. Eph. 5. 3. 2 Tim. 3. 2-4. H. v. lix. Jer. ix. Ezek. viii. xvi. xxi. xxiii. Mich. ii. iii. vii, &c.

The punishment in each place is expressed by *God gave them up*. If a man will not worship God as God, he is so to himself, that he throws away his very manhood. One punishment of sin is from the very nature of it, as ver. 27. another as here is from *vindictive justice*. Between *between*, & *between*, would be more properly rendered by *between*; for the Apostle's sentiment seems to be, that the abuse of themselves was their own act and deed; it was fit they should be dishonoured who dishonoured God; and they could not be dishonoured by any so much as by themselves; nor by themselves any other way so much as this. We have the same thought again, ver. 27. and the same phrase; where we render it *in themselves*. The original word *ἐν*, in the Hellenistic Greek, as the critics tell us, has the force of all prepositions, and here may be translated *from*, or *by*. See Bengelius and Bos.

Ver. 25 *Who changed the truth of God into a lie*] Elfner tries great pains to show, that the *truth of God*, here signifies what he really was; and *a lie*, a false representation. It is well known that idols are often called *lies*. See Isai. xiv. 26, &c. "They changed the truth of God, the true doctrine of his nature, and the genuine institutions of his worship, into a lie, into abominable idolatries, founded on the falsest representations of God, and often supported by a train of artful forgeries." See Elfner's Celebrations, vol. ii. p. 11.

Ver. 26 *Into that which is against nature*] Many horrible caricatures of this may be seen in Bos's Exercitations on this place.

Ver. 27 *And likewise also the men*] How just the Apostle's reflections are, and how pertinently he has placed the most abominable abuse of human nature at the head of the vices into which the heathen world were fallen, will be seen, if we observe, that Cicero,—the greatest philosopher in Rome,—a little before the Gospel was preached,—in his book concerning the *Nature of the Gods*, where you will find a thousand idle sentiments upon that subject, introduces, without any mark of disapprobation, Cato, a man of the first rank and genius, freely and frankly owning to other Romans of the same quality, this worse than beastly vice as practised by himself; and quoting the authority of ancient philosophers in vindication of it. See lib. i. sect. 28. Nay, and do we not even find the most elegant and correct both of the Greek and Roman poets, avowing this vice, and even

celebrating the objects of their abominable affection?—Indeed it is well known, that this most detestable vice was long and generally practised among the heathens by all sorts of men, philosophers and others: whence we may conclude, that the Apostle has done justice to the Gentile world in the other instances that he gives of their corruption. *Error* is used also for *idolatry*, 2 Pet. ii. 18. See Calmet and Bos.

Ver. 28. *And, even as they did not like to retain God, &c.*] The word *ἀειμαζω*, which we render *like*, signifies to *search* or *explore*; as goldsmiths try metal, to distinguish the good from the counterfeit. 1 Thess. v. 21. 1 Pet. i. 7. In opposition to this, the phrase *ἀδόκιμος νῆς*, which we render a *reprobate mind*, Mr. Locke very ingeniously observes, must signify an *unsearching injudicious mind*; for St. Paul often uses compounds and derivatives, in the sense wherein a little before he used the primitive words, though a little varying from the precise Greek idiom; an example whereof we have in this very word *ἀδοκιμος*, 2 Cor. xiii. where, having, ver. 3. used the Greek word *δόκιμον* for a *proof* of his mission by supernatural gifts, he uses the contrary word *ἀδόκιμος*, for one who was destitute of such a proof. So here he tells the Romans, that the Gentiles not exercising their minds to *search out the truth*, and form their judgments right, God left them to an unsearching injudicious mind. The words rendered, *In their knowledge*, *ἐν τῇ γνώσει*, would be rendered more properly, *with acknowledgment*: for that the Gentiles were not wholly without the knowledge of God in the world, St. Paul tells us in this very chapter. But they did not *acknowledge* him as they ought: they did not so improve their knowledge, as to *acknowledge* or honour him as they ought. This verse seems in other words to express the same as ver. 21. The last words are an instance of the figure called *metonymy*; for they imply those things which are *most inexpedient* and enormous; such as are mentioned in the next verses. The reader will find in Wisd. xiv. 11, &c. a discourse like this of St. Paul, wherein idolatry is set forth as the source of men's greatest crimes and profligacies. Mr. Locke thinks that the copulative *and*, at the beginning of this verse, joins it to the 25th, and that the intermediate verses should be read in a parenthesis: but it is easy to see how the thread of the Apostle's discourse is carried on, without supposing any parenthesis.—Ver. 23. the heathen *dishonoured God*, by representing him under the images

fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

30 Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, dis-

obedient to parents,

31 Without understanding, covenant-breakers, * without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

32 ^d Who knowing the judgment of God,

* Or unfeeling. ^d Ver. 18. ch. 2. 1—5, 21—23. & 6. 21. Hosea, 7. 3.

images of the meanest things: and ver. 24. he suffered them to *dishonour* and *debase themselves* by the vilest lusts. Ver. 25. they *changed the true nature of God into a lie*: And ver. 26, 27. he left them to *change their nature* into something worse than brutal. Lastly, ver. 28. they did not exercise their minds in *searching* and inquiring, that they might retain the knowledge of God, and reject the false notions of men; and therefore God gave them up to an unthinking, *unsearching*, stupid mind. They would not use their reason, through the divine light and grace offered to them, in the knowledge and worship of God; and they acted as if they had no reason in the manner of their living among men. And in the same way, all corruption of true religion is, and ever will be in proportion attended with corrupt and vicious practices. See Hammond, Locke, and Bos.

Ver. 29. *Wickedness*] The original word signifies *doing mischief*: that rendered *maliciousness* denotes a *malicious temper*; and that rendered *malignity*, a custom of repeating their malice frequently. *Unrighteousness* or *injustice* stands first in this black catalogue, *unmercifulness* last. The whole enumeration contains *nine* particulars relating to the affections, *two* to conversation, *three* respecting God, themselves, and their neighbour; *two* to the transacting of outward affairs, and *six* to the various relations in which they stood. See Bengelius, and Calmet.

Ver. 30. *Haters of God*] Discontented with his government, and disaffected to his rule, as a righteous and holy Being who could not but be highly displeased with their abominations. The original word ἔμισατος, rendered *despising*, would be more properly rendered *violent* or *overbearing* in their behaviour to each other. It properly expresses the character of a man who is resolved to gratify his own appetites and passions, and to pursue what he apprehends his own interest, right or wrong; without at all regarding those inconveniencies or sufferings which he may thereby bring upon himself. *Inventors of evil things*, means such as piqued themselves on making new discoveries in the arts of sensuality or of mischief; who found out new pleasures, new ways of gain, and new arts of hurting their fellow-creatures, particularly in war. See Bengelius, Calmet, and Mintert.

Ver. 31. *Without understanding*] *Without consideration*, ἄσυνετα. See on ver. 21.—*Covenant-breakers*: it is well known that the Romans, as a nation, from the very beginning of their commonwealth, never made any scruple of vacating altogether the most solemn engagement, if they did not like it; though made by their supreme magistrate, in the name of the whole people. They only gave up the general who had made it, and then supposed themselves to be at full liberty. The custom of *expelling* their own new-born *children* to perish by cold, hunger, or

wild beasts, which so generally prevailed in the heathen world, particularly among the Greeks and Romans, was an amazing proof of their being *without natural affection*: as was also that of *killing their aged parents*: for the Greek word ἀσέβην may include the absence both of parental and filial affection. See Bengelius, and Doddridge.

Ver. 32. *Who knowing the judgment of God*, &c.] It seems here to be strongly implied, that to look with complacency on the vices of others is one of the last degrees of degeneracy. A man may be hurried by his passions to do the thing he hates; but he who has pleasure in those that do evil, loves wickedness for wickedness' sake. And hereby he encourages them in sin, and heaps the guilt of others upon his own. See the following Inferences, Locke, Mill, Erasmus, Doddridge, and Hallet's Introduction to J. Pearce on the Hebrews, p. 22.

Inferences.—From the foregoing verses we have a long catalogue of the blackest sins which human nature, in its highest depravation, is capable of committing; and that so perfect, that there seems to be no sin imaginable but what may be reduced to and comprised under some of the sins here specified. In short, we have an abridgement of the lives and practices of the whole heathen world; that is, of all the baseness to which both the corruption of nature, and the instigation of the devil, could for so many ages bring the sons of men.

And yet, full and comprehensive as this catalogue of sin seems to be, it is but of sin under a limitation: an universality of sin under a certain kind; that is, of all sins of direct and personal commission. And is not this, it may well be asked, a sufficient comprehension of all? Is not a man's person the compass of his actions? Or can he operate farther than he exists?—Yes, the Apostle tells us, in some sense he may; as he may not only *commit* such and such sins himself, but also *take pleasure in others* who commit them. This is indeed the farthest that human depravity can reach; the highest point of maliciousness to which the debauched powers of man's mind can ascend. For surely that sin, which *exceeds* the horrible list before us, must needs be such a one, that it must nonplus the devil himself to proceed farther. It is the very extremity, the concluding period of sin, the last finishing stroke of the devil's image drawn upon the human soul.

The sense of St. Paul's words, in ver. 32. naturally resolves itself into this plain proposition: "That the guilt arising from man's delighting or taking pleasure in the sins of others, (or in other men for their sins, which is all one,) is greater than he can possibly contract by a commission of the same sins in his own person:" and this for the following reasons:

1. There is no natural motive to induce or tempt a man

that they who commit such things are worthy pleasure in them that do them. of death, not only do the same, but * have

* Or consent with them.

man to this mode of sinning; and it is a most certain truth, that the less the temptation is, the greater the sin; for in every sin, by how much more free the will is in its choice, by so much is the act more sinful. If the object be extremely pleasing, and apt to gratify it, there, though the will has still the power of refusal, yet it is not without some difficulty where grace does not fully reign; on which account it is that men are so strongly incited to and so hardly diverted from the practice of vice; namely, because the sensual appetite arising from it is still importuning and drawing them to it.

“But whence (it may be asked) springs this pleasure? Is it not from the gratification of some desire founded in nature?” It is indeed very often an irregular gratification; yet still the foundation of it is, and must be, something natural. So that the whole amounts to this; that the naturalness of a desire, is the cause that the gratification of it is pleasure, and pleasure importunes the will, and so renders a refusal or forbearance difficult, except to the genuine believer. Thus drunkenness is an irregular satisfaction to the appetite of thirst; uncleanness an unlawful gratification of another appetite, and covetousness a boundless pursuit of the principle of self-security. So that all these are founded in some natural desire, and therefore pleasurable, and on that account capable of following and enticing the will. In a word, there is hardly any one vice or sin, of direct and personal commission, but what is an abuse of one of those two grand natural principles;—either that which inclines a man to *preserve himself*, or that which inclines him to *please himself*.

But what natural principle, faculty, or desire, either of pleasure or preservation, can be gratified by *another man's* pursuit of vice? It is evident that all the pleasure which *naturally* can be received from a vicious action, can immediately affect none but him who perpetrates it, and no man can feel by another man's senses. So that the delight which a man takes from another's sin, can be only a lascivious, preternatural complacency, arising from that of which he has really no feeling: it is properly a love of vice as such; a delighting in iniquity for its own sake; and it is a direct imitation, or rather *exemplification* of the malice of that evil spirit, who delights in seeing those sins committed, of which the very condition of his nature renders him incapable.

If a man plays the thief, as Solomon remarks, *and steals to satisfy his hunger*; though it cannot excuse the fact, yet it sometimes extenuates the guilt: we consider the strong impulse of appetite, we consider the frailty of human nature; and we cannot but pity the person, while we abhor the crime: it being like the case of one ready to drink poison, rather than die with thirst.

But when a man shall, with a sober, sedate, diabolical rancour, enjoy himself in the sight of his neighbour's shame, and secretly hug himself upon the ruins of a brother's virtue, and the dishonour of his reason, can he plead the instigation of any appetite in nature, inclining

him to this?—this is impossible, and beyond a pretence. To what cause then can we assign this monstrous disposition? All that can be said in this case is, that nature proceeds by quite another method,—having given men such and such appetites, and allotted to each their respective enjoyments,—the appetite and the pleasure still cohabiting in the same subject,—the devil, and long custom of sinning, have, in the present instance, superinduced upon the soul, new, unnatural, and absurd desires, which have no real object; which relish things not at all desirable; but, like the distemper of the soul, feed only on filth and corruption, and give a man both the devil's nature, and the devil's delight; who has no other joy or happiness, but to dishonour his Maker, and to destroy his fellow-creatures;—to corrupt them here, and to torment them hereafter. In fine, there is as much difference between the pleasure that a man takes in his own sins, and that which he takes in other men's, as there is between the wickedness of a man, and the wickedness of a devil.

2. A second reason why a conduct like this is attended with such an extraordinary guilt, arises from the unlimited nature of this mode of sinning; for hereby a man contracts a kind of universal guilt, and as it were *sins over* the sins of all other men. So that while the *act* is exclusively theirs, the *guilt* is equally his. Consider any man as to his personal powers, and opportunities of sinning,—at the greatest they must still be limited by the measure of his actions and the term of his duration. His active powers are but weak, and his continuance in the world but short: so that nature is not sufficient to keep pace with his corruptions by answering desire with proportionable practice.

To instance only in those two grand extravagancies of lust and drunkenness; let a man be never so general and licentious in his debaucheries, yet age will in time chill the heats of appetite, and the impure flame will either die of itself, or consume the body which harbours it. Let a man be never so insatiable in drinking, he cannot be such a swine as to be always pouring in; but he will, in the compass of years, drown his health and his strength in his own belly; and, after all his drunken trophies, at length drink down himself too; an event which certainly will and must put an end to the debauch.

But this *collateral* mode of sinning, which we have been attempting to delineate, is neither confined to place, nor weakened by age. The bed-ridden, the gouty, the lethargic, all may, on this account, equal the activity of the strongest, and the speed of the most impetuous sinner. Such a one may take his brother by the throat, and act the murderer, even while he can neither stir a hand, nor lift a foot; and may invade his neighbour's bed, even while weakness has tied him down to his own. He may sin over all the adulteries and debaucheries, all the frauds and oppressions of the whole neighbourhood, and break every command of God's law by proxy;—and (as a learned divine emphatically concludes) well were it for him, if he could be damned by proxy too.—A man, by delight

C H A P. II.

They that sin, though they condemn it in others, cannot excuse themselves, and much less escape the judgment of God, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. The Gentiles cannot escape, nor yet the Jews, whom their circumcision shall not profit, if they keep not the law.

[Anno Domini 58.]

THEREFORE ^a thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest:

^a Ch. 1. 18, 20, 32. ² Sam. 12. 5, 7. Mat. 7. 1—5, & 23. 3. Luke. 6. 4, 5. & 9. 14. Pl. 96. 13. & 11. 6, 7. Ezek. 18. 25, 29. Luke, 12. 47. & 4. 11. Prov. 11. 21. & 16. 5. Luke, 19. 22.

for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

2 But we are sure that ^b the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

3 ^c And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them who do such things, and doest

³⁷ & 14. 3. John, 7. 49. ¹ Cor. 2. 5. James, 2. 1. & 4. 11. ^b Ch. 3. 2 Thess. 1. 6—9. ver. 11, 12. Gen. 18. 25. ^c Mat. 7. 2. James, 2. 13.

delight and fancy, may grasp in the sins of all countries and ages, and, by an inward liking of them, communicate in their guilt; he may take a range all the world over, draw in all that wide circumference of vice, and centre it in his own polluted breast. So that hereby there is a kind of transmigration of sins, much like that which Pythagoras held of souls; such a one, as makes a man not only (according to the Apostle's phrase) a partaker of other men's sins, but also a driver of the whole aggravated guilt of them to himself;—yet still so, as to leave the actual perpetrator as full of guilt as he was before!

Hence then we see the infinitely fruitful and productive power of this mode of sinning; how it can increase and multiply beyond all measures of actual commission; how vastly it swells the sinner's account in an instant! So that a man shall, out of all the various villainies acted round about him, extract one mighty guilt, and adopt it for himself, and thus become chargeable before God, the judge of hearts, and accountable for a world of sin, without a figure.

3. The third and last reason that we shall offer of the extraordinary guilt attending this peculiar vice, arises from the soul's preparation and passage to such a disposition, as it presupposes and includes in it the guilt of many preceding sins. A man must have passed through many periods of sin before he can arrive at it; for it is in a manner the very quintessence and sublimation of vice, by which, as in spirituous liquors, the malignity of many ingredients is contracted into a little compass, but with a greater advantage of strength by such a contraction. In a word, it is the wickedness of a whole life discharging all its defilements into one common quality, as into a great sink of turpitude; so that nothing can be so properly, or significantly called the very *sinfulness of sin* as this. No wonder, therefore, if, containing in its bowels the guilt of so many years, it stands here eternally stigmatized by the Apostle, as a temper of mind rendering men so detestably bad, that Satan himself, the great enemy of mankind, is neither able nor desires to make them worse. What can or need be said more to awaken the abhorrence of every serious reader against it!—It is indeed a condition not to be thought of by any person serious enough to weigh and consider consequences, without the utmost horror. Happy they who truly fear and love God; for such will not only be kept from it, but from those *easily besetting sins* which lead to this perfection of iniquity!

REFLECTIONS.—1st The epistle opens,

1. With an account of the author. *Paul a servant of Jesus Christ*, once an envenomed persecutor, but now called to be an Apostle, and glorying in this honourable name; separated unto the Gospel of God; to that delightful and happy work of preaching the glad tidings of salvation through a dying Redeemer; signally distinguished by the Spirit's call, qualified by the working of his mighty power, and solemnly dedicated and devoted to this service.

2. The Apostle no sooner mentions the Gospel of God, than his heart fires at the views of its glory and excellence. The wondrous scheme had been the burden of the prophetic word from the beginning, where various hints of it had been given, and promises made of a more clear revelation of the divine mind and will which might be expected in the fulness of time. The grand subject of this Gospel is *Jesus Christ*, the Messiah, the anointed Saviour, and *our Lord*; the object of our faith and worship, and the King to whom we owe all duty and allegiance; who, in his *human nature*, was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, as had been foretold (Pl. cxxxii. 11.), and as to his *divine nature*, he was declared to be the *Son of God with power*, according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. As the eternal Son of God, he possessed the same divine nature and perfections with the Father, they being one in the Spirit of holiness, in the essence of the undivided Godhead; a demonstration of which appeared, when, by the exertion of his own power, through the operation of the holy Spirit, he raised his body from the grave; so that he is God and man in one Christ.

3. From this risen Saviour he professes to have received, together with his brethren, *grace and apostleship*, both the high honour of that office, and ability to discharge it to the glory of God; for *obedience to the faith among all nations for his name*; this being the great end of their ministry, to bring all men, both Jews and Gentiles, to the faith of the Gospel, and that holy obedience which flows from it, by which the name of Jesus should be to eternity exalted. Note; As obedience to God's law is the great fruit of faith, so is faith itself a most eminent part of obedience, when considered as an act of submission to the righteousness of God.

4. He with pleasure mentions the happy lot which they had among those who were become obedient to the faith; among whom are ye also the called of Christ Jesus; by his word

the fame, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

4^d Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not

* Eccl. 3. 11. Deut. 32. 15. H. 1. 2. Hosea, 13. 6. Ezek. 12. 22. Mat. 24. 48, 49. 2 Peter, 3. 3—9, 15. H. 30. 18. & 63. 7—10. Ezek. 16. 63. & 32. Mat. 5. 44.

word and Spirit brought to the participation of all the privileges of the Gospel; *beloved of God and called to be saints*, separated from a world which lieth in wickedness. *Note*; Every truly regenerate soul is the happy object of the divine regard; and all such are obliged to answer in their spirit and conversation the honourable title they bear, as the *children of God*.

5. To these the Apostle addresses his epistle. *To all that live in Rome*, professors of the faith, and in the judgment of charity partakers of the grace of God in truth, may *grace*, pardoning, comforting, quickening, sanctifying, be multiplied to you; and *peace*, the blessed effect thereof, *from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ*.

2dly, After the warmest wishes for all spiritual blessings upon them, and his benediction, that the grace and peace he prayed for, would be bestowed upon them,

1. He thanks God on their behalf, whom he calls *my God*, happy in an assured interest in his favour and love through *Jesus Christ*, by whom alone every mercy descended on him or them. And the matter of his thanksgiving was, *that their faith spoken of throughout the world*; they had approved themselves eminently faithful, and were the glory and joy of the churches, who triumphed in their eminent attainments. *Note*; (1.) When faith can say, *My God*, then the heart will be filled with thanksgiving and praise. (2.) A Christian's heart glows with gratitude, when he beholds the power of divine grace shining in the conversation of his brethren. (3.) Though we may not affect a name in the world, yet it is highly desirable to be spoken of by good men, and that our faith and conduct should receive their approbation.

2. He appeals to God for his incessant prayers on their behalf. *God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of his Son*; most willingly, affectionately, and faithfully preaching the glad tidings of salvation through the divine Redeemer; *that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers*, begging that the best of blessings may descend upon you; and particularly *making request (if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God) to come unto you*, and enjoy the comfort of personal conversation with you. *Note*; (1.) Those whom we truly love, we should remember without ceasing at the throne of grace. (2.) God's service must engage our souls: nothing is acceptable to him but what is done heartily with an eye to his glory. (3.) In all our business the Lord should be regarded: though we devise our way, he must direct our steps.

3. The ends that he proposed to himself in this visit, were, (1.) Their benefit. *For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; so fitted, if it please God, by his labours and ministry in the faith*; guarded against seducers, and their ministers furnished with greater gifts for the edifying of the church. (2.) Their mutual consolation: *That is, that I may be comforted together with you, by the mutual faith both of you and*

me; when, by communicating their mutual experience, they might discover the gracious workings of the same divine faith, and rejoice together in the glorious hope set before them. *Note*; (1.) The highest advanced in faith and grace have need of farther establishment. (2.) Mutual communications of the dealings of God with our souls greatly tend both to our comfort and establishment in the faith.

4. He informs them that he had long meditated a visit to them, though hitherto he had been providentially hindered by the difficulties that he had to encounter, and the engagements which lay upon him; being earnestly desirous *to have some fruit among them, even as among other Gentiles*; that he might see his ministry attended with the same blessed effects, as in so many other places. And in these his labours he looked upon himself as a *debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians*; his call of God to the office of apostleship, and the qualifications that he was endued with, obliged him to be faithful to his trust: and as the deepest adepts in Grecian literature were, respecting the way of salvation, as far removed from the truth as the most unpolished barbarian, he endeavoured to suit his discourses to both, that the wise men of this world might become wise unto salvation through the Gospel word, and the weaker and more unlearned be fed with the sincere milk of heavenly truth. *Note*; (1.) All our abilities and gifts of nature, providence, or grace, are lent us of the Lord, and to be accounted for to him, as being his debtors for them. (2.) We must suit our discourses to our auditory; and though the matter be the same, the manner should be varied, to give every man his portion in due season.

5. He professes the alacrity and cheerfulness wherewith he looks towards Rome, amid all the dangers that he might expect to encounter there, ready to preach the Gospel in the most public manner, and fearless of any consequences from the opposition of the many or the mighty. The ministers of grace should thus be bold as lions in the cause of truth, nor fear the faces of men.

3dly, The apostle having experienced the power of the Gospel on his own soul, so far was he from being ashamed of the reproach of the cross, which to the Jews was a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, that he gloried in the honour of being sent to publish to small and great the glad tidings of salvation through a crucified Jesus; and he gives his reasons for so doing.

1. Because the Gospel which he preached was *the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek*; this being the great mean which God is pleased to make use of, and through the Spirit's working comes with demonstration to the sinner's heart; and it was sent to the Jews first, and then more generally to the Gentile world, that they might believe the divine report, and by faith embrace and lay hold of the hope of eternal life revealed in the Gospel; *for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith*, being wholly of faith, exclusive of all works and duties of our own (see 2 Cor. iii.

knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

5 But, ° after thy hardness and impenitent heart, ' treasurest up unto thyself wrath against

° Exod. 33. 3. & 34. 9. 11. 48. 4. Zech. 7. 11, 12. 1 Tim. 4. 2. ch. 1. 23. Ezek. 3. 7. Acts 7. 51. ' James, 5. 3. Deut. 32. 34, 35. Amos, 3. 16. ch. 9. 22.

18.), or from the doctrine of faith in the word, to the grace of faith in the heart; or rather from one degree of faith to another; *as it is written*, in the Old Testament, which exactly corresponds in doctrine with the New, *the just or justified man, shall live by faith*; hereby he is brought into, and continues in, a state of spiritual life; so that sin has no more dominion over him.

2. Because without this method of divine grace every human creature must lie down under eternal wrath and despair: *for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness*; God's word denounces vengeance on every transgressor; his judgments past have often fearfully spoken his displeasure against sin; and the whole world are found guilty before him, since all have sinned in opposition to their better knowledge, whether Jews, who enjoyed the light of revelation; or Gentiles, whom God left without witness, giving them sufficient traditional notices of his being, perfections, and attributes, which the visible objects around them served to explain, so as to leave them without excuse in their idolatry and disobedience. *Note*: (1.) Every sinner at God's bar will stand self-condemned; he will be made to own that he knew better, and did worse. (2.) Fearful is the wrath revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men: if it once seize on the sinner, it will burn, and never can be quenched. (3.) How highly should we value, and how eagerly embrace that glorious Gospel, which affords shelter from those terrible blasts of the divine vengeance!

4thly, The deplorable state of guilt in which the Gentile world lay is pathetically described, and the judgment of God against them therefore evidently appears to be the most righteous.

1. They had, though not the light of revelation, yet such notices of God's being and attributes, as left them inexcusable. *Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, or among them; for God hath shewed it unto them*, by the traditional notices delivered down from the beginning, and by the works of creation and providence, which confirm and evidence the truth of the being and glory of the eternal Jehovah; whose *invisible things*, his divine perfections, his eternal power and Godhead, his self-existence, incorporeal nature, infinite wisdom and goodness, *are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made*: the intellectual faculties contemplating the visible objects, and man himself (*ἄλλοις νοῦς*), the most remarkable creature upon earth, might from the creation of the world, through the secret influences of divine grace, receive sufficient confirmation of what God had shewed unto men concerning himself.

2. They notwithstanding fell into the grossest and most inexcusable idolatry. *When they knew God*, had some notions of his being and attributes, and might have obtained clearer discoveries had they attended to the means of instruction which he afforded them; *they glorified him*

not as God, neither in their hearts, their worship, nor their conduct, not regarding and treating him suitably to his nature and perfections; *neither were thankful*, insensible to the blessings of his providence, and imputing to second causes all the mercies which they received from the first. Hence they *became vain in their own imaginations*, indulging their fancies, and, proudly reasoning about matters which were too high for them, the philosophers set up their various systems, and in their contests and disputations for their own opinions erred alike from the truth; *and their foolish heart was darkened*, their boasted wisdom became folly, the corruption of their nature blinded their understanding, and, in the midst of the highest pretensions to science, they sunk into the most fatal depths of ignorance and error; *professing themselves to be wise*, puffed up with the conceit of their vast attainments, *they became fools*, perfect idiots in the most obvious matters respecting the divine Being and worship; *and*, instead of a Spirit immortal, invisible, eternal, they *changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things*; so shockingly debasing his dignity; so horridly infatuated in their wild imaginations; *changing the truth of God into a lie*, ascribing to idols the honour due to Jehovah; making such false representations of him, as if he were corporeal; and worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator, (*ἡραπα*), above, besides, or contrary to him. Though they acknowledged a supreme Numen, their worship was chiefly directed to their inferior deities; and all the services which they paid to their idols were the greatest dishonour to God, and reflected most highly upon his being and perfections, *who is blessed for ever. Amen!* He is infinitely and necessarily blessed and glorious in himself, the only author of blessedness to all his creatures, and the alone worthy object of their worship and adoration; to whom may it be for ever rendered and ascribed!

3. In just judgment upon them for such abominable idolatry, and direct opposition to the notices that he had given them concerning himself, *he gave them up*; abandoned them to their own heart's lusts; which, when his restraining grace was withdrawn, hurried them headlong into the foulest and most unnatural acts of uncleanness, the very mention of which should make us shudder with horror. To commit such uncleanness with greediness was at once the filling up of the measure of their iniquities, and the heavy and deserved punishment inflicted for their idolatry, *the recompence of their error which was meet*. *And as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge*, but quenched the gift that he had bestowed, and acted in opposition to the knowledge which he had vouchsafed to them, *God gave them over to a reprobate mind*, rejected them with abhorrence, and left them to the blindness, hardness, and malignity of their fallen hearts, *to do those things which are not convenient, detestable to God, dishonourable to themselves, and the consequences of which must be eternally ruinous, being filled with*

the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God ;

6^s Who will render to every man according to his deeds :

1 Pt. 6. 12. Job. 34. 11. Jer. 17. 10. & 32. 19. Prov. 24. 12. Mat. 16. 27. & 25. 34—46. ch. 14. 12. 1 Cor. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Rev. 21. 12. & 1. 27. & 20. 12.

with all unrighteousness. And the dreadful catalogue of sins here given, was not merely applicable to the more ignorant and unrefined part of the Gentile world, but was notoriously true of their wisest philosophers and their most famed moralists; who knowing the judgment of God, and having sufficient light in their consciences to discover, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, as transgressors against the Majesty on high;—yet so enslaved were they by their vile affections, that they not only do the same themselves, but have pleasure in them that do them, encourage, countenance, and take delight in others who commit the same abominations. From all which it is most evident, that men of such a character as these can never, by any works of righteousness which they can pretend to, be justified before God; but must be saved by abounding grace, or perish. Note; (1.) Nothing is a sorer punishment than for the sinner to be given up to his own heart's lusts. (2.) When God withdraws his restraints, there are no abominations into which we shall not rush headlong, as the horse rusheth into the battle. (3.) When we see the dire iniquities here recorded, and behold them in the practice and temper of others, we should reflect for our own humiliation, that our hearts are by nature the same, alike corrupt. (4.) Sin against light and knowledge is most exceeding sinful; but the summit of iniquity is, to take a diabolical pleasure in the wickedness of others, and to love sin for its own sake.

CHAP. II.

THE Apostle having shewn that the Gentiles could not entertain the least hope of salvation according to the tenor of the law of nature; it was next to be considered, whether the law of Moses gave the Jews any better hope. This inquiry the Apostle managed with great address. Well knowing, that, on reading his description of the manners of the Greeks, the Jews would pronounce them worthy of damnation, he suddenly turned his discourse to the Jews, telling them, that they who passed such a judgment on the Gentiles, were inexcusable in hoping to be saved through the law of Moses; because, by condemning the Gentiles, they virtually condemned themselves, who, being guilty of the very same crimes, were thereby under the curse of Moses' law, ver. 1.—And to enforce his argument, the Apostle observed, that God's sentence of condemnation, passed in the curse of the law upon them who commit such things, is known by all to be according to truth, ver. 2.—But although every Jew was condemned by the curse of the law of Moses, they all expected salvation on account of their being Abraham's children, Matt. iii. 8, 9. and of their enjoying the benefit of revelation, Rom. ii. 13. Wherefore to shew them the vanity of that hope, the Apostle proposed the following question: Dost thou, who condemnest the Gentiles for their crimes, and yet committest the same thyself, think that thou shalt escape the righteous sentence of God, declared in the curse of the

law of Moses, merely because thou art a son of Abraham, and a member of God's visible church? ver. 3.—By entertaining such a notion, thou judgest amiss of thy privileges, which are bestowed on thee, not to make sinning more safe to thee than to others, but to lead thee to repentance, ver. 4.—These privileges, therefore, instead of making thy salvation sure, if abused by thy obdurate and impenitent heart, will make thy punishment greater in the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, ver. 5.

Having mentioned the general judgment, the Apostle for the instruction of the Jews, and of all who, like them, expect salvation, because they are favoured with revelation, discoursed at large concerning future retributions. And first of all, he shewed them from the natural character of God, that rewards and punishments will be dispensed at the judgement to every man, not according to the outward privileges and advantages which he enjoyed in this life, nor according to the flattering opinion which he entertains of himself, but according to his works, ver. 6. More particularly, to them who, by perseverance in well-doing, earnestly seek glory, honour, and immortality, God will render eternal life, ver. 7.—But them who obey unrighteousness, he will punish with indignation and wrath, ver. 8. Left, however, the Jews might have imagined from the Apostle's mentioning eternal life (ver. 7.), that he spake of the members of the visible church of God only, and that no others are to have eternal life, he repeated his account of the judgment in such terms as to make his readers sensible, that he is speaking of men of all nations and religions. Affliction and anguish shall come upon every soul of man who worketh evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek, ver. 9.—But glory, honour, and peace shall be to every one who worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek, ver. 10. For as Jew and Greek is a division which comprehends all mankind, there can be no doubt of the Apostle's intention to declare, on the one hand, that every impenitent sinner, and among the rest the impenitent members of God's visible church, shall assuredly be punished; and, on the other, that all who have wrought good, whether they be Jews, or heathens, or Christians, shall through Jesus Christ alone have glory, honour, and peace, that is, eternal life, rendered to them: Because with God there is no respect of persons, ver. 11.

His account of the judgment, the Apostle introduced in this place with admirable propriety, not only for the reason already mentioned, but lest the heathen philosophers and Jewish scribes, from his teaching that no man can be saved, either by the law of nature, or by the law of Moses, might have suspected it to be his opinion, that all are to be condemned who have not the Gospel-revelation; and that the holiness and good works of Jews and heathens will be of no use to them at the last. For by declaring that glory and peace shall come through Jesus Christ alone (which must be always implied) not only upon such Jews, but upon such Greeks, as have lived to God by the secret in-

7 ^h To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality; eternal life:

8 ⁱ But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation, and wrath;

^h Mat. 24. 13. Gal. 6. 8, 9. Rev. 2. 7, 10, 11, 17, 28. & 7. 5, 12, 21. Jude, 20. 21. Mat. 5. 3—10. & 13. 43. & 25. 34—40, 46. 1 Peter, 1. 7, 13. 2 Cor. 5. 1. & 4. 17. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. ⁱ Job 24. 13. Hosea. 4. 4. 2 Tim. 3. 8. 1 Cor. 11. 16. ch. 1. 18. Gal. 3. 1. & 5. 7. 2 Thess. 1. 8, 9. & 2. 12. Lev. 26. 14—39. Deut. 28. 15—68. 11. 3. 11. Ezek. 18. 4. Pl. 9. 17.

fluences of his Spirit, he has taught that salvation is not confined to them who have enjoyed revelation; that in all nations there are men who fear God and work righteousness; and that at the judgment, such shall have the benefit of the method of salvation established at the fall, and revealed in the Gospel, extended to them through the Divine Mediator, though it was not discovered to them during their lifetime on earth.

Moreover, because the Jews really held the uncharitable opinion, falsely imputed to the Apostle, consigning to damnation all who had not the Mosaic revelation, the Apostle assured them, that the revealed law of God is not the rule by which the heathens are to be judged: *as many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law*; without being judged by any revealed law. So that in punishing them, God will consider those hindrances of their holiness and virtues, and those alleviations of their sins, which resulted from the imperfection of the dispensation under which they were placed. Whereas all who have sinned under a revealed law, shall be judged by that law: the aggravations of their sins, resulting from the advantages which they enjoyed, will be taken into the account, and punished, ver. 12.—And with respect to men's being saved, because they have enjoyed an external revelation, the Apostle expressly declared, that *not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified*: ver. 13.—He therefore concluded, that when the Gentiles, who have not a revealed law, do, by the secret influences of the Spirit of God (which must be implied according to the analogy of faith) the internal and external works which conscience dictates to them, ver. 14. and shew thereby, that there is a law of God written in their hearts, to which their reason and conscience bear witness, ver. 15. they shall, through the alone merit of Jesus Christ obtain eternal life, in the day when God will judge the hidden things of men, namely, their inward dispositions, by Jesus Christ, according to the Gospel which Paul every where preached, ver. 16.

Here let it be observed, *first*, that to shew the unbelieving Jews the vanity of placing their hope of salvation on God's having chosen them for his people, and on his having given them the law, the Apostle inquired what efficacy the law of Moses, with their other privileges as the people of God, had had in leading the men of rank and learning among the Jews to a right practice. Now, that he might not seem to undervalue their privileges as Jews, he enumerated them particularly: *Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law*, &c. ver. 17—20. Then he asked the doctors and scribes, how it came to pass that, notwithstanding they had the express image of knowledge and truth in the law, and had set themselves up as guides of the blind Gentiles, they had not so instructed themselves, as to refrain from breaking the law in the many flagrant instances which he mentioned, ver. 20—23. At the same time, that he might

not charge the Jews with those gross immoralities without foundation, he quoted passages from their own Scriptures, which declare, that the name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles through the wickedness of the Jewish rulers and scribes, ver. 24. Wherefore, seeing that not the hearers of the law, but the doers of it shall be justified, the men of rank and learning, as well as the people in general among the Jews, had not the least ground to expect salvation through the law, but were under a necessity of seeking justification through faith: and the Gentiles were under no obligation to be guided, in the interpretation of the revelations of God (see ver. 19.), by persons whose practice was so contrary to the precepts of revelation.

In the *second* place, because the Jews expected salvation on account of their being the children of Abraham, and members of God's covenant, and gloried in their circumcision, as the sign of that covenant, and of their descent from Abraham, the Apostle told them that their circumcision, though a proof of their descent from Abraham, and of their relation to God as his people, would not profit them, if they were breakers of the law: but in that case, they would be in no better a condition than the uncircumcised Gentiles, ver. 25.; whereas if the Gentiles are found through the secret power of divine grace to have possessed the holiness, and performed the good actions enjoined by the law of God given to the Jews, their circumcision will be no obstacle to their salvation through the alone merits of Christ, ver. 26.; consequently they will put the Jews to shame, by obtaining that salvation which shall be denied to the unregenerate Jews, ver. 27. For he is not a *Jew*, or son of Abraham, and heir of the promises, who is so by descent and profession only; ver. 28.: but he is a son of Abraham, and an heir of the promises, in their highest meaning, whatever his pedigree may be, who is Abraham's son in the temper of his mind: and true circumcision is that of the heart, which is made by cutting off evil affections, according to the spirit, and not according to the letter of the law of circumcision. And where that circumcision was found, though such a person might not receive praise from the Jews, as one of the people of God, he shall assuredly receive it from God at the judgment, who will own him as one of his people, by conferring upon him the blessings promised to Abraham, and to his seed, through Jesus Christ alone, ver. 29.

Reader, behold and admire the benignity and impartiality of the divine government, as set forth in the Gospel. At the judgment, God will render to every man according to his works; without shewing more favour to those who have enjoyed revelation, merely because they have enjoyed it, than to those who, in the exercise of his sovereignty, have been denied that favour. In other words, the enjoyment of revelation will not be imputed to any man for commendation, nor the want of it be considered as a fault:

9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, * of the Jew first, and also of the * Gentile :

10 ¹ But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good ; to the Jew first, and also to the * Gentile :

* Acts, 2. 2. Luke, 17. 47. 48. 1 Peter, 4. 17. ch. 1. 16. Acts, 3. 26. & 13. 46. ver. 10. * Gr. Greek. ¹ Ver. 7. II. 1. 19. & 3. 19. Prov. 1. 19. 24. 34. 37. 34. & xxxvii. cxlii. cxxxviii. 1 Peter, 3. 10—13.

but, in judging men, God most righteous will consider the advantages and disadvantages which result from the nature of the dispensation under which they lived, and will pass sentence upon them accordingly. And therefore, if, at the judgment, some who have not enjoyed revelation are found to have feared God, and wrought righteousness notwithstanding the disadvantages they laboured under, he will not deny them those rewards which are proportionable to the dispensation under which they lived, and the measures of holiness which they experienced, but all through the alone merits of the Son of his love.

To this liberal and scriptural doctrine, it has been objected,

1. That, no works being good but such as proceed from faith, none of the heathens will be found, at the judgment, to have wrought good, as they had no opportunity to believe the revelations of God: consequently the Apostle's doctrine, that *glory, honour, and peace*, shall be to every one who worketh good, is not to be understood of the heathens, but must be limited to such Jews and Greeks, as have enjoyed the benefit of an external revelation.

But the answer is, inasmuch as the influences of the Spirit of God are not confined to them who enjoy revelation, but are promised in the gracious covenant made with mankind at the fall to all who are sincere, a heathen by those influences may in his measure attain saving faith, and thereby may please God. For faith is more a work of the heart than of the understanding. So our Apostle teaches, Rom. x. 10. *With the heart we believe unto righteousness*. So that although the persons to whom revelation is denied, may not have the same objects of belief with those who enjoy revelation, they may have the same Spirit of faith, as it is termed, 2 Cor. iv. 13. Of this Abraham, Rahab, the centurion, whose servant Christ healed, the Ethiopian eunuch, and Cornelius, are examples; for, in vocation, they exercised such faith as was acceptable to God. And therefore St. Peter did not scruple to say, Acts. x. 33. *Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him*. And 1 Pet. i. 17. *The Father, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work*.

That the pious heathens should have their faith counted to them for righteousness at the judgment, notwithstanding it may have been deficient in many particulars, and even erroneous, is not unreasonable; provided that, in these instances of error, they have used their best endeavours to know the truth, and have not been led by these errors into habitual sin.

2. It has been objected to the salvation of the heathens, that they have not that explicit knowledge of Christ, nor faith in him as the Saviour of the world, which is required in the Gospel. But to this I reply: The Gospel does not make it necessary to salvation, that men should have an

explicit knowledge of Christ, and a direct faith in him, if they never have had an opportunity of knowing and believing on him. On the contrary, by informing us, that all mankind live at present, and shall hereafter be raised from the dead, through the obedience of Christ to the death of the cross, although the greatest part of them know nothing of him, nor of his obedience, the sacred oracles lead us to conclude, that, at the general judgment, many shall be saved through Christ, who till then never heard of him. Besides, is it not as agreeable to justice and goodness, to save the pious heathens through Christ, notwithstanding they never heard of him, as it was to condemn all mankind to death for the sin of Adam, although the greatest part of them never heard of his disobedience? Withal, since at the judgment, the ground of the salvation of mankind shall be declared in the hearing of the assembled universe, the discovery of Christ as Saviour will be made to the saved heathens, in time sufficient to lay a foundation for their gratitude and love to him through all eternity. In fine, if the efficacy of Christ's obedience to death does not extend to the saving of the pious heathens, what interpretation can we put on Rom. v. 12—21, where the professed purpose of the Apostle's reasoning is, to shew that the effects of Christ's obedience are greater than the consequence of Adam's disobedience?

3. To the salvation of the heathens it has been objected, that if justifying faith consists not so much in the number and extent of the doctrines believed, as in the disposition of the heart to believe, so that many who have lived and died in false religion may be saved, what purpose does it serve, to give any of mankind the true form of faith and worship by revelation? This objection the Apostle himself has slated in the beginning of chap. iii. and has answered it very solidly, by shewing, that in the true religion men have many more and better opportunities of cultivating good dispositions, by the Spirit of God, and of being prepared for heaven, by the discoveries which revelation makes of spiritual things, than can be had in any false religion. In short, the true form of religion, instead of being of no use, is the greatest blessing that men can enjoy; because, by affording better means of improvement, it enables them to acquire, through divine grace, a greater measure of holiness, and a more distinguished reward.

This illustration will not be thought tedious by those who consider the importance of rightly understanding what the Gospel teaches concerning the salvation of the heathens. For,

First, To know that this liberal doctrine makes part of the Christian revelation, must give the highest pleasure to every benevolent mind, on account of the glory which will redound to God, from the salvation of so many of the human race, through the coming of his Son into the world.

In the *second* place, this liberal doctrine puts an end to those

11 For^m there is no respect of persons with God.

12ⁿ For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many

^m Lev. 19. 15. Deut. 10. 17. & 1. 17. & 16. 19. 2 Chr. 19. 7. Job, 34. 10, 19. Prov. 24. 23. Acts, 10. 34. Gal. 2. 6. Eph. 6. 9. Col. 3. 25. & Peter, 1. 17. If. 3. 10, 11. Pl. 11. 6, 7. ⁿ Luke, 12. 47. John, 5. 45. ver. 14. ch. 3. 2.

those specious cavils, whereby the enemies of revelation have endeavoured to discredit the Gospel in the eyes of the intelligent. For it can no longer be pretended, that by making faith the means of salvation, the Gospel has consigned all the heathens to damnation. Neither can God be accused of partiality, in conferring the benefit of revelation upon so small a portion of the human race, in the false notion, that the actual knowledge of revelation is essentially necessary to salvation. For although the number of those who have lived without revelation, has hitherto been much greater than of those who have enjoyed that benefit, no unrighteousness can be imputed to God, since he has not excluded those from salvation who have been denied revelation, but has graciously determined, that all in every dispensation, who, by perseverance in well-doing through the secret power of grace, seek for glory, honour, and immortality, shall obtain eternal life, by having their spirit of faith counted to them for righteousness through Jesus Christ. Moreover, all the heathen who are condemned, shall be condemned, not because they lived without revelation, but because they lived in opposition to the law of God written on their heart. Wherefore, the strongest of all the objections with which revelation has been attacked having no foundation, the Gospel ought to be received by every one to whom it is offered, as a discovery from God of the only method in which sinners can be saved; namely, not by a *righteousness of law*, which in our present state is unattainable, but by a *righteousness of faith* counted to us by the mere favour of God, on account of the obedience of Christ.

Ver. 1. The representation of the moral state of the heathen world, in the foregoing chapter, is a proof of the necessity of the Gospel, or of a further dispensation of grace or favour, for the salvation of mankind: and how rich the favour wherewith God visited the world! To have destroyed the race of the apostate rebels who had abused their understandings and every gift of a bountiful Creator, would have been justice; to have spared them, lenity and mercy: but to send his only-begotten Son from heaven to redeem us from all this iniquity and ungodliness by his own blood, is the most wonderful and exuberant favour. Rightly is the doctrine which teaches it called Gospel, or *glad tidings*: according to its true nature it should have filled the whole world with transports of joy: however, one would think it could not possibly have met with *opposition* from any part of mankind. But the *Jew* opposed it: he abhorred the Gentile, and contradicted the grace which honoured and saved him. The Apostle pleads and defends our cause: his business is, to confound the Jew, and to prove that we have as good right as he to all the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom; and by the description of the vicious state of the Gentiles in the former chapter, he has delicately availed himself of the prejudices of the *Jew*. He endeavours, from the beginning of the epistle, to court *his* attention; but nothing would please *him* more

than a discourse, in which the Gentiles were reduced to such a vile and abject state. Thus the Apostle rouses his contempt of the Gentiles, and gives him occasion to condemn them:—but it is, that he may the more effectually humble him in this chapter; in which he proves, that the Jews, having in an aggravated manner despised the goodness and broken the law of God, were as obnoxious to his wrath as the Gentiles. How could they, with any conscience or modesty, arrogate all the divine mercy to themselves; or pretend that other men were unworthy of it, when they had done as much, or more, to forfeit it than others? Must they not exclude themselves from being the people of God under the Gospel, by the same reason that they would have the Gentiles excluded? This, however, was an argument highly ungrateful to the Jew: and it would be very difficult to fix any conviction upon his mind: therefore the Apostle *first* addresses him in a covert general way, *thou art therefore inexcusable, O man!* &c. not giving out expressly that he meant the *Jew*, that the Jew might more calmly attend to his reasoning, while he was not apprehensive that he was the man. *Secondly*, Most judiciously, and with irresistible force of reasoning, he turns his thoughts from his present superior advantages to the awful day of judgment (ver. 5—16.), when God, in the most impartial equity, will render to all mankind without exception according to their works. Thus the Apostle grounds his following argument very methodically and solidly on God's equal regards to men in all nations, who fear him and uprightly practise truth and goodness; and his disapproving, and at last condemning all men in any nation, however privileged, who live wickedly. This is striking at the root of the matter, and demolishing, in the most true and effectual manner, the Jew's prejudices in favour of his own nation, and the unkind thoughts that he had entertained of the Gentiles. For if a Jew could be convinced, that a sober virtuous heathen, fearing God and working righteousness, might, through the infinite merit of the Messiah and the secret influences of the Holy Spirit, be blessed with eternal salvation, he must be persuaded that it was no such shocking or absurd matter, that believing Gentiles should be pardoned and taken into the visible church. Thus the Apostle advances with great skill and with the justest steps in his argument; insinuating himself by degrees into the Jew's conscience. This passage is also well adapted to encourage the Gentile, humbled by the dismal representation in the foregoing chapter; for he would here see, that he was not utterly abandoned of God; but might, upon good grounds, hope for his mercy and kindness. We may just observe farther, that what St. Paul says of the *Jews*, in the present chapter, answers to what he had charged on the Gentiles in the first. For there is a secret comparison of them one with another, running through these two chapters; which, as soon as it comes to be considered, gives such a light and lustre to St. Paul's discourse, that one cannot but admire the skillful turn

as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law ;

before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

13 (For ° not the hearers of the law are just

14 For when the Gentiles, ° who have not

° Mat. 7. 23, 24. James, 1. 22, 25. 1 John, 3. 7. John, 13. 17. Gal. 3. 10, 12. ver. 25. ° Pf. 147. 19. 20. ch. 3. 1, 2. Acts, 17. 30. Eph. 2. 12.

turn of it, and look on it as the most soft, the most beautiful, and most pressing argumentation; leaving the Jews to say for themselves, why they should have the privilege continued to them under the Gospel, of being alone in a national sense the people of God. See Locke, and on ver. 29.

That judgest] 'O κριτων, *the judger*, is here very emphatical; and the more so, as it is repeated in the latter part of the verse. It denotes more than simply judging: it implies adorning the character, place, and authority of a judge; which would be seen more clearly, if the verse were rendered thus; *Therefore, thou art inexcusable, O man! who art a judger; for whereas thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou, the judger, doest the same things.* There will need no remark, to those who read this epistle with the least attention, to prove that the *judging* which St. Paul here speaks of, refers to that aversion which the Jews generally had to the Gentiles: insomuch that the unconverted Jews could not bear the thought of a Messiah who admitted the heathen equally with them into his kingdom; nor could the converted Jews be easily brought, for a considerable time, to admit them into their communion, as the people of God, now equally with themselves; so that they generally, both one and the other, at that time judged them unworthy the favour of God and incapable of becoming his people any other way than by circumcision and an observance of the ritual parts of the law;—the inexcusableness and absurdity whereof St. Paul shews in this chapter. Dr. Doddridge observes, that there is a greater delicacy in the Apostle's transition here, than most commentators have imagined. From what he had before said, to prove the wicked and abandoned among the heathens inexcusable in their wickedness, he justly infers, that the crimes of those who had such knowledge of the truth as to condemn the vices of others, were proportionably yet more inexcusable. This was eminently the case with the Jews. But he does not directly speak of them till the 13th verse; drawing the inference at first in such general terms, as might also comprehend Gentiles, philosophers, and all others who contradicted the moral instructions which they themselves gave. Though the black detail of vices enumerated in the preceding chapter is such as cannot fail to shock the thinking mind; yet whoever will take the trouble to search into the state of religion and virtue among the Jews at the same period will confess, that the Apostle is rather tender than rigid in his accusations. See Joseph. Jewish War, b. v. c. 13. b. vii. c. 8. and Whitby.

Ver. 2. Is according to truth] The Apostle is here speaking of the general punishment of sin, in whomsoever it is found. *The judgment of God is according to truth* [—all of them, Jews or Gentiles] *who do such things*: and he has his eye, not upon the rejection of the Jews, in this world, but upon the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; ver. 5, 6. 16.

Ver. 4. Goodness and forbearance, &c.] Taylor observes, that *goodness* is here to be understood of the mercy and goodness of God, which bestowed superior light and advantages upon the Jews. *Goodness* is used in the same sense with regard to the Gentiles, chap. xi. 22. We may observe, that the Apostle uses general terms, that the Jew may not too plainly see that he is speaking to *him*. When he says, *leadeth thee to repentance*, the meaning is, *ought to lead thee*: for it should be carefully noted, that it is very common in the sacred writings, to express not only our Christian privileges, but also the duties to which they oblige, in the present or preterperfect tense; or to speak of that as done which only ought to be done; and which, in fact, may possibly never be done. See Matt. v. 13. 1 Pet. i. 6. Heb. xiii. 14, &c.

Ver. 6. Deeds] 'Εργα, *works*; as it is rendered in other places.

Ver. 7. By patient continuance] *Patient*, in this verse, seems to be opposed to *contentious* in the next: the former referring to the patience of Christians under Jewish persecutions, the latter to the bitter persecuting spirit of the Jews. See Locke.

Ver. 8. Do not obey the truth] Though by *the truth* the Gospel be here meant, yet St. Paul seems plainly to have used the term *truth* with an eye to the Jews; for, though some few of them received the Gospel, yet even a great part of these few joined with the rest of their nation in opposing *this great truth* of the Gospel;—that under the Messiah, the Gentiles were the people of God as much as the Jews; and, as such, were to be received by them. In the last words of this verse there seems to be a reference to Psal. lxxviii. 49. when, speaking of the Egyptians, it is said, *He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble*: and it may intimate with great delicacy, that the Jews would in the day of vengeance be more severely punished than even their Egyptian enemies were, when God made their plagues so wonderful. There should be a full stop at *wrath*. *Tribulation and anguish* in the next verse begin a new sentence, which affirms that to be a general rule of God's dealing with mankind at large in judgment, which in the two foregoing verses he seems to mean only of Christians so called, and Jews. The word στενωπία, rendered *anguish*, signifies *straitness*; and is used by Xenophon to denote a narrow way, which cannot be passed. See Locke, Doddridge, Raphelius, and Elmer.

Ver. 9, 10. Upon every soul, &c.] We see by these two verses, and chap. i. 16. how carefully St. Paul lays it down, that there was now under the Gospel no other national distinction between Jews and Gentiles, but only a priority in the offer of the Gospel; which may farther satisfy us, that the distinction which St. Paul insists on so much here, and all through the first part of this epistle, is national; the comparison being between the Jews, as nationally

the law, ⁹ do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves :

15 Which shew the work of the law writ-

ten in their hearts, * their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts † the mean while accusing or else † excusing one another ;)

⁹ 2 Cor. 5. 1. 1 Cor. 11. 14. Phil. 4. 8. ch. 1. 19, 20. * Or the conscience witnessing with them. † Or between themselves. † Gen. 20. 5.

nationally the people of God, and the Gentiles, as not the people of God before the Messiah; and that under the Messiah the professors of Christianity, consisting chiefly of converted Gentiles, were the people of God, owned and acknowledged as such by him,—the unbelieving Jews being rejected, and the unbelieving Gentiles not received; but that yet, personally, both Jews and Gentiles, every single person, shall be punished for his own particular sins; as appears by the next two verses.

Ver. 11. There is no respect of persons with God] That is, in passing the final sentence he is determined by their real characters. See the note on Acts, x. 34. This is perfectly consistent with an inequality in distributing advantages, and opportunities of improvement, according to the sovereign pleasure of the great Lord of all. This assertion of the Apostle, so often repeated, will appear the more important and reasonable, as the Jews thought that no Israelite should be deprived of future happiness, whatever his faults had been, unless he was guilty of apostacy, idolatry, and some few other very enormous crimes. See Jortin's Discourses, page 26.

Ver. 12. Without law—without law] *Without the law; &c.* Those under the law, St. Paul says, shall be judged by the law; and this is easy to conceive: because they were under a positive injunction, wherein life and death were annexed as the reward and punishment of obedience and disobedience. But of the unbelieving Gentiles, who were not under that positive injunction, he says barely, that they shall *perish*. St. Paul does not use these so eminently different expressions for nothing. See particularly chap. v. 13.

Ver. 13. For not the hearers, &c.] This, and ver. 14, 15. are a comment upon the 20th verse. In ver. 13. he remarks upon the latter part of the 12th, that *enjoying the advantages of revelation will not save us, unless we duly improve them*. Ver. 14, 15. he remarks upon the former part of the 12th, and proves that the Gentiles, who have no revelation, are yet condemnable for their wickedness, because they transgress against the light of their dispensation.

Ver. 15. In their hearts, &c.] This is the force and stress of the Apostle's argument. He is proving that the Gentiles have a rule of action; and where is that rule?—*It is written in their hearts*, inscribed upon their mental faculties; a sense of moral good and evil is common to all mankind; and a secret power offered by divine grace to embrace the one and to avoid the other. The last clause literally rendered is, *and their reasonings between one another, accusing or else defending*. This interpreters in general understand of the workings of the conscience in one and the same person, alternately accusing the actions which are bad, and justifying those which are good. But here it is proper to observe, I. That *κατηγορούντων, accusing*, and

ἀπολογουμένων, defending or answering for themselves, are forensic terms, and correspond to *plaintiff* and *defendant* in legal process. Now plaintiff and defendant suppose a dispute, and are correlates, which exist together at the same time; but to say that the single principle of conscience forms two litigant parties in itself, the one accusing, the other defending, is incongruous. Conscience is a law, not a litigant, unless it be with a different principle, *lust*, (of which the Apostle says nothing here,) but never with itself, or its own reflections upon a person's conduct. II. The copulative *καί, and*, as it stands here, points to a distinct head; "*their conscience also bearing witness*, that the work of the law is written in their hearts; *and their reasonings between one another, accusing or answering for themselves*, bearing witness that the work of the law is written in their hearts." This is the proper structure and construction of the Greek. But if this last clause be understood of the workings of conscience, it will be a tautology; for the Apostle must be supposed to say, *their conscience bearing witness*, and *the workings of their conscience, alternately accusing or defending, bearing witness*. III. The phrase *μεταξύ ἀλλήλων, between one another*, denotes the litigant parties, accusing or else defending; and who should those be but the Gentiles, the persons concerning whom the Apostle is arguing? The word *ἄλλήλοι, one another*, always, it is conceived, denotes parties existing at the same time. But we cannot suppose that litigant parties exist at the same time in the conscience, one accusing, and the other excusing a man's conduct. To whom then does the word *αὐτῶν, their*, in the preceding clause refer, but to the Gentiles?—And not only the sense, but the like position of the words, directs us to refer *ἀλλήλων, one another*, to the same antecedent: for the words lie in this order, *their consciences bearing witness, and their between-one-another-debates* [bearing witness]. IV. The Greek word *λογίζω* signifies *to reckon, reason, debate*; (see Mark, xi. 31. 2 Cor. x. 5, &c.); agreeably whereto the original word *λογισμῶν*, in the present passage, should have been rendered, —*their reasonings, debates, disputes* one with another, when one party was plaintiff, and the other defendant. This proves that they both had, and knew they had, a law or rule of action among them: for as plaintiff and defendant necessarily suppose each other, so do they necessarily suppose a law, determining some actions to be true, just, and good; others to be false, unjust, and evil: for if there were no difference of actions, there could be no accusation of wrong, nor defence of right. The Apostle says, *accusing or else answering for themselves*; because either of these is sufficient to his purpose: either their accusing others of wrong, or defending themselves as in the right, (whichever of the parties was really in the right or in the wrong,) proved that they had a law among them,—a law written in their hearts.

Ver.

16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

17 Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,

18 And knowest his will, * and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law;

19 And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them who are in darkness,

* Pf. 6, 21. & 96. 13. & 98. 9. & 7. 8. & 100. 8. Eccl. 3. 17. & 12. 14. 1 Cor. 4. 5. Mat. 6. 4, 6. & 25. 31. John. 5. 22. 28. & 12. 48. Acts. 10. 42. & 17. 31. 2 Tim. 4. 1, 8. 1 Peter. 4. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 10. ch. 14. 12. Rev. 20. 11, 12. 2 Tim. 2. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 11. Titus. 1. 3. Gal. 1. 11. ch. 16. 16, 19. 1 Cor. 9. 17. 1 Theff. 2. 2, 4. Pf. 76. 1, 2. & 114. 2. & 135. 4. & 148. 14. ch. 3. 1, 2. & 9. 4. 5. Phil. 3. 5. Jer. 7. 4. Zeph. 3. 11. Il. 48. 2. Micah. 3. 11. Mat. 3. 9. John. 8. 33, 41. ch. 9. 4. Pf. 147. 9. with Phil. 1. 10. 2 Tim. 3. 15. Deut. 6. 7. Il. 31. 19. * Or *trist* the things that differ. Il. 42. 19. Mar. 5. 14. & 15. 14. & 23. 16. 1 Cor. 8. 1. Gal. 6. 3.

Ver. 16. *The secrets of men*] Not, we conceive, their secret bad actions, but, agreeably to the preceding discourse, their moral state and circumstances under different degrees of light; which are *secrets* now to us, or of which we are by no means competent judges. We cannot judge what capacities, opportunities, and advantages every man, in every different age and country, enjoys; nor what use he makes of them; these are things only known to God: This interpretation will be confirmed by observing, that this 16th verse is in connection with the 12th. According to my Gospel refers not to the day of judgment in general, as if the Apostle intended no more, than that he made known a future judgment in his preaching the Gospel.— This was not peculiar to St. Paul's preaching as he was the Apostle of the Gentiles; other apostles and preachers made known a future judgment, as well as St. Paul; therefore it seems rather to refer to God's judging the secrets of men. It might be asked by what rule will he judge them? The answer is, According to my Gospel; that is according to the nature and extent of the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, and which represents all mankind as the objects of the divine beneficence, cognizance, and care through the merit of the great Atonement." According to St. Paul's Gospel, or upon its principles, God is the God, Father, and Judge of all, who has in one degree or other revealed himself to all, who expects a proportionable obedience from all; and consequently will judge, and either reward or punish all the nations of the world under different dispensations, and different degrees of light; and this principle is expressed in the very first words of the first sermon preached to the Gentiles, Acts, i. 34. 35. See Locke.

Ver. 17. *Behold, &c.*] If the unbelieving Jew was at all disposed to admit evidence and conviction, the Apostle has had enough to awaken his conscience in the preceding part of this chapter; and therefore here he throws off the cover, and openly argues with him in the most plain and serious manner, that his superior knowledge, privileges, and professions served only to aggravate his condemnation; and that, in fact, he, who, under all his greater advantages, transgressed the law of God, stood condemned by the honest Gentile, who, to the best of his knowledge, obeyed it. In ver. 17—20. St. Paul makes use of the titles which the Jews assumed to themselves, from the advantages they had of hope and knowledge above the Gentiles, to shew them how unreasonable they were in judging the Gentiles, (who were, even in their own account, so much beneath them in knowledge,) for doing those things, of which they themselves

were also guilty. St. Paul says emphatically, *thou art called a Jew*; for such a Jew as described in the following verses, he insists, was a Jew only in name, not in reality; and so he concludes, ver. 28, 29. The Greek words *καυχᾶσθαι, καυχῆμα, καυχῆσις*, are used by none of the New Testament writers except St. Paul and St. James; by the latter thrice, by the former above fifty times. They are favourite terms with St. Paul, probably because of their very expressive and extensive signification. We render them by *boasting, glorying, rejoicing, joy*; but *glorying* best suits all the places where they are found. Now *glorying*, as it gives the sense of those words, denotes being pleased with, and acquiescing in the object wherein we glory, as it is supposed to be an object of joy and delight; of hope and dependence; as being praise-worthy, and reflecting an honour upon us: and such an object may be either in ourselves, or in other things or persons. I. In ourselves; 1. with regard to dependence, Jer. ix. 23.—2. with regard to honour, Judges, vii. 2. 1 Cor. i. 29. Ephes. ii. 9. H. In other things or persons; 1. with regard to joy, Pf. v. 11. Philipp. ii. 16.—2. with regard to hope, Prov. xi. 7. in the LXX.—3. with regard to dependence, Psal. xlix. 6. Philipp. iii. 3, 4.—4. with regard to what is praise-worthy, 2 Cor. v. 12.—5. with regard to honour, Jer. xiii. 11. 2 Cor. i. 14. These several senses the words above mentioned will admit; but commonly more senses than one are implied, and sometimes all the several significations are included in the force of the word: so here, *and makest thy boast*, or rather, *and gloriest in God*; that is to say, "You rejoice in him as the object of your hope and dependence;—you praise, or speak well of him;—you account it your honour that he is your God; and "that you worship him, &c." So ver. 23. ch. v. 2, 3, 11, &c. See Locke and Mintert.

Ver. 18. *And approvest the things, &c.*] The words *Τα διαφέροντα*, signify things excellent, convenient, controverted, or differing: in either of these senses the term may be understood here; though the last (namely, their difference in respect of lawful and unlawful) may be pitched on, I think, says Mr. Locke, as most suited to the Apostle's design here; and that which the Jews much stood upon, as giving them one great pre-eminence above the defiled Gentiles. Beza, in this view, translates the passage, *And discernest things that differ*. See Elmer's Observations, vol. ii. page 17.

Ver. 19. *Guide of the blind, &c.*] *Blind*,—in darkness,—*ignorant*,—*have*,—were appellations which the Jews gave to the Gentiles; signifying how much inferior to themselves

20 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.

21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?

22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?

23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

24 For the name of God is blasphemed

among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

25 For circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?

27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?

28 For he is not a Jew who is one out-

Ch. 6. 17. 2 Tim. 1. 13. & 3. 5. Titus, 1. 16. Pf. 50. 16—21. Mat. xxiii. Luke, 11. 39—48. & 4. 23. 1 Cor. 9. 27. Jer. 3. 1. Mal. 1. 6. 8, 12. & 2. 8. Mat. 12. 33. & 16. 4. & 21. 12. Mark, 7. 19. & 8. 38. & 11. 15. Mat. 5. 28. Ver. 17. ch. 9. 4. 2. Mat. 23. 3. 14, 13. & 19, 20. Luke, 18. 11. ver. 24. ch. 7. 9. 2 Sam. 12. 14. 11. 52. 5. Ezek. 36. 20, 23. Ch. 3. 1, 2. & 9. 4, 5. Lev. 26. 41. Jer. 4. 4. & 6. 10, 14. & 9. 25, 26. Acts, 7. 51. 2 Cor. 7. 19. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. Mat. 8. 10, 11. & 15. 28. Acts, 10. 34. ver. 28, 29. Mat. 12. 41, 42. Ezek. 16. 51, 52. ver. 14, 15. Ch. 7. 8. 2 Cor. 3. 6. Titus, 1. 16. 2 Tim. 3. 5. John, 8. 33. Rev. 2. 9. Mat. 3. 9. ch. 9. 6—8. & 14. 17. 1 Cor. 4. 20. & 8. 2. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. 1 Tim. 4. 8.

elves they thought them in knowledge. The word μορφωσι, rendered form, ver. 20. seems to mean the same with the word τυπος, ch. vi. 17. that is, such a draught, as contained and represented the parts and lineaments of the whole; for it is to be remembered, that the Apostle uses these terms here in the same sense that the Jews spoke of themselves, vaunting over the Gentiles; thereby placing their crime in the strongest light, in judging the Gentiles as they did. See 2 Tim. iii. 5. Locke, Bos, and Beaufobre: and Lensant.

Ver. 24. Dost thou steal? Grotius on this text proves from Josephus, that some of the Jewish priests lived by rapine, depriving others of their due share of the tithes, and even suffering them to perish for want: that others were guilty of gross uncleanness: and as for sacrilegiously robbing God and his altars, it had been complained of as early as Malachi's days (Mal. i. 8, 12, 13). See Grotius and Doddridge.

Ver. 25. For] It is most evident that γαρ, for, cannot here signify that the following words are a reason for what was asserted in those immediately preceding. It seems little more than an expletive, as the particle now is frequently among us. Circumcision is here put for being a Jew, as being one of the chief, and most discriminating rites of that people: It profiteth, says St. Paul, (or, as it may be rendered, It is indeed an advantage,) if thou keep the law.

Ver. 26. The righteousness of the law] Mr. Locke renders the original words δικαιωματα το νομου the rectitudes of the law, in an appropriated sense of the word rectitude. This rule of their actions, all mankind uncircumcised as well as circumcised had, and it is that which the Apostle, in ch. i. 32. calls δικαιομα τα Θεου, the judgment of God; because it came from God, and was made by him the moral rule to all mankind. And this rule of morality, St. Paul says, the Gentile world did acknowledge: so that δικαιομα τα Θεου, the judgment of God, ch. i. 32. signifies that rule of right taken in general; and δικαιωματα το νομου, the righteousness of

the law, here signifies the particular branches of it, contained in the law of Moses: for no other part of that law could a Heathen be supposed to observe, or be concerned in; and therefore those only can be the δικαιωματα το νομου, the righteousness of the law, here meant.

Ver. 27. And shall not uncircumcision, &c.] The Apostle here supposes that a heathen may be an honest, sober, good, kind, benevolent and holy man through the secret influences of the Spirit of God: for were it impossible for the Gentiles in any sense to fulfil the law of love, it would not be supposable that he should do it; and then the Apostle's argument would be without any foundation. And that he does not here speak of a Heathen converted, or to be converted to Christianity, is manifest from the whole context. Hence it appears, that it was the Apostle's sentiment that a man under the Heathen dispensation might do the will of God by the secret influences of the Holy Spirit, and through the alone merits of Jesus Christ be saved for ever,—not indeed by his works: it is of grace that he is saved. See chap. iii. 20. The following words, judge thee, look back as far as the first verse: who soever thou art that judgest. This judging, as Mr. Locke observes, relates to the unkind erroneous sentiments of the Jews concerning the uncircumcised Gentiles; judging them utterly unworthy of the favour of God, and disqualified from being his people. But here the Apostle, with great force and truth, retorts the censure upon them. "Shall a virtuous and pious Heathen condemn you, wicked Jews, as unworthy of God's favour, and disqualified from being any longer his people?" That this is the Apostle's meaning, appears from the next verse; For he is not a Jew, &c.; and in the following dialogue, concerning the rejection of the Jews, he supposes that the Jews would take this to be his sense; nor could any Jew in those days, acquainted with St. Paul's principles, miss or understanding him thus. In ch. xiv. 3, 4. the word judge is used in the same sense. See Locke, and the note on ver. 15.

Ver.

wardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: ¹ But he is a Jew, who is one inwardly;

and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

¹ Phil. 3. 2. 3. ch. 14. 17. Pf. 45. 13. Luke, 17. 21. 1 Cor. 4. 20. 2 Cor. 4. 16. Gal. 4. 49. Eph. 3. 16. Col. 1. 27. 1 Peter, 4. 4. Deut. 10. 16. & Jo. 6. Jer. 4. 4. Col. 2. 17, 12. Ch. 7. 6. 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7. Phil. 3. 3. 1 Cor. 4. 5. 2 Cor. 10. 18. 1 Thess. 2. 4. 1 Peter, 2. 4.

Ver. 29. *Whose praise is not of men*. Perhaps here is a reference to the etymology of the word *Jew*, it being derived from the name of *Judah*, which signifies *praise*. See Gen. xlix. 35. xlix. 8. We have observed, in the note on ver. 1. that there is a secret comparison of the Jews and Gentiles, which runs through what St. Paul says of them in this and the preceding chapter.

Inferences.—Miserable are those judges, preachers, makers, &c. who, in arraigning others, condemn themselves. It is for our own interest to be very slow and reserved in the judgment we pass upon our neighbours, because God judges us as we judge others. We readily enough blame vice, when we see it only in others; but God sees it better in us, than we do in them. We frequently condemn our fellow-creatures, in order to justify ourselves before men; and this very thing does but the more condemn us in the sight of God, ver. 1.

Let us revere the *righteous judgment of God*, which is here laid before us in so particular and affecting a manner; remembering that we are each of us to have our part in that day of final retribution; and that the *secrets of our hearts* will then be made manifest. It behoves us often to reflect upon the awful result; and to consider, that *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish*, will be our portion, if we are contentious and disobedient to the truth; yet, if we do not, by a *patient continuance in well-doing*, seek the promised *glory, honour, and immortality*. This if we do by the grace of God, we shall, through the alone merits of our adorable Saviour, secure *eternal life*. Ver. 7—9. Be otherwise, vain will our knowledge and our best profession be found, and our testimonies against the sins of others will only inflame the *guilt of our own*.

What cause have we to adore that *goodness of God*, which so freely takes unworthy sinners, as it were by the hand, and *draws them to repentance*? ver. 4. While we continually lie upon this goodness, let us not act in contempt of its blessings, or abuse it to our own ruin. Is the *word* already laid up so small, that we should be increasing the treasure; that we should stimulate and arouse the *terrors of the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of the Almighty*, ver. 5.

It will be a most impartial, as well as important day! It does not much concern us to know how the *Heathen* will fare in it: it may suffice us, that if they be condemned, they will be righteously condemned;—not for remaining ignorant of that *Gospel*, which they never had an opportunity of hearing, but for violating those precepts of the divine law, which were *inscribed on their consciences*. See ver. 14, 15.

This *law within*, accompanied by the secret workings of divine grace, accuses, judges, convicts, and condemns every sinner upon earth; who shall all be judged by the dispensation they have enjoyed. What a severe judgment then

must attend on those, who, having besides this, the law of the Gospel, the example of the life of Christ, and the superior illuminations of the Holy Spirit, live notwithstanding as if they had no law at all! For how devoutly soever we may have heard and spoken of it, we shall be condemned, at the last, if we have not acted agreeable thereto. The use of the law is, to hear it with docility, to preserve the remembrance of it with gratitude, to meditate upon it with faith, to perform it with fidelity, to covet it with all our heart, and to make it our joy and delight: to effectuate all which is the work of grace in us, and that grace a gift of God, which we must earnestly supplicate, if we would savingly receive.

How little will it signify, to have the name of a Jew or a Christian! To boast in an external and temporary relation to God, if we be such as shall finally be disowned by him, will but render us more wretched. To have *known his will*; to have distinguished things that differ, and set up for instructors or reprovers of others, will only furnish out matter of condemnation from our own mouths, if *while teaching others we teach not ourselves*, ver. 17—21. Well may the punishment be aggravated, where the guilt is so great, when it brings so peculiar a reproach upon religion, and, in effect, dictates so many blasphemies against the name of God, at the very time it pretends to exalt it, ver. 24. For as a good life is the praise which tends most to the honour of God; so a wicked life, in a profession holy of itself, includes in it a kind of blasphemy, and is often the fatal occasion thereof in others.

We pity the Gentiles, and we have reason to pity them; but let us take heed, lest those appearances of virtue, which are to be found among some of them, condemn our conduct, who with the letter of the law and the Gospel, and with the solemn tokens of a Christian relation to God about us, transgress his precepts, and violate our engagements to him; turning the very means of goodness and happiness into the occasions of more unpardonable guilt, ver. 26, 27.

May our hearts, therefore, be always attentive to those *lessons of inward religion* which the sacred oracles continually inculcate, and the Holy Spirit of God urges, ver. 28, 29. We are holy only by living inwardly and outwardly according to the holiness of our profession, and observing its sacred rules. The *outward appearance*, which was not sufficient to make a *real Jew* in the times of the law, can never be sufficient to make a true Christian in the times of Gospel grace. *Christianity is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter*. We are nothing for or before God, but what we are in the inward man; all the rest is shadow only, and hypocrisy in the sight of heaven. Let us remember, it is the *praise, not of men, but of God*, which is in question. And who can be so lost to all greatness of mind, all generous ambition, as not to long, and ever burn to attain the glorious prize? Who can enjoy, or attend to the *praise of men*, while he has any reason to fear that *God*,—

CHAP. III.

The Jew's prerogative. None are justified by the law; but all by faith.

[Anno Domini 58.]

WHAT advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit *is there* of circumcision?

^a Eccl. 1. 3. & 3. 19. & 6. 8. Dan. 5. 14. & 6. 3. with ch. 2. 26, 28, 29. Phil. 3. 5. ^b Deut. 32. 9. & 4. 7, 8. Pl. 98. 5. & 147. 18—20. ch. 2. 18. & 9. 4, 5. Eph. 2. 12. ^c Num. 23. 19. 1 Sam. 15. 29. ch. 9. 6. & 11. 29. 2 Tim. 2. 13. Heb. 4. 2.

the All-seeing,—All-wise,—All-powerful God, condemns and disapproves?

REFLECTIONS.—1st, Nothing could be urged against the prophane Gentiles which the Jews would not with satisfaction admit. But, while they judged them, they in fact condemned themselves, being chargeable with the same abominations, and that with more aggravated guilt because of their superior advantages. To them therefore the Apostle addresses himself, and proves them most inexcusable in their censures, and liable to the same wrath of a justly-offended God.

1. They were guilty of the same sins which the Gentiles committed, yet flattered themselves that they should escape the judgment of God. But it was folly in them to promise themselves impunity, when the God of truth and judgment had fully declared his determined purpose to punish such workers of iniquity: and all who knew the unchangeableness of his word were sure that vengeance must overtake the impenitent transgressors, whether they were Jews or Gentiles. *Note*, (1.) It is vile hypocrisy to condemn that in others which we allow and practise ourselves. (2.) God's judgment will be according to truth, and none shall be able to object to the righteousness of his sentence, any more than they can escape from the execution of it.

2. They abused God's patience, and made the most ungrateful returns for his goodness. Peculiar mercies they had enjoyed, the most wonderful forbearance they had experienced, and all his multiplied favours had the most direct tendency to melt down their obdurate hearts into ingenuous shame and contrition, and to engage them to return to him: but they considered not their deep obligations, were insensible to all the wonders of his grace, and, after their hardness and impenitent hearts, treasured up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; so eager in pursuit of their iniquities, as if they were heaping up the most valuable treasures. *Note*, (1.) There is a day of wrath, of terrible wrath, approaching, when inexorable judgment will seize the impenitent soul. (2.) In all God's decisions his righteousness will appear, and even the damned be forced to own their sentence just. (3.) A hard and impenitent heart is the direct plague on this side of hell. (4.) The time of God's patience is expiring, and abused patience will bring down the heaviest vengeance.

3. God, in his procedure at the day of judgment, will act with the greatest impartiality, rendering to every man according to his deeds. (1.) To them who by patient continuance in well-doing, who in the persevering exercise of faith in a Redeemer are in the use of the appointed means

2^d Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

working out their salvation; and seek for the glory, honour, and immortality which is brought to light in the Gospel; to them God will give eternal life: glory, honour, and peace, are the assured portion secured to every man that, under the influence of faith and love, perseveringly worketh good, actuated by Gospel principles, and proposing as his end the divine glory. And herein there is no difference between Jew or Gentile, nor is God a respecter of one more than the other; the faithful of both denominations shall share the same blessedness according to their measure of grace; as they are interested in the same divine Saviour, they shall be entitled, in proportion to their faithfulness and holiness, to the same reward. (2.) On the other hand, unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, contradicting and opposing the method of divine grace revealed in the Gospel; but obey unrighteousness, walking in unbelief, iniquity, and impenitence; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, even all the terrors of vengeance which a righteous Judge will inflict, must be poured out upon every man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, to whom all his outward privileges will be no protection; and also of the Gentile, who shall no more escape than the Jew, if he perseveringly neglect the great salvation of the Gospel: and each will bear their punishment according to the advantages which they have enjoyed, and the means and mercies which they have abused.

4. In judging the world, God will regard the different measures of light against which men have sinned, and will punish them according to the several aggravations of their guilt.

The Gentiles, who have sinned without law, must perish without law. They have not had indeed the same clear revelation as was made to the Jews at Sinai; but they have a law written on their hearts, some more obscure traces of God's will have been delivered down to them, and their consciences, though defiled, have some general notions, of good and evil, right and wrong, truth and falsehood; by which means these heathens, though not having the law, are a law unto themselves; and, when they correspond in their practice with these dictates of natural conscience through the secret influences of the Spirit of God, their thoughts and judgment acquit and approve them; or, if they deviate therefrom, they are accused, reproached, and condemned in their own hearts*. The unbelieving Gentiles, therefore, though not so criminal as the unbelieving Jews, who resist clearer manifestations of

* This passage is here considered according to the common interpretation of it; but for farther light upon it, see the Critical Notes.

4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

† Ps. 11. 11. & 51. 4. & 62. 9. John, 3. 33. Job, 40. 2. II. 46. 10. Pf. 85. 15. & 100. 5. Micah, 7. 20. Luke, 10. 35. Deut. 32. 4

the divine will, yet cannot plead ignorance; they sin against their partial convictions, are without excuse, and God is just in executing his judgments against them.

The unbelieving Jews, as many as have sinned in the law, against the holy commandments which were delivered unto them, shall be judged by the law; and, as their sin is more aggravated, their condemnation will be more grievous. And though they valued themselves highly on their external privileges as the disciples of Moses, and thought themselves the favourites of heaven, because they were acquainted with God's law, and heard it constantly read and explained to them, they were most fatally deceived; since not the bearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

In the day therefore when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, to whom all judgment is committed, according to the Gospel, which Paul calls my Gospel; not as if he was the author of it, but as being put in trust with it; then shall impartial justice be executed on transgressors, and according to the measure of their guilt shall be their condemnation. Note; (1.) An awful day of judgment approaches: it highly imports every soul to inquire how they shall come and appear before God. (2.) Whatever is now concealed with most cautious care shall soon be brought to light: we believe that he shall be our Judge, from whom nothing is hid, nothing is secret.

adly, The great rock on which the Jews split, was their vain dependence on the law of Moses; when in fact that very law on which they trusted denounced indignation and wrath upon them as transgressors of it.

1. The Apostle mentions various particulars in which they proudly gloried. Behold, thou art called a Jew; they valued themselves highly on their descent from Abraham; and rested in the law; secure of heaven because they had Moses for their teacher, though they obeyed not his injunctions; and makest thy boast in God, as if peculiarly interested in him, and exclusive of all other nations, possessing his favour and regard; and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law, puffed up with the conceit of their superior knowledge of God's mind above any other people, accurate to discern truth from falsehood, professing their high estimation of the divine law, and from earliest youth (*καταρχήθεν*) catechised and instructed out of it; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes; such high and lofty titles they assumed, when regarding their Gentile neighbours, on whom they looked down with sovereign contempt, and thought the wisest heathens were but as infants to them, and needed to come to their school to learn the elements of divine knowledge; when, in fact, all they possessed was but a form of knowledge and of the truth in the law; for in reality they neither understood its nature, extent, or spirituality; nor practised its precepts. Note; (1.) External privileges rested upon, instead of improved, tend but more fatally to deceive and destroy us.

(2) Unsanctified knowledge is a dangerous possession, puffing up the soul in pride, and leading it to perdition. (3.) A form of sound words in our lips may impose upon men; but without the power of divine grace in the heart, all the rest is no better than sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

2. He charges them with various crimes, the more aggravated because of the privileges in which they boasted, and the knowledge which they professed. While they taught others, they never preached to their own hearts; their lives gave the lie to their instructions. They declaimed against theft, yet practised it themselves, Matt. xxiii. 14. and lived in that adultery which they so sharply condemned in others: they testified their abhorrence of idols, yet sacrilegiously robbed God of his honour, not only by withholding their offerings from his altar, but more abundantly by making void his law through their traditions, and, while scrupulous in trifles, neglecting the weightier matters. Thus they stood most inexcusably guilty; and by such flagrant breaches of his law, even while they boasted of it as their great privilege, and trusted on it as their security, they put the highest dishonour upon God, and brought the greatest reproach on their profession, giving occasion to the very Gentiles to blaspheme and speak evil of that religion, the professors of which were so infamously vile; and acting over the same part as it is written their fathers had done before them, Ezek. xxxvi. 20—23. Note; (1.) Example influences more than precept. Indeed how can it be expected that the people should believe those, who shew by their practice that they do not believe themselves? (2.) They who prove false to their professions, give the deepest stab to the cause of God.

3. The Apostle considers the Jewish plea of circumcision, and proves the vanity of it. It profited them, if they kept the law perfectly; but, in case of transgression, it stood them in no stead but as it led them to view the great atoning Saviour, nor were they at all more acceptable to God than an uncircumcised Gentile. And if, for argument's sake, it be supposed that a heathen should observe all the precepts of the law, would he not be an object of God's regard, as much as if he had been circumcised? and would not such a moral heathen, though uncircumcised, condemn thee a Jew, and circumcised, if he observed that law, which you, though professing to hold, and by circumcision obliging yourself to keep, notwithstanding transgress? Undoubtedly he would. Note; The comparative exemplariness of those who enjoy less means, and make less profession of religion, will justly condemn those, who with greater advantages and more pretensions to piety dishonour, by their unfaithfulness, the holy name whereby they are called.

4. He describes the true circumcision. It is not mere outward profession which seals a man a true Israelite; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh available to any saving purpose: but he is the true son of Abraham, who in faith and spirit resembles this eminent friend.

5. But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man.)

Ch. 5. 8, 20. Titus, 3. 3-5.

Ch. 4. 1. & 6. 1. & 7. 7. & 9. 14.

Ch. 6. 19. 1 Cor. 9. 8. Gal. 3. 15.

friend of God; and the true circumcision, which God regards, is that of the heart, purified by faith; in the spirit, and not in the letter; where not only a profession is made, but a real inward change is wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost; whose praise is not of men, but of God; it is what men cannot discern; and as they who profess it desire not human but divine approbation, their great care and concern is that they may be accepted of God. *Note.* It is the heart which God regards. Let us remember then; that we have to do with him, on whom the most plausible professions cannot impose.

CHAP. III.

THE foregoing reasonings being contrary to the prejudices of the Jews, one of that nation is here introduced, objecting, if our being the children of Abraham, members of the church of God, and heirs of the promises, will procure us no favour at the judgment; and if the want of these privileges will not preclude the Heathens from salvation;—what is the pre-eminence of a Jew above a Gentile, and what is the advantage of our being made the visible church of God? ver. 1.—The Apostle replied, That the Jews, as a nation, enjoyed great advantages by being the church of God: to them were committed the oracles of God, the law of Moses, and the writings of the prophets, in which the coming of the Seed of Abraham, who was to bless all nations, is foretold, ver. 2.—But, says the Jew, What good have we derived from these oracles, if the greatest part of us have not believed on him whom you affirm to be the seed of Abraham? Will not our unbelief occasion our rejection, and thereby destroy the faithfulness of God, who promised to Abraham to be a God to him and to his seed in their generations? ver. 3.—This consequence the Apostle denied. Because, although all the natural seed of Abraham were rejected for unbelief, the faithfulness of God would not be destroyed thereby, but rather established; as the casting of Abraham's seed out of the covenant for unbelief and disobedience, was tacitly threatened in the covenant itself, ver. 4.—But, replied the Jew, If our unrighteousness, in not believing on Jesus, establish the faithfulness of God, by occasioning our losing the privileges of the covenant, Is not God unrighteous in destroying us also as a nation for the sin of not believing on Jesus? ver. 5. By no means, answered the Apostle; for if no sin could be righteously punished, which is attended with good consequences, *How shall God judge the world? How shall he render to every man according to his works?* ver. 6.—This answer not convincing the Jew, he urged his objection in a stronger form, as follows: If the truth of God, in executing his threatenings on us as a nation, hath abounded to his glory through our lie, Why are we punished as sinners individually, for what has contributed so exceedingly to God's glory, that it can scarcely be called a sin? To this objection the Apostle adds, Why not say also, what we apostles are slanderously reported to practise, and even to order; *Let us do evil that good may come?*

This pernicious doctrine the Apostle reprobated with abhorrence, by declaring, that the condemnation of those who hold it is most just, ver. 8. which is all that he now thought fit to say on the subject; intending to confute both the objection and the slander more fully afterwards; chap. vi. vii. viii.

Because the Apostle had affirmed, ver. 2. that the pre-eminence of the Jews above the Gentiles consisted in the advantages which they derived from the oracles of God, for improving themselves in knowledge, holiness, and virtue, the Jew asks, Do you acknowledge that we excel the Gentiles in worthiness of character, and that, on account thereof, we are entitled to be justified by the law? Not at all, says the Apostle; for we have formerly, chap. i. and iii. proved Jews and Gentiles, that is the scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers among the Jews, and the statesmen, philosophers, and common people of the Gentiles, to be all under sin, and obliged to seek justification by faith, ver. 9.—And with respect to the common people of the Jews, I will shew you by passages from your own Scriptures, that the generality of them have always been exceedingly corrupt, notwithstanding the advantages which they derived from the oracles of God, ver. 12—18. Wherefore Jews and Gentiles being sinners, every mouth of man, pretending to justification as due on account of works, is effectually stopped, both by the law of nature and by the law of Moses, and all the world stands condemned by both, as liable to punishment from God, ver. 19.—The Apostle having thus, step by step, led his readers to the great conclusion which he meant to establish, he produces it as the result of all his reasonings hitherto: *Wherefore, by works of law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: because through law is the knowledge of sin,* ver. 20.—That is, neither Jew nor Gentile can be justified meritoriously by works of law; because, law requiring immaculate obedience under the penalty of death, its only operation is to make sinners sensible that they are liable to condemnation, without giving them the least hope of mercy: so that any expectation of eternal life which sinners can entertain, must be founded upon a method of justification different from that of law.

This being the proper place for it, the Apostle introduces his account of the Gospel-method of justification, as follows. Because both the law of nature, and the law of Moses have made immaculate obedience necessary to justification, and because no man is able to give such an obedience, a righteousness without law, that is, a different righteousness from immaculate obedience to any law whatever, is now discovered in the Gospel, to be what God requires in order to salvation. And to reconcile the Jews to that kind of righteousness, the Apostle told them, (deferring the proof of his assertion till afterwards, chap. iv. 1—8.) that it is testified by the law and the prophets, ver. 21.—even the righteousness which God has appointed from the beginning, as the righteousness of sinners; a righteousness which is through the faith enjoined by Jesus Christ, and which,

6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?

7 For if the truth of God hath more

abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?

8 And not rather, (as we be slanderously

¹ Ver. 4. ch. 6. 2, 11. & 9. 14. & 7. 7.

² Gen. 12. 25. Job, 2. 3. & 34. 17. Ps. 11. 6, 7. & 7. 8, 9. & 9. 8. & 96. 13. & 9. 8, 9. & 50. 6.

³ Ver. 5. ch. 5. 8, 10.

which, from mere favour, will be counted to all, and rewarded upon all who believe; for with God there is no distinction of persons, in his method of justifying mankind, ver. 22.—because all have sinned and come short of the praise of God, ver. 23.

Many of the Jews, however, continued utterly averse to the new dispensation: First, Because its doctrine of justification by faith rendered the Levitical sacrifices, which they believed to be real atonements, altogether useless; and, secondly, because they fancied that no sacrifice for sin was appointed under the Gospel.—This latter mistake the Apostle corrected, by informing them that justification is a free gift from God, bestowed on sinners through the redemption which is by Christ Jesus, that is through the atonement which he has made for sin by the sacrifice of himself: ver. 24.—And that on account of his having offered a sacrifice so meritorious, God has set him forth as a mercy-seat, seated on which, consistently with his justice, he forbears to punish sinners immediately, and grants them space to repent and believe, that he may pardon both them who have repented and believed before the coming of Christ, ver. 25. and them who shall repent and believe after his coming, even to the end of the world; ver. 26.—Where then is boasting? the boasting of the Gentile philosophers, and of the Jewish scribes, who, being puffed up with pride, the one on account of their intellectual attainments, and the other on account of their zeal in performing the rites of Moses, fancy themselves entitled to eternal life. To this question the Apostle replies, It is excluded: not however by law, which only justifies men meritoriously through an immaculate obedience to its precepts; but by the law of faith, the Gospel, which justifies sinners gratuitously through faith, ver. 27. and thereby utterly beats down the pride both of the Jews and the Gentiles.

Having thus explained the Gospel-method of justification, and shewn that it is founded not on the merit of men's works, but in the mercy of God, and in the atonement made for sin by the death of Christ, the Apostle produces his second great conclusion: We conclude then, that by faith man is justified without works of law, ver. 28. And truly, unless this, with the arguments which support it, had been added, the former conclusion, ver. 20. By works of law there shall no man be justified in his sight, would have answered no purpose, but to terrify sinners.—Farther, to wean the Jews effectually from the legal method of justification by sacrifices, washings, and meats, on which they doted, the Apostle observed, that Jews and Gentiles being all under the government of the same God, who is equally related to all, as their creator and judge, ver. 29. there cannot be one way of justification appointed for the Jews, and another for the Gentiles; but all are to be justified in one method, namely, by faith, ver. 30.—To conclude: because the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles affirmed, that in teaching a gratuitous justifica-

tion by faith without works of law, the Apostle made law useless, he told them, this doctrine does not make law useless, but rather establishes it as absolutely necessary, ver. 31. However, the proof of his assertion being a matter of great importance, the Apostle deferred it till afterwards, that he might propose it at large, chap. vii.

Ver. 1.] The Apostle, in the latter end of the foregoing chapter, has carried his argument to the utmost length. What remains is, to keep the Jew in temper, to fix his convictions, and to draw the general conclusion. He has shewn that the Jews were rather more wicked than the Gentiles, and stood condemned by such of them as sincerely did their duty through the secret influences of divine grace; that a possession of the law, circumcision, and an outward profession of relation to God, gave them no character, and signified nothing, as to their acceptance with him.—This was in effect to say, that the Jews were as unworthy to be continued in the church, as the Gentiles to be taken into it; and consequently, that in order to their enjoying the privileges of the church, under the Messiah, they stood in need of a fresh display of grace; which if they rejected, God would cast them out of the vineyard. And the Apostle was sensible that the Jew would understand what he had said in this sense. To set aside his law, his circumcision, his external advantages, as insufficient to gain him any interest in the favour of God, was to strip him of his peculiar honours, and quite ruin him as a Jew. This must be very disgusting: and the Apostle, who had often debated the point with his countrymen, knew very well what a Jew would be ready to say upon this occasion. Here, therefore, he seasonably introduces a dialogue between himself and the Jew, indulging, as it were, his disgust, by giving him leave to speak for himself; ver. 1—8. and what he is supposed to speak, we have reason to think was what the Jews had actually replied and objected against the Apostle. This would amuse, and at the same time instruct him, and possibly cool his resentment; especially as the Apostle's answer to the first question is much in his favour. There seems no room to doubt, that this dialogue relates to the rejection of the Jews; a subject which would have come in here naturally enough. But then it would have broken in too much upon the Apostle's argument: for which reason he but just touches upon it here, reserving the full consideration of it to the 9th, 10th, and 11th chapters; particularly ch. ix. 4—23. where we have the same questions more distinctly put, answered, and largely discussed; only we may observe, that here they relate solely to the rejection of the Jews, but there they take in also the calling of the Gentiles. After the dialogue, St. Paul resumes his argument, ver. 9. proves farther by Scripture quotations, that the Jews were guilty before God as well as other men, ver. 10—19. and concludes that no part of mankind could have a right to the blessings of God's kingdom and covenant upon the footing

reported, and as some affirm that we say,) 'Let us do evil that good may come? whole damnation is just.

9 What then? "are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before "proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

¹ Ch. 5. 8, 20. & 6. 1, 13. & 7. 7. Jude, 4. ^m Ver. 10—20, 23. Gal. 3. 22. ⁿ Or charged. Ch. i. xi.

footing of any works of obedience which they had done, ver. 20. but only by the favour of God in the Gospel; which he explains, ver. 21, &c. The sum and force of the Apostle's argument is this: "All sorts of men, Jews as well as Gentiles, have sinned: therefore no part of mankind can lay claim to the blessings of God's kingdom and covenant upon the score of *obedience*; and therefore the Jew stands as much in need of grace or favour, to give him a title to those blessings under the kingdom of the Messiah, as the Gentile. Consequently the Gentile has as good a title as the Jew; for those blessings are given only by *grace*; and *grace*, or mere favour, is alike free to all mankind: and when all are in equal circumstances, it is perfectly absurd for any to pretend to engross it to themselves, exclusively of others, who are as good, or but as bad, as they." And thus the Apostle very solidly, and to our great comfort, proves, that we Gentiles, through *faith alone*, have a good and firm title to all the blessings of the Gospel covenant; pardon, privileges, ordinances, the Spirit of God, and the rich hope of everlasting life.

Ver. 2. Much easier way] St. Paul gives a list of the advantages which the Jew had over the Gentile, ch. ix. 4, 5. but here mentions only one of them, which was most proper to his present purpose; and which is so remarkable and important a testimony to the divine inspiration of the Old Testament in general, that it can leave no doubt of the full persuasion of St. Paul upon this head. See Doddridge and Locke. We may read the next clause, *Because they were intrusted with the oracles of God.*

Ver. 3. For what if some did not believe? &c.] This and the following verse are generally understood as a continuation and explication of the Apostle's answer in the second verse; whereby the sense of the third and fourth verses is generally embarrassed, as they will not admit of a connection with the second verse. For in truth, ver. 2. is not the words of the Apostle, but a second question or objection advanced by the Jews: nor is *γὰρ*, *for*, a causal, shewing the reason why the having the oracles of God committed to them was a privilege, notwithstanding their unbelief; but the original words *τι γὰρ*, are interrogative, and may be translated, *well, and what?* And thus the phrase is frequently used in Xenophon's Memoirs of Socrates: see particularly, lib. ii. c. 6. sect. 2. Whence it appears that the phrase *τι γὰρ*, in a dialogue, and when the word *τι* has no following substantive to agree with it, is a form of introducing another question or objection by the inquirer. And as the Apostle in this place is carrying on a dialogue after the Socratic manner, it is to be understood as advancing a new question or objection; and thus every thing stands right and easy, which otherwise is in great disorder. *Did not believe*, should rather be, *Have not been faithful*; that is to say, have not been obedient. See 1 Pet. ii. 7. The Jew here alludes to the charge of wickedness which the Apostle had brought against the

Jews in the foregoing chapter. St. Paul has the same sentiment as the next clause in chap. ix. 6. He is speaking of the same thing in both places; and therefore evidently *the faith of God*, here, is the same with the *faith of God*, there, or that faithful promise which he made to Abraham. See Gen. xvii. 7, 8. Tillotson's Sermons, vol. xii. serm. 1. The verse may be rendered, *For what if some of them were unfaithful, shall their unfaithfulness make void the faithfulness of God?*

Ver. 4. But every man a liar] *Though every man should be a liar.* For the next clause, see the note on Psal. li. 4. Dr. Taylor observes, that the Hebrew of that verse literally is, *that thou mayest be just in thy speaking, and clean [that is clear] in thy judging.* The *speaking* meant is, the word of promise which God made to David, 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. and the *judging* referred to is the execution of the threatening denounced, 2 Sam. xii. 9—13. and David owns, that if the threatening did not agree with the promise, God was clear from the charge of falsehood; the inconsistency must be assigned to *his own* wickedness. This is full to the Apostle's purpose. If the promise to Abraham was not made good, as the Jews expected, they might thank themselves for it. See Tillotson, vol. xii. serm. 8.

Ver. 5. The righteousness of God] St. Paul hereby intends God's faithfulness in keeping his promise. This verse is the language of an unbelieving Jew, and therefore in his mouth God's righteousness, or fidelity to his promise, has relation only to the nation of the Jews, and their being still continued the church and people of God.—*Who taketh vengeance*, might be rendered, more agreeably to the original, *who inflicteth wrath*, or, "who is the inflicter of wrath, as you intimate." See on chap. ii. 1. and on i. 18. This expression evidently points at the rejection of the Jews, and therefore is closely connected with chap. ix. where the Apostle not only handles the same subject, but resumes these very questions or objections of the unbelieving Jew, and answers them at large; and as the rejection of the Jews stands here inserted in the midst of his argument relating to the justification of the Gentiles, it is manifestly connected with that argument, or with the Apostle's doctrine of justification by faith. For after his discourse here, upon the rejection of the Jews, he immediately subjoins, ver. 9. *What then? are we better than they?*—In answer to which, he proves to the end of the chapter that the Jews were not better than the Gentiles, seeing both stood in need of the grace or favour of God for their justification. Thus, in the Apostle's discourse and argument, the rejection of the Jews stands in close connection with his doctrine of justification. But what connection or relation is there between the justification of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews?—This will appear from what is said chap. ix. 30, 31, and the note there. In short, the rejection of the Jews for their want of faith stands in direct opposition to the justification of the Gentiles by faith; therefore, if we have a true idea of the rejection of

10 As it is written, ° There is none righteous, no, not one :

11 ° There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

12 ° They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

13 ° Their throat *is* an open sepulchre ; with their tongues they have used deceit ; ° the poison of asps *is* under their lips :

14 ° Whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness :

15 ° Their feet *are* swift to shed blood :

16 Destruction and misery *are* in their ways ;

^a Pf. 14. 1—7. & 53. 1—5. & 36. 1—4. Eph. 2. 1—3. Titus, 3. 3. 2 Peter, 2. 13—15. ^b Pf. 14. 2, 4. If. 27. 17. Hosea, 4. 6. Eph. 4. 17, 18. ^c 2 Cor. 5. 4. ch. 10. 2, 3. Jer. 3. 22. ^d Pf. 14. 3. Eccl. 7. 29. Jer. 2. 17. If. 1. 2, 4. & c. 7—13. & 9. 17, 18. & 24. 5. & 57. —5. & 19. —11. & 24. 6. 1 Cor. 6. 9. 10. Gal. 5. 19—21. Titus, 3. 3. ^e Pf. 5. 9. & 12. 2, 3. & 51. 21. & 36. 1—4. Mt. 15. 19. Jer. 9. 2—11. ^f Pf. 40. 7. & 51. 7. & 53. 3. & 57. 4. & 64. 3. & 53. 4. H. 59. 3—8. Jer. 9. 2—6. James, 3. 6, 8. ^g Pf. 10. 7. & 5. 9. & 36. 3. Job, 20. 13. James, 3. 6—9. ^h Prov. 1. 16. & 4. 16. If. 59. 7, 8. Hosea, 4. 1, 2. Pf. 120. 7. If. 59. 7—15. Ezek. xxii. Titus, 3. 3. Eph. 2. 2, 3.

of the Jews, we may thence collect a true idea of the justification of the Gentiles ; but the rejection of the Jews is their being cast out of God's church, and stripped of the privileges and blessings of God's peculiar people ; consequently the justification of the Gentiles, for which the Apostle pleads, chap. iii. and iv. is their being pardoned, and received to all the privileges and blessings of God's peculiar people. See Locke.

Ver. 6. *God forbid*.] This verse is the Apostle's answer to the Jews, which he crowds in while the Jew is going on with his observation. In reverence of the Divine Majesty, who is perfectly righteous, he qualifies the mere supposition for a moment of his being unrighteous (though this is proposed only for the sake of argument) *three* ways ; *first*, by putting it into the form of a question, *Is God unrighteous?* *Secondly*, by adding immediately, that he spoke in the person of another, and *as a man* might say who was arguing that the casting off the Jews was a thing inconsistent with God's righteousness. *Thirdly*, by interrupting the Jew with a strong assertion of the most perfect righteousness of God, in the words of Abraham, Gen. xviii. 25. We have a similar instance of crowding in an answer while another person is speaking, Hor. lib. ii. sat. 3. ver. 18.

Ver. 7, 8. *For if the truth of God, &c.*] The particle *for* joins what follows in this verse, to *vengeance*, or *wrath*, in the fifth, and shews it to be a continuation of the objection begun there. But the whole eighth verse is the Apostle's answer, the true sense of which seems to be this : Says the Jew, "If the faithfulness of God in keeping his promise is, through our wickedness, made far more glorious than otherwise it would have been, why should we Jews be blamed and condemned as sinners, for that which redounds to the honour of God?" To which the Apostle replies, ver. 8. "And why do you not say, and draw it into a general rule and maxim, that in all cases we ought to do wickedly, because God can one way or other turn it to his own glory? an impious sentiment, which some charge upon me; as if, when I magnify the grace of God in pardoning sin, I advanced this notion, that we ought to do evil, that good (God's glory) may come of it: for which, and other malicious opposition to the Gospel, they shall come under the just condemnation of God." See a further answer, chap. ix. 19, &c. We may just observe, that *rather*, ver. 8. is not in the Greek, and it seems to be improperly supplied. The sense is more truly and clearly filled up thus : *And why do you not say?* which Vol. II.

falls in naturally with what follows, "Why do you not say, as some affirm that we say?" Such an elliptical way of speaking we have, Rev. xxii. 9. *Οσα μη, see not*, that is to say, "See thou do it not." *Through my lie*, ver. 7. is to be understood as *not believing*, ver. 3. and as *Isai. lxiii. 8. For he said, surely they are my people, children that will not lie*; that is, "violate my covenant by perfidiously forsaking me, and falling into disobedience and wickedness." The last clause of ver. 8. *whose condemnation is just*, seems manifestly to imply, that there are certain rules which God has laid down for us, disobedience to which, in any imaginable circumstances, is universally a moral evil; even though the quantity of good arising thence to our fellow-creatures should be greater than that arising from an observance of those rules; for if this be not allowed, there can be no shadow of force in the Apostle's conclusion. See Locke and Doddridge.

Ver. 9. *What then?*—*Are we better than they?*] The Apostle having given the Jew leave to put in his objections, in reference to what would disgust him most,—the rejection of the Jews; and having given such answers as he thought proper at present,—now returns to the main point, namely, to prove that the Gentiles have as good a right to the privileges and blessings of God's covenant as the Jews; which he introduces very properly by putting this question into the Jew's mouth; *What then? Are we better than the Gentiles?* which by the way makes it clear, that in his arguments he considers the Jews and Gentiles in a body, or collective capacity, and that he is arguing for a justification agreeable to such a capacity; namely, by which the believing Gentiles were taken into the church, when the unbelieving Jews were cast out. For this point, whether Jews, or how far Jews were better than Gentiles, or had a better claim to the blessings and privileges of the kingdom of God, is the very subject upon which he is disputing; and in this extensive collective sense, all his arguments and conclusions are to be understood. He says, *we have before proved*,—namely, chap. ii. 3. where, under the gentler compellation of *O man!* he charges the Jews with being sinners, as well as the Gentiles, and ver. 17—24. shews, that by having the law, they were not more kept from being sinners, than the Gentiles were without the law: and his charge against them that they were sinners, he reproves from the testimony of their own sacred books contained in the Old Testament. See Locke.

Ver. 10—19. *As it is written*] In these verses and quotations

17 And the way of peace have they not known :

18 ^a There is no fear of God before their eyes.

19 Now we know that what things foever

the law saith, ^v it saith to them who are under the law : ^z that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become ^{*} guilty before God.

20 Therefore ^a by the deeds of the law there

^a Pf. 56. 1. Gen. 20. 11. Hosea, 10. 7. If. 1. 2, 4. ^v Gal. 3. 10, 13, 23. Ch. 1. 31. & 2. 14, 17, 18. Ver. c. ^z Job, 5. 16. Pf. 107. 42. Ezek. 16. 63. 1 Cor. 1. 29. & 14. 21. Ch. 1. 26, 32. & 2. 1. John, 15. 22. J. b. 9, 2, 3. ^{*} Or *subject to the judgment of God.* ^a Gal. 2. 16. & 3. 10. Pf. 143. 2. & 130. 3. Job, 9. 2, 3. Titus, 3. 3, 5. Ch. 4. 5. & 7. 9.

tations from Scripture, the Apostle is evidently giving a description of the general character and morals of the infidel Jews in his own time, when he wrote the Epistle ; a description, which suits their case as exactly as the foregoing one of the degeneracy of the heathen world suits theirs, the passage being picked and chosen for the purpose ; but the manner of representing it is different. In the case of the Gentiles, he speaks out plainly ; for the *Jews* would freely enough attend to an account of *their* corruptions ; and the Gentile, it is probable, would be more in danger of despising and neglecting what he said, than of being disgusted at it. But had he used the Jews in the same open manner, it would have roused every passion and prejudice of the Jewish reader ; and he could have expected no other but a rejection of his letter with indignation. To keep him therefore in temper, he, 1. gives no intimation of his design, but enters upon it covertly, — *as it is written.* 2. He couches the charge under Scripture expressions, and turns the eyes of the Jew rather to ancient facts, in which notwithstanding, as in a glass, he might see the very deformed complexion of the present Jews. 3. He uses the term *law*, in ver. 19. (which there signifies the whole Old Testament,) rather than *Scriptures*, as being of greater force and authority with the Jews ; and then concludes in that general manner ; *We know that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law ;* meaning the Jews, and suggesting the obligation that they were under to attend to a charge advanced against them out of their law, which they owned was of divine authority. This was sufficient for a Jew who was disposed to reflect, and at the same time avoids what might pervert his calm and sober reflections. It is farther observable, that these quotations from Scripture do not prove that these characters belonged to all the ancient Jews without exception : for there were at the same time in the nation persons of a different character ; nor could the Apostle intend that they should be applied to every individual among the Jews in his own time ; for then they would have included himself with the rest of the Apostles, and all the other Jews who had embraced the Christian faith, and were persons of undoubted piety and holiness. Nay, he could not suppose, that even his account of the corrupt morals of the *heathen world*, given in chap. i. 18, &c. was true of them *all*, without exception. His own arguments, chap. ii. 10, 14, 15, 26, 27. evince the contrary. It was sufficient to his purpose, if the generality of mankind were corrupt : for this appears ground sufficient for the rejection or excision of them, with regard either to temporal life, or the privileges of the church ; that is to say, God might in justice have destroyed the whole world, which was gene-

rally exceedingly vicious, although there were some few persons of piety and goodness in it (for whose happiness he easily could and certainly would have provided in the world to come through the alone merit of Christ). The Apostle is here speaking of bodies of people, — of Jews and Gentiles in a collective capacity. In the affair of the golden calf, wherein the Israelites so corrupted themselves, Exod. xxxii. 7, 8. God might justly have rejected and consumed them, and have made his promise good in the person of Moses and his posterity, as he proposed, ver. 10. though we have reason to think that there were some who had not engaged in that instance of idolatry and defection from God ; for we find that numbers appeared on the Lord's side, ver. 26—29. In short, the Apostle is taking collective bodies of men into the church, or continuing them in it ; in reference to which it is true, that those may not be taken into the church in this world, who yet shall be taken into the kingdom of heaven in the world to come ; and many are now taken into the church, who shall for ever be excluded from happiness in the other world. Consequently a set of texts, which prove the general corruption of the Jewish nation, may be a good argument of their deserving to be rejected from the privileges of God's church ; or that it must be by grace alone, that they, in this general collective sense, could be continued in the visible church and special covenant of God, notwithstanding there might be among them some righteous persons, not involved in the general corruption ; who, whether they were in the church, or out of it, would be taken care of in the great day of account ; — that is, whether they were or were not justified with regard to the donation and possession of church privileges, or the escaping of the wrath which would fall on the Jewish nation, when they were rejected, and their polity demolished, — would certainly be justified, and saved in the day of judgment. In fine, we cannot have a just idea of the Apostle's arguments, unless we keep in mind that he is arguing concerning the rejection of Jews, and the reception of Gentiles, in a general collective capacity, to the *present* privileges of the church and covenant of God ; namely, in such a sense and capacity, that some good and righteous men might be left out among the *rejected*, and some unrighteous persons taken in among the *elect* and *justified*. See on Psal. xiv. 3.

Ver. 19. *The law saith*] It appears here, that this word *law* sometimes signifies the Old Testament in general ; for not one of the quotations above is taken from the Pentateuch. Instead of *that every mouth may be stopped*, the original would be better rendered, *so that every mouth is stopped*. Instead of *may become guilty before God*, the original may be rendered more exactly, *stand convicted before God*.

Archbishop

shall no^a flesh be justified in his sight: for^c by the law is the knowledg^e of sin.

21 But now^d the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God which is^e by faith of Jesus Christ^f unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

23 For^h all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24ⁱ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath^k set forth to be a propitiation^l through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the^m remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

^a With ch. 7. 5, 18, 25. & 8. 1, 3—5, 8, 9, 12, 13. ^c Ch. 7. 7, 9, 14. & 5. 20. ^d If. 45. 24. Jer. 23. 6. & 33. 16. Ch. 1. 17. & 10. 3. & 5. 19. Phil. 3. 9. 2 Peter, 1. 1. 2 Cor. 5. 21. If. 45. 24. ^e Gen. 3. 15. & 15. 6. & 22. 18. & 49. 10. If. 42. 21. & liii. & 45. 24, 25. & 54. 17. & 61. 10. Jer. 23. 6. Dan. 9. 24, 25. Zech. 13. 7. Acts, 10. 43. & 15. 11. & 26. 22. John, 5. 46. 1 Peter, 1. 10, 12. ^f Ch. 1. 17. & 5. 1. Phil. 3. 9. Gal. 2. 16. ^g Ch. 10. 12. Gal. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11. ^h Ch. 1. 18—32. Ver. 10—18. Ch. 11. 32. Gal. 3. 22. ⁱ Eph. 1. 6, 7. & 2. 7, 8. Col. 1. 14. Titus, 3. 5, 7. If. 53. 11. Mat. 20. 28. John, 1. 6. Ch. 6. 6. & 5. 19. Heb. 9. 12, 14. ^k Or *reared*. 1 Peter, 1. 18—20. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Ch. 8. 3. 32. Gal. 4. 4. 1 John, 1. 2. & 4. 10. Col. 1. 20. ^l Ch. 1. 17. & 5. 1. Acts, 13. 38, 39. & 10. 43. Phil. 3. 9. ^m Or *propitious*. Heb. 9. 15. Acts, 17. 30.

Archbishop Tillotson would render it, *liable to divine justice*, which is the same in sense. See his works, fol. vol. i. p. 126.

Ver. 20. *By the deeds of the law*] The deeds or works of the law here mentioned appear to be those in which both Jews and Gentiles were defective; and with regard to which every mouth was stopped, or on account of which no part of mankind could plead a right or worthiness to be admitted into the kingdom of God. Some render the last clause, *The law takes cognizance of sin*. See Locke, Vitringa, and Bishop Bull's Harmonia.

Ver. 21. *But now, &c.*] *But now a righteousness of God without law is discovered, being testified by the law and the prophets, (ver. 22.) even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ, &c.* See the note on chap. i. 17. The question with the Apostle is, "Upon what footing do either Jews or Gentiles obtain this instance of justification or salvation,—namely, to have a place among God's people, in his family and kingdom, and to be made meet to be partakers of the promises, and of the heavenly calling?" Now in a court of judicature there are two ways of righteousness, or justification. First, when a person stands upon his obedience to law, or a rule of action; then *righteousness*, justification, or a right to the blessing, whatever it be, is his due; and the lawgiver is bound by his own constitution to give it: this is the righteousness or justification which is of law or works. The other way of justification is, by the mere *grace* or favour of the lawgiver. When the law is transgressed, the sinner has no dependence but upon the mercy and goodness of the lawgiver or judge, and can be justified only by his grace, remitting sin, and conferring the undeserved blessings. Now this is the righteousness or justification of God without law, because it is provided and granted by him, setting aside law, or in a way different from that in which law justifies; or, it is the righteousness or justification of faith, as it is answered on our part, only by belief and trust in the mercy and favour of God. Law and works give us a right which the lawgiver cannot deny, unless he will revoke and break his own constitution, granting life and happiness to the obedient; which constitution the Apostle here supposes: but *grace* and *faith* suppose that we are transgressors, obnoxious to wrath; and that if we

escape destruction, and obtain any blessings, it is purely because the judge is merciful, and of his own sovereign goodness chooses to spare us, and to bestow farther favours upon us. Of works, as antecedent to justification, and inconsistent with grace and faith, the Apostle speaks, in chapters iii. iv. v. ix. x. Of works, as consequent to justification, and consistent with grace and faith, he discourses, chapters vi. vii. viii. xii. xiii. xiv. Or thus,—Of grace and faith, as excluding works, he discourses in chapters iii. iv. v. ix. x. Of grace and faith, as obliging to good works, and producing them, he speaks in chapters vi. vii. viii. xiii. xiv. Or it may otherwise be expressed thus:—Of the terms of our present admittance into the kingdom and covenant of God, he discourses in chapters iii. iv. v. ix. x. and of our obligations to obedience, after we are taken into them, he discourses in chapters vi. vii. &c. But it is proper to observe, that by what is here offered, it is not meant that no works or obedience but what are sinless will be accepted; or as if there were no allowance for repentance, or no benefit of pardon, now that we are taken into the kingdom and covenant of God. For pardon, upon repentance, is one of the privileges of that kingdom, and a blessing freely given us in Christ, and not to us only, but to the truly penitent in all ages and nations, who will be pardoned at last, though they have not in this life such clear knowledge of it as we enjoy.

Ver. 23. *And come short of the glory of God*] "They have failed of rendering him that glory which was so justly his due; and thereby have not only made themselves unworthy of the participation of glory and happiness with him, but stand exposed to his severe and dreadful displeasure."

Ver. 24. *By his grace*] *Grace* or favour means that compassionate disposition of the divine nature, whereby God freely remits his right of punishment, and receives penitent sinners into favour on terms which he was not bound in justice to do. Concerning the true import of the words *redemption*, *propitiation*, &c. we refer to what has been said in the notes on the Old Testament, at the same time referring the reader to Peter Whitfield's "Christianity of the New Testament," p. 95, &c. where he will find a very learned and copious elucidation of these words.

Ver. 25. *Whom God hath set forth, &c.*] See the note

26 To declare, *I say*, at this time ^a his righteousness: that ^o he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.

27 ^p Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the ^q law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude that ^r a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

29 ^s *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

^a Pf. 11. 7. & 119. 137. 142. or Dan. 9. 24. If. 45. 24. & liii. & 54. 17. & 61. 10. 1 Cor. 1. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Phil. 3. 9. ^o 2 Cor. 5. 19, 21. If. 42. 21. 1 John, 1. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 7. 8. John, 3. 14—17. ^p Ch. 2. 17, 25. & 4. 2. 1 Cor. 1. 29, 31. Eph. 2. 9. Titus, 3. 4. 5. Ezek. 16. 62, 63. & 36. 25—32. ^q If. 2. 2. & 51. 4. Luke, 2. 10, 11. ^r Ver. 15—26. Gal. 2. 16. Phil. 3. 9. Titus, 3. 5. Acts, 13. 38, 39. Ch. 4. 5, 6. & 5. 1. If. 45. 24, 25. & 64. 6. Eph. 2. 4—9. ^s Ch. 1. 16. ver. 22. Gen. 17. 5, 7. & 22. 11. with Gal. 3. 26, 28. Col. 3. 11.

on Exod. xxv. 17. The Alexandrian copy omits the words *διὰ πίστεως* by faith, which seems conformable to the sense of the Apostle here. He says that God hath set forth Christ to be the propitiatory in his blood: the atonement under the law was made by blood, sprinkled on the propitiatory, or mercy-seat; Lev. xvi. 14. "Christ," says St. Paul here, "is now set forth, and shewn by God to be the real propitiatory in his own blood." See Heb. ix. 25, 26. where the sacrifice of himself is opposed to the blood of others. God hath set him forth to be so, to declare his righteousness,—the mercy-seat being the place whereon God spake, and declared his pleasure; Exod. xxv. 22. There God always appeared, Levit. xvi. 2. It was the place of his presence; and therefore he is said to dwell between the cherubim (Psal. lxxx. 1.); for the mercy-seat was between the cherubim: in all which respects our Saviour, who was the antitype, is properly called the propitiatory. If, however, the words *through faith* be retained, they must not be understood as if our faith was the cause of Christ's being appointed to be a mercy-seat. The cause of Christ's being appointed to be a mercy-seat is, the free purpose and grace of God; but it has reference to our use and application of the mercy-seat. See Rev. vii. 14. xii. 11. For the remission of sins that are past, may be read, *In relation to the remission, &c.*; for the original word *διὰ*, with an accusative, frequently signifies, *in respect, or relation to*. See on chap. viii. 10. *The sins that are past*, evidently mean in this place, the sins which both Jews and Gentiles had been guilty of before the Gospel had been promulgated; by which sins both were deserving of destruction, and unworthy the blessings of God's covenant. See 2 Cor. v. 19. Locke and Bos.

Ver. 26. *To declare, I say, &c.*] "He has, I say, proposed his Son for a demonstration of his righteousness. or method of justifying; which now, in this present ever-memorable and signal time, is so wonderfully illustrated in the great transactions of our own age; intended for this purpose, that he might be and appear strictly just, and yet at the same time, without impeaching in any degree the rights of his government, the justifier of him who is of the faith of Jesus; that is, of every one who sincerely believes in him; and acquiesces in that method of salvation, which God has published by him, and established in his perfect obedience and meritorious sufferings." It is no way wonderful that God should be merciful, or faithful to his promises, though the justifier of believing sinners,—as some would have us understand this passage; but that he should be just in such an act, might have seemed incredible, had we not received an account

of the propitiation and atonement, by whom made, and in how awful a manner. Thus the perfections of God, which were dishonoured by our rebellion, are glorified. He appears, by this method of justification, inconceivably rich in shewing mercy; yet steady, inflexibly steady, in executing vengeance. The sceptre of grace and the sword of justice have each their due exercise, each their full scope. The holiness of the divine nature, and the dignity of the divine government, are not only maintained, but most magnificently displayed. Indeed it is the peculiar excellence of this wonderful expedient, that it renders all the divine attributes supremely venerable, and supremely amiable. The words *at this time*, *ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ*, the now time, or the time that now is, meaning the time when the Gospel was promulgated, are emphatical. They distinguish the justification which God at that time exhibited to the world, from the justification which he will manifest to them who do good, that is, produce all the fruits of justifying faith, in the day when he will judge the world by Jesus Christ. See Doddridge and Fletcher.

Ver. 27. *Where is boasting then?*] *Where is glorying then?* See on chap. ii. 17. What is here meant by glorying, may be nearly determined by these two remarks: First, this question must be different from that in ver. 9. *What then? are we better than they?*—Secondly, the glorying here spoken of must be such, as is congruous to works of righteousness which a person performs; but which faith, or a dependence on favour, will not admit: for the Apostle here tells us, that this glorying is not excluded by the law of works, but by the law of faith; and chap. iv. 2. that he who is justified by works, hath glorying; and Ephes. ii. 8, 9. *By GRACE are ye saved through faith;—not of WORKS, ἵνα μὴ τις καυχήσῃται, so that no man can glory.* Were we saved, or taken into God's kingdom or covenant by works, there would be room for glorying; that is, our salvation might be ascribed to human virtue or goodness: but whereas it is the effect of pure free grace, there is no place for glorying.

Ver. 28. *Therefore we conclude*] This inference is drawn from the whole preceding argument. The Greek word ἄνθρωπος, in the singular, without the article, frequently signifies man, mankind, or any man whatsoever. And the Apostle's argument requires it should be taken in this general sense, so as to include all mankind, Jews and Gentiles, or all flesh, in opposition to no flesh, ver. 20. For ver. 28. is the reverse of ver. 20. and this extensive sense of the word man is confirmed by the following verse; for the Apostle divides the whole world in this Epistle only into Jews and Gentiles. It is evident from ver. 30. that the

30 'Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

31 "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

' Ch. 4. 11. Acts, 13. 39. " Ch. 10. 4. & 8. 4. Mat. 5. 17. † John, 4. 9, 10, 19. Gal. 3. 24.

the meaning of the clause, *Man is justified by faith*, is, "Mankind may be justified, or may be interested by faith "in the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom;" for it is said, that *God will justify the circumcision, &c.* that is, either Jew or Gentile, any part of mankind, may be justified by faith. God is ready to justify them whenever they believe.

Ver. 30. *Seeing it is one God, &c.*] So that it is one God, the same eternal and unchangeable Jehovah, who will justify, &c. Mr. Locke would render it, *seeing God is one*; and suppose it an allusion to the prediction, Zech. xiv. 9. that the *Lord shall be One, and his name One*,—fulfilled by the publication of the Gospel: but the allusion appears far-fetched. The Apostle, having asserted that God is the God of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews, goes on to observe that there is but one God, whose *tender mercies are over all his work*; and with whom there is no acceptance of persons. See chap. ii. 11.

Ver. 31. *Yea, we establish the law*] Meaning, through faith. He did not make void law through faith, but, on the contrary, established law through faith. Now this demonstrates that law, in this chapter, is to be understood neither of the ceremonial law, nor of law in the rigorous sense, with the penalty of death annexed for every transgression; for it is certain, the Apostle through faith established law in neither of these senses. Law therefore, in this chapter, must necessarily be understood in that general sense, in which it may be applied both to Jews and Gentiles; or, as it is simply, a rule of obedience, or the law of the Gospel. See on ver. 20. Faith, in the apostolic scheme, is the principle of obedience: Gospel faith works by love, and without works is dead, James, ii. 17. We are God's workmen, created in Christ Jesus unto good works: they that are in God, ought to be careful to maintain good works. The Christian is under the strongest obligations to righteousness and obedience. This the Apostle urges very strongly in chap. vi. where he shews at large how he established law, or obedience through faith. See "Christ the Redeemer," p. 90, &c.

Exposition.—The sad use which those persons have heretofore made of the divine favours, by whose hands they have been conveyed down to us (ver. 1.), ought by no means to lessen our gratitude towards God. If it were in great advantage to the Jews, to have received the oracles of God wrapped up in so many obscure clouds, and as it were sealed up (ver. 2.); how great is the mercy towards Christians, who have received the interpretation, and the effect of the promises contained in them! But at the same time, what awful judgment may not they expect, who fail to make a good use of this extraordinary privilege!—Gratitude and fear ought scarce ever to be separated in reference to this subject; but while we thank-fully own the inestimable goodness of God in having favoured us with his sacred oracles, it behoves us to endeavour to improve in the knowledge of them. And, thus

instructed, let us be careful to form the most honourable notion of God, as the worthy and universal Judge, who will never fail to do right, without respect of persons.

What a striking reflection does the Apostle suggest in ver. 6.!—God himself, were he unjust, could not be the Judge of the world; and yet man, who is comparatively nothing but injustice,—vain, erring man, undertakes boldly to judge of every thing. May these views of God and of ourselves produce in us an abhorrence of every evil thing, of every rash judgment, which must necessarily be displeasing to him: nor let us even allow ourselves to be brought under the influence of those fallacious and pernicious maxims, which would persuade us that, "The goodness of "the intention sanctifies the badness of the action;" (see ver. 8.) or that the pretended benevolence of the end will justify irregularities in the means. God's judgment and decision is final; and the inspired Apostle's authority is an answer to a thousand subtilities, which might attempt to turn us from the strictest rules of that immutable rectitude, on which it always proceeds.

Who can read the melancholy picture of human nature, ver. 10—19. copied by the hand of St. Paul, from the lines first drawn by other inspired writers, without deep humility and lamentation? To such a degree was it sunk, that there was none righteous, no, not one; none disposed to seek after God, or to cultivate his fear:—and from this bitter root, the apostacy of our nature, what detestable fruits may not be expected to proceed!—The throat like an open sepulchre, ready to consume and devour,—the deceitful tongue,—the envenomed lips,—the malicious heart,—the murderous hand! And who can wonder, that such rebels to their heavenly Father should sometimes prove rustians to their brethren!

Let those devoutly bless God, who have been preserved either from falling into such enormities, or from falling by them. It was his grace that restrained us from sinning against him in so aggravated a manner; it is his providence which has guarded us from those, whose feet are swift to shed blood, and whose paths are strewn with destruction and misery.

Above all, we should remember the view in which these instances of corruption were brought; it was to evince this deplorable but undeniable truth, that Jews and Gentiles are all under sin, ver. 19. The purpose, therefore, of divine conviction being hereby answered on our hearts, let us humble ourselves before God, as those who stand guilty in his presence, and obnoxious to his judgment.

How should our whole souls rejoice in that glorious display of divine mercy, tempered and harmonized with divine justice, in our redemption by Christ, to which the Apostle bears so noble a testimony! ver. 20—24. We are all become guilty before God; so that if he should mark iniquity, no flesh living could be justified before him: what so reasonable, what so indispensably necessary, therefore,

CHAP. IV.

Abraham's faith was imputed to him for righteousness before he was circumcised. By faith alone he and his seed received the promise. Abraham is the father of all that believe. Our faith also shall be imputed to us for righteousness.

[Anno Domini 58.]

WHAT^a shall we say then that Abraham, ^bour father as pertaining to the

^a Ch. 6. 1. & 7. 7. & 9. 14. ^b If. 51. 2. Mat. 3. 9. John, 8. 39. Phil. 3. 4, 5. ^c 1 Cor. 4. 7. Eph. 2. 8. Isa. 64. 6. Tit. 3. 5. Isa. 45. 24, 25. Phil. 3. 9. ^d Gen. 15. 6. & 12. 3. Gal. 3. 3. James, 2. 23. with ch. 3. 24, 25, 28. ^e Mat. 20. 7, 14. Ch. 11. 6. with 33.

fore, as with all reverence to esteem, and with all joy to embrace the *righteousness of God*, as now attested by the law and the prophets, by Christ and his apostles; and which we have the divine word to assure us, shall be upon all believers, without any difference,—humbling ourselves in the presence of God, as those who have *sinned, and come short of the glory of God*; and seeking to be *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus!*

To this mighty Deliverer let us continually look, as the great propitiation of lost man; exercising faith in his Blood, and rejoicing that those, which seemed to our feeble apprehensions the most jarring attributes of the Deity, are now reconciled and glorified;—that *mercy and truth have met together, that righteousness and peace have kissed each other*. And while we readily acknowledge that all *boasting is excluded*, let us, in the grateful overflowings of our souls, fall down before that throne whence pardon is dispensed; confessing that this act of grace is our only plea, and abasing ourselves before God for ever, in a sense of the demerit of our sins, and of the abundance of his mercy, ver. 25—27. It should at all times be noted that the more faith there is in a soul, the less pride is there. *Where is boasting then?*—It is *excluded*.—By what law?—the *law of faith*. Faith humbles man by making him sensible that without Christ he is nothing but falsehood, sin, and unworthiness; and that it is through the merits and grace of his Saviour, that he begins, continues, or completes any thing which is really good.

Jews and Gentiles are bound to unite in thanksgivings to God, and in love to each other, as having been all involved in the same condemnation,—all partakers of the same compassion. But *Christians* are especially called upon to remember, that by this rich display of grace, the Almighty intended not to *superse*de, but to *establi*sh the law. See ver. 29—31. May we, therefore, make it our serious concern, that not only the actions of our lives, but the sentiments of our hearts, be directed and determined by *that law*; which is now peculiarly enforced by more powerful motives, than when it appeared from Sinai in all its unallayed terrors: let it be seen at all times, and in all our conduct, that the *love of Christ effectually constrains us* to glorify his name, and exalt the honours of our incarnate God,—that *God*, who never shews himself more plainly to be *our God*, than when he produces sincere love through faith in our hearts.

flesh, hath found?

2 For^c if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God.

3 For what faith the scripture? ^d Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

4 Now^e to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Apostle proceeds to answer the objections raised against the doctrine that he had advanced, and to confirm the truth which he had asserted.

1. He answers the objections raised against his positions.

[1.] If the Jews are thus in the same condemnation as the Gentiles, what advantage have they, notwithstanding the peculiar favours shewn them of God, and the divinely instituted rites, particularly circumcision, which he appointed them? The Apostle answers, *Much every way: chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God*. In the law and the prophets they had the most blessed means vouchsafed them to come to the knowledge of the truth, and especially of that Messiah who was the sum and substance of the oracles of God: and it was also their honour to be intrusted with the keeping of these sacred records. Their advantages therefore above the Gentiles were very great and singular. *Note*; Among our most invaluable blessings we should always reckon our Bibles; for in them we have eternal life revealed to us.

[2.] If it be objected to this, that, though the Jews had the oracles of God, *some did not believe*; admit it. But what then? *shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?* Shall the promise-keeping God, because of the infidelity of some, fail of fulfilling his promises to Abraham and his faithful spiritual seed, who perseveringly trust upon him according to his word? *God forbid!* His word must be accomplished, and his promises are sure to every faithful soul. *Yea, let God be true*, let it be for ever acknowledged that he is so; but let *every man*, who dares dispute his veracity and truth, know that he must be found a *liar*. Men are inconstant, deceitful, and vain; no confidence, comparatively speaking, is to be placed in them; but God never can nor will deceive us: *as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged*; as David acknowledged, Ps. li. 4. for, notwithstanding his soul falls and great unfaithfulness, God would not alter the word which was gone out of his mouth concerning that Messiah who should spring from his loins. And he will for ever stand clear of all imputations which foolish men may cast upon him, and be found faithful and true, though we presumptuously dare arraign his righteousness, or censure his conduct.

[3.] But some perverse Jew may say, whose character I will personate, speaking *as such a man*, *If our righteousness commend the righteousness of God*, and he gain glory by our wickedness and unbelief, both glorifying his justice in our punishment,

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

¹ Gal. 2. 16. Phil. 3. 9. Acts, 13. 39. & 15. 11. Ch. 5. 1, 11. ver. 3. ² Joh. 24. 2. Ch. 5. 6, 8. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15. Ch. 5. 10. ³ Ch. 10. 4, 10. & 5. 11. or Gal. 3. 23, 25. with 1 Tim. 1. 1. Col. 1. 27. ⁴ If. 45. 24, 25. & 54. 17. & 61. 10. Jer. 23. 6. & 33. 16. Dan. 9. 24. Ch. 1. 17. & 3. 21-23. & 5. 15-21. & 8. 1-4, 32, 33. 1 Cor. 1. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 21. Phil. 3. 9. 1 John, 2. 2. & 4. 10. Rev. 1. 5. & 5. 9. & 9. 1.

punishment, and his grace in calling the Gentile sinners in our stead, and justifying them through the obedience of his Son unto death, *what shall we say? Is not God unrighteous, (ὁ Θεός, ὁ Θεός,) who taketh vengeance for that unbelief and unrighteousness, which serves as a foil more eminently to display the lustre of his divine perfections, his truth, holiness, and grace? With abhorrence the Apostle rejects the insinuation. God forbid! for then how shall God judge the world? If he were not infinitely righteous in his nature, he would be unfit for this high office: and if he, by his overruling providence, brings good out of evil, and magnifies his grace more eminently where sin has most abounded, sin has not therefore the less evil or malignity, nor has the sinner ought to plead, since he designs nothing less than the divine glory.*

[4.] But the same carnal Jew, whom I have personated before, may farther urge, *If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; and my unbelief which gives the lie to his promises, and my wickedness which gives the lie to my profession, serve to magnify his veracity, why yet am I also judged as a sinner? and punished for transgressions which serve rather to magnify God than to dishonour him? and may we not rather abandon ourselves to evil, in order that good may come, and God's grace and truth receive greater glory in justifying those who believe on his Son? And such malicious and blasphemous reports are spread by our Jewish enemies, who confidently affirm that this is the doctrine which we as apostles preach, and as Christians believe. But we abhor the suggestion, and declare to such slanderers of us and the truth, and to all who dare thus abuse the holy doctrines of grace, that their damnation is just, and inevitable. Note; (1.) The best of ministers and of men have had the foulest aspersions cast on them, and been charged with holding the most horrid blasphemies. (2.) The injured characters of his ambassadors God will avenge. (3.) They who abuse the doctrines of grace, as arguments for licentiousness, will perish with most aggravated guilt.*

2. The Apostle returns, after confuting the Jewish objections, to the main question in debate, Whether Jews, as well as Gentiles, were not all under sin? *Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved at large in the two former chapters, that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin, condemned by the guilt, enslaved by the power, and liable to the eternal wrath which is the wages of sin. And to enforce this truth, the Apostle quotes the Scriptures, which the Jews admitted, as containing the fullest proof of his assertion. God declares, Ps. xiv. 1-3. That there is none righteous, according to the perfect demands of his holy law, no not one: so corrupted is our nature, that there is none that understandeth; the human mind by nature is darkened, and cannot discover or*

receive the things which be of the Spirit of God; *there is none that seeketh after God, no one good disposition remaining in the natural heart, nor desire after communion with God; but evil, and only evil, and that continually. Hence the Psalmist asserts of all mankind, that they are all gone out of the way, following the bent of their native corruption; they are altogether become unprofitable, bringing forth no fruit to God's glory in that state of nature; there is none that doeth good, no not one. And the foul streams which flow from this polluted fountain are described in other places of the Scripture: their throat is an open sepulchre, voracious and insatiable in the pursuits of their lusts and covetousness; with their tongues they have used deceit, flattering, false, faithless; the poison of asps is under their lips, secretly, artfully, does their tongue drop the malignant venom, to blast the fame or destroy the life of their neighbour; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, blaspheming God himself, and shooting out their bitter words of rancour and reviling against the people and the good ways of the Lord; their feet are swift to shed blood, every member of their body is a ready instrument of iniquity; destruction and misery are in their ways, and wherever they go they mark their path with mischief, spreading their wickedness as a plague, pestilential to others, and at last bringing perdition on themselves; and the way of peace have they not known, strangers to whatever would conduce to their own peace and happiness both here and hereafter; disturbing, as far they can, by their malignity and perverseness, the peace of mankind: there is no fear of God before their eyes; destitute of every gracious principle: and as this is the root of all their wickedness, so it is the summit of all their ungodliness,—they leave God far above out of their sight. And such being the spirit of God's description of every man by nature, declared by him who searcheth the heart, and knoweth what is in man, the universal guilt and desperate wickedness of the whole human race, both Jews and Gentiles, cannot but be most evident. While we read the dreadful charge, may we be led to a humbling acknowledgment of the truth, and from the deepest heartfelt conviction be laid in the dust, submitting wholly to the righteousness of God by faith!*

2dly, The Apostle proceeds to apply the truths which he had advanced and proved.

1. *All the world is become guilty before God, and no flesh can be justified in God's sight by the deeds of the law, because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, have come short of righteousness, and therefore of heaven. According to the several dispensations under which they have lived, the law speaketh both to Jews and Gentiles, and condemns them as transgressors. The Gentiles have offended against those precepts of the moral law, which God, though more obscurely, has shewed them; and*

7 *Saying, * Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.*

8 *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*

* Pf. 32. 1. & 85. 2. & 103. 3. & 130. 4. & 51. 9. If. 1. 18. & 40. 1, 2. & 43. 25. & 38. 17. & 44. 22. Jer. 33. 8. & 50. 20. Mic. 7. 18, 19. Acts, 13. 38, 39. Ch. 3. 1, 33, 34. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 21.

and the Jews, against the clearer revelation, which in the Scriptures they have enjoyed; so that *every mouth must be stopped*, and guilt evident and confessed appear upon every living soul. *For by the law is the knowledge of sin*; so far from being able to justify any man, it is a glass which can of itself only shew him his deformity, the straight rule to mark his sad deviations from it. *Note*; (1.) Man in his fallen nature is become *flesh*, fallen and corrupted; and therefore it is impossible that, in his present ruined state, he should of himself be just before God. (2.) All flesh must stand guilty at God's bar, and no man can possibly be saved, till he has seen, felt, and owned that he has deserved most justly to be damned.

2. To those who, from the conviction which the law brings to their consciences, are driven to despair of acceptance with God on account of any doings and duties of their own, the Gospel reveals the method of divine grace, appointed and provided for the sinner's justification before God. *But now*, since all hope is fled of obtaining favour with God on the footing of our own obedience, *the righteousness of God without the law*, which the moral law never discovered, *is manifested* by Jesus Christ, and by the preaching of the Gospel, *being witnessed* by all the types and figures of the ceremonial law, *and by the prophets*, *Isai. xlv. 24* 25. *Jer. xxiii. 6*. *Dan. ix. 24*. So that even during the time that the Mosaical dispensation lasted, the Jews were taught to look for a better righteousness than that which they could obtain by the deeds of the law; *even the righteousness of God which is now received by faith in our adored Redeemer Jesus Christ*, and judiciously made over, and reckoned to the account of every soul which, renouncing every other hope, lays hold on this set before him; and it is *unto all and upon all them that believe*, whether Jew or Gentile, *for there is no difference*; they alike need it, as having all sinned and come short of God's glory, and he freely bestows it on them without any regard to the degrees of their guilt. Nor is there the least first-moving cause in any of us to engage God to have respect to us. We lie in one promiscuous mass of corruption, till through grace we repent, and are *justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ*, who by his obedience unto death paid down the invaluable price of our redemption, which does not at all affect the riches of the grace respecting us, but rather infinitely enhances it: we owe it to God's boundless mercy, that he provided, qualified, and accepted our glorious Surety, and freely gave him up for us all.—*Whom God hath set forth*, in the fulness of time sending him in the human nature, *to be a propitiation*, to be the one great propitiatory sacrifice, that, *through faith in his blood*, the chief of sinners might boldly approach a throne of grace. And hereby, (1.) The best of blessings is secured to us, *even the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God*. The sacrifices under the law were insufficient to take away sin; the faithful therefore under the Old Testament had recourse

to this atoning Blood which in the fulness of time should be shed, and in the view thereof God bore with them, pardoned and accepted them. And we are infinitely indebted to this Blood which speaks before the throne, and to the forbearance of God with us in consequence thereof, that we have not through our repeated provocations been cut off long since, as we have deserved, and been cast into hell for our sins. (2.) Hereby the greatest honour redounds to God; for in this his method of dealing with sinners, he shews and demonstrates *his own righteousness*, both the glory of his justice in the punishment of sin, and the transcendent excellence and perfection of the Redeemer's infinite merit, by means of which, consistent with the divine glory, an honourable provision was made for the pardon of sin, and neither God's truth, justice, nor holiness impeached by the grace extended to the sinner: so that *at this time*, under the Gospel dispensation, he *declares his righteousness, that he may be just, and withhold the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*. Never was God's displeasure against sin more awefully displayed than when he laid upon his Son the iniquities of us all. (3.) Hereby all boasting is excluded from the sons of men; none can say he is accepted before God on account of any works of righteousness done by him, or foreseen in him; all are excluded. *By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith*; by that gracious evangelical dispensation, wherein the blood of God our Redeemer is proposed as the only meritorious cause of the sinner's acceptance. The conclusion then from the above premises is evident, that a man is and can be justified before God in no other way than *by faith only, without the deeds of the law*.

3. This privilege of free justification, through a Redeemer's blood, is common to the Gentile as well as the Jew. Is God then, in this new dispensation of his grace in the Gospel of his dear Son, *the God of the Jews only?* or peculiarly? *Is he not of the Gentiles also? Yes, of the Gentiles also*. It is a common salvation, and both are alike freely invited to partake of it;—*Seeing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith*, both Jews and Gentiles standing exactly on the same footing, without respect of persons, or any difference in the way of their acceptance.

4. He concludes with obviating an objection which some might raise, as if he hereby *made void the moral law*, the eternal rule of righteousness, as useless and insignificant; but he rejects with detestation the suggestion;—*God forbid! Yea, so far from making it void, we establish the law*. Its true use remains the same as ever, to convince of sin, and to be, not a covenant of life, but a law of obedience; and that faith which shews it manifested in the highest by the perfect obedience of Christ to the death of the cross, as it works by love, is the most powerful principle to engage our hearts to delight in the law of God after the inner man, and to run the way of his commandments, walking in

9 *Cometh* this blessedness then upon the *circumcision only*, or upon the *uncircumcision* also? for we say that *faith* was reckoned to *Abraham* for *righteousness*.

Ch. 3. 22, 29, 30. & 1. 16. & 9. 24, 30. & 10. 12, 13, 18. & 11. 11. & 15. 8—19. Gal. 3. 26—28. Col. 3. 11.

in the glorious liberty of the children of God, a liberty not to transgress, but to obey.

CHAP. IV.

THE Apostle having, in the preceding chapter, shewn the impossibility of man's being justified meritoriously by obedience to any law, moral or ceremonial, judged it necessary, for the sake of the Jews, to consider more particularly the merit and efficacy of ceremonial performances. For their having no foundation in the nature of things, the only motive from which they can be performed, must be a regard to the divine command. Hence they have always been considered as acts of piety highly pleasing in the sight of God. This was the case more especially with the Jews, who, because the rites of Moses were of divine appointment, thought the observance of them so meritorious, that they had not the least doubt of obtaining justification and salvation by them: and therefore they were at all times more careful in observing the rites of the law, than in performing the moral righteousness which it enjoined.

To correct this, which is the error of the superstitious in all religions, the Apostle examined the justification of Abraham, the father of believers; and shewed from Moses's account, that his circumcision, though performed when he was ninety-nine years old, had not the least influence in his justification; he having obtained the promise of justification by means of his faith, long before he was circumcised. To this example, the Apostle appealed with great propriety, both because circumcision was the most difficult of all the rites enjoined in the law, and because, Abraham being the father of believers, his justification is the pattern of theirs. Wherefore, if circumcision contributed nothing towards Abraham's justification, the Jews could not hope to be justified thereby, nor by the other rites of the law; and were much to blame in pressing these rites on the Gentiles, as necessary to their salvation, and in consigning all to damnation who were out of the pale of the Jewish church.

The Apostle begins his reasonings on this subject, with asking the Jews what it was that Abraham, the father of believers, obtained by those services pertaining to the flesh, which they so highly valued, ver. 1.—He did not obtain justification: for if Abraham were justified by the merit of any moral or ceremonial work, he might have boasted that his justification was no favour, but a debt due for what he had performed. Yet in this transaction with God, he had no such ground of boasting, ver. 2.—As is plain from God's counting his faith to him for righteousness; which implies, that in rewarding him as a righteous person, God did not discharge a debt, but bestow a favour, ver. 3.—For the person who works receives the reward, not as a favour, but as a debt, ver. 4.—But to one who is not said to have wrought, but to have believed what was promised by God, whose prerogative it is to justify sinners, his faith is counted for righteousness, by mere favour, ver. 5.—Wherefore, from Moses's account of the justifi-

cation of Abraham, it appears that he was justified freely, without meriting it by any kind of work whatever; consequently that the Gospel method of justification is testified by the law itself, as the Apostle affirmed, chap. iii. 21.

The same thing is testified by the prophets. For David nowhere represents men as justified before God, either by obeying the precepts of God's law perfectly, or by performing circumcision, or by offering sacrifice, or by doing any of those rites which purify the flesh; but he describes the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord counteth righteousness without such works; saying, (Psal. xxxii. 1, 2.) *Blessed, like Abraham, are they whose iniquities are forgiven, ver. 7.—And to whom the Lord will not count sin, ver. 8.—*From this it appears, that the not counting of sin is the same with the counting of righteousness, as it obtains pardon for the sinner for all his transgressions.

In chap. ii. the Apostle, by arguments taken from the character and perfections of God, had proved that the heathens may be saved, though they never have enjoyed any external revelation, nor were members of God's visible church. But this doctrine, it seems, the Jews rejected, on pretence that it was contrary to their scriptures. Wherefore, to shew the falsehood of that pretence, the Apostle, after describing the justification of Abraham, introduced the subject of the salvation of heathens anew, by asking, *Cometh this blessedness* of justification *on the circumcision only, or on the uncircumcision also?* and demonstrated the possibility of the salvation of the heathen, though no members of God's visible church, by observing that Abraham had his faith counted to him for righteousness, and received the promise of the inheritance in uncircumcision; that is, while he was no member of any visible church, neither performed any ritual service whatever, ver. 10.—For it happened full thirteen years before he and his family were made the visible church of God by circumcision.

But because the Jews might ask, if Abraham obtained the promise of justification before he was circumcised, why was that rite enjoined to him? The Apostle told them, it was enjoined merely as a seal, or confirmation on God's part, of his counting to him for righteousness that faith which Abraham had exercised in uncircumcision, and of his having made him the father or federal head of all the faithful who are out of God's visible church, to assure us, that their faith, like his, shall be counted to them for righteousness, and rewarded with the inheritance of the heavenly country, of which Canaan was the type, though they be no members of any visible church of God, ver. 11.—a seal also or proof of his being the father of all who believe in the visible church, to give them the same assurance concerning their faith, provided that, to their outward profession of faith, they join such an obedience to God, as Abraham exercised while he was out of the visible church, ver. 12. Thus, as in the second chapter the Apostle had established the doctrine of the *salvation of the heathens by faith*, without arguments drawn from revelation, so in this chapter he establishes the same doctrine by arguments taken from

10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? ^m Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that

^m Gen. 12. 3. & 15. 6. with 17. 11.

from revelation. And by both he has expressly condemned the bigotry of all, who, like the Jews, confine salvation to their own church, or mode of faith; and has beautifully illustrated the righteousness and impartiality of God's moral government of the world.

Farther, To shew that the whole body of the ritual services enjoined by Moses, taken together, had no influence to procure salvation for the Jews, the Apostle told them, *that the promise to Abraham and to his seed, that they should be heirs of Canaan, and of the heavenly country typified by Canaan, was not given them by a righteousness of law; that is, by an immaculate obedience to any law, whether moral or ceremonial, but by a righteousness of faith, ver. 13.*—For if they who are righteous by an immaculate obedience to law, are heirs either of the earthly or of the heavenly country, their faith is of no use in obtaining it; and the promise by which the inheritance is bestowed on them as a free gift, has no influence at all in the matter, contrary to the express declaration of Scripture, ver. 14.—Besides, in the nature of the thing, no one who has ever transgressed law, can obtain the inheritance through law. For law, instead of rewarding, worketh wrath to every transgressor, and among the rest to the heirs, not excepting Abraham himself, who by receiving the inheritance as a free gift, was shewn to be, not an innocent person, but a transgressor of some law or other, namely, of the law written on his heart. For where no law is, there is no transgression, nor treatment of persons as transgressors, ver. 15. To these things add, that the promise was bestowed on Abraham and his seed, not by an immaculate obedience to any law, either natural or revealed, but *by faith*, that the inheritance promised might be a free gift, and be made sure to all persevering believers: not to those only, who enjoy an external revelation, but to those also who, like Abraham, believe out of God's visible church: for the inheritance was promised to them in the person of Abraham, who in uncircumcision was made *the father* or federal head of such believers, for the purpose of receiving that promise on their behalf, ver. 16.—according to what God said to him, *A father of many nations I have constituted thee*, ver. 17.—This great honour was done to Abraham on account of the excellency of his faith; ver. 18—21.—For which reason it was counted to him for righteousness, and he received the promise of the inheritance, ver. 22.—Now God directed Moses to record this, not for Abraham's sake alone, but for ours also, if we believe in Him who raised Jesus from the dead, ver. 23, 24.—who was delivered to death to make atonement for our offences, and was raised again for our justification, ver. 25.

Thus it appears that the method of justifying sinners, by accepting their faith in place of immaculate obedience which law requires, and by rewarding it as if it were a perfect righteousness flowing from perfect innocence, is no new way of salvation. It was appointed at the fall for Adam and all his posterity, and was then obscurely revealed

in the promise that the Seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent: afterwards it was more explicitly declared in the covenant with Abraham, wherein God promised to give to him and to his seed by faith, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, the land of Canaan for an everlasting inheritance, as the reward of their faith. Wherefore, when the Jews in general denied salvation to the believing Gentiles, unless they entered into their church by receiving circumcision, they shewed great ignorance of the method of salvation which was established at the fall, and which was made known to themselves in the covenant with Abraham. And when they refused to be united with the believing Gentiles, into one *body*, or *church*, they rebelled against God, and for their disobedience were justly cast off: while a few of their brethren, more obedient to God, continued his people; and the Gentiles, who believed the Gospel, were incorporated with them, as joint members of the covenant with Abraham; and both together formed that great community called *the Israel of God*, and the *church of the first-born*. Wherefore, in the article of man's justification, the Mosaic and Christian revelations perfectly agree.

Ver. 1. What shall we then say? In the foregoing chapter the Apostle has proved, that neither Jews nor Gentiles have a right to the blessings of God's peculiar kingdom, otherwise than by grace, which is free to the one, as well as the other. In this chapter he advances to a new argument, admirably adapted to convince the Jew; to shew the believing Gentile in a clear light the high value of the mercies freely bestowed upon him in the Gospel, and at the same time to display the wondrous plans of the providence and grace of God. His argument is taken from Abraham's case. Abraham was the father and head of the Jewish nation. God pardoned him through faith, and took him and his seed into his especial covenant, and bestowed upon them many extraordinary blessings above the rest of the world. Thus he was *justified* through faith; and it is evident he was justified not upon the footing of obedience to law, or the rule of right action, but in the only way a sinner can be justified,—by the favour of the Law-giver. Now this is the very same way in which the Gospel saves the believing Gentiles, and gives them a part in the blessings of God's covenant. Why then should the Jews so violently oppose the Gentiles being interested in those blessings?—Especially if it be farther observed, that the believing Gentiles are actually included in the promise made to Abraham, and the covenant established with him; for at the time God entered into covenant with Abraham, he considered him as the head, not of one nation only, but of many nations (Gen. xvii. 4.). *As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be, with regard to this my covenant, the father of many, or a multitude of nations; consequently, the covenant being made with Abraham, as the head or father of many nations, all in any nation, who should stand upon the same religious principle*

he might be ° the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised ; ° that righteousness might be imputed unto them also :

° Luke, 19. 6. Gal. 3. 7, 29. John, 8. 39. Ch. 6. 9. Gal. 6. 16. ° Ch. 3. 22, 24, 30. & 9. 24, 30. & 5. 19. 1 Cor. 6. 14. If. 45. 22, 24, 25.

principle with him, were his seed, and with him interested in the covenant that God made with him : but he stood only upon the footing of *faith* in the mercy of God through the seed of the woman, pardoning his sins and graciously bestowing extraordinary blessings ; and upon this footing also the believing Gentiles stand in the Gospel ; therefore they are the seed of Abraham, and included in the covenant of promise made to him. Now to all this the Apostle knew very well it would be objected, that it was not *faith alone* which gave Abraham a right to the blessings of the covenant ; but his *obedience* to the law of circumcision ; which, being peculiar to the Jewish nation, gave them also, and them alone, an interest in the Abrahamic covenant : consequently, whoever among the Gentiles would be interested in that covenant, ought to embrace Judaism, and, as the only ground of their right, perform obedience to the law of circumcision, and so come under the obligations to the whole law. With this objection the Apostle introduces his argument, ver. 1, 2 ; shews that, according to the Scripture account, Abraham was justified by faith, ver. 3—5 ; explains the nature of that justification by a quotation out of the Psalms, ver. 6—9 ; proves that Abraham was justified long before he was circumcised, ver. 9—11 ; that the believing Gentiles are his seed, to whom the promise belongs, as well as to the believing Jews, ver. 12—17 ; and describes Abraham's faith, in order to explain the faith of the Gospel ; ver. 17. to the end. See Locke.

Abraham our father] *Father* is of an extensive and emphatical signification in the Hebrew : amongst other things, it signifies a person who is first in the invention, use, or enjoyment of any thing, with regard to those who imitate him, or derive from him any particular custom or advantage. Gen. iv. 20, 21. *Jabal* was the father of shepherds ; *Jubal* was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. *Abraham* is the father of all them that believe, ver. 11. and the father of us all, ver. 16. : namely, as he was the first to whom the grant or promise of extraordinary blessings was made upon his faith, and as all that believe are included in that promise, and are justified in the same way that he was. In this sense the Jew here calls Abraham *our father*; meaning, not only as the Jews were naturally descended, but as they held all their privileges from him, were included in the promises made to him, and must be justified as he was. Thus we must understand *our father*, to give the Jew's argument its proper sense and force ; and thus he meant according to his own narrow notion, as if Abraham, in this respect, was father to the Jews only, and to no other people. But the Apostle proves that he was, in this respect,—namely as the head and pattern of justification,—the father of all them that believe, whether Heathens or Jews. The expression, *as pertaining to the flesh, or with respect to the flesh*, evidently relates to circumcision, and the obligation it laid upon the Jews : for *in the flesh,—after the flesh,—or appertaining to the flesh*, are thus

frequently used ;—Gal. vi. 12. 1 Cor. x. 18. 2 Cor. v. 16. xi. 18. Philip. iii. 3. This was the Jew's *glorying in the flesh*, and is sufficient to point out the sense of Abraham's *finding* or obtaining, as appertaining to or after the flesh, that whereof he had *καυχύμα*, *to glory*. See chap. iii. 27. and on ii. 17. It is what the Jews suppose he procured from God, for his obedience to the law of circumcision, and for answering the peculiar obligations he was thereby brought under ; as farther appears from ver. 9—12. where, arguing against the Jew's objection started here in the first and second verses, he asks, *How was faith reckoned to Abraham ?—when he was in circumcision or uncircumcision ?—Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision, &c.* Now as this reason is undoubtedly full to the purpose of the Jew's objection, it confirms, or rather makes necessary, the sense we have given of the phrase before us.

Ver. 2. But not before God] This appears to be the Apostle's answer to the Jew's objection (ver. 1, 2.), and it implies that Abraham might have some sort of *glorying*, possibly such as the Apostle himself had, 1 Cor. ix. 15. 2 Cor. i. 12. x. 13, &c. xi. 16—30. The Apostle had *glorying* in his superior vouchsafements and labour, but only *before men*, and with respect to them ; not before God, in regard to whom his language was, *Not I*, but the *grace of God*. Note farther, that *before God* hints, that the Apostle considers Abraham as standing in the court before God's tribunal, when the promise was given him. It perhaps would make this passage clearer, if the present verse ended with the word *glory*, and the third began with the clause before us. See Raphelius.

Ver. 3. It was counted] The original word ἔλογίσθη, in our translation, is rendered *counted*, *reckoned*, ver. 4, &c. and *imputed*, ver. 6, &c. : but as the word and the sense are constantly the same, it would certainly have been better to have rendered it constantly by one word ; and *reckoned* seems as proper as any other. Indeed this is a remark which may be extended to many other words ; as it would certainly help the English reader to find out and pursue the sense of Scripture, if the same original word were every where rendered by the same English word.

Ver. 4. Of grace] *Of favour*. Raphelius has shewn that the Greek word *μισθός* does not only mean a *reward of debt*, but also a *gift of favour* ; and that the phrase *μισθὸν δωρενῆς*, occurs in Herodotus : so that a *reward of grace or favour* is a classical as well as theological expression.

Ver. 5. The ungodly] Abraham is the subject of the Apostle's discourse ; and he plainly hints, though he did not choose to speak out, that even Abraham before his conversion was chargeable with not paying due reverence and worship to God, as the word ἄσεβος, which we render *ungodly*, properly imports. See on chap. i. 18.

Ver. 8. Blessed is the man, &c.] See on Psal. xxxii. 1, 2. and the *Inferences*.

Will not impute sin] What the *imputing* or *reckoning of righteousness* is, ver. 6. may be seen in this verse, namely,

12 And the father of circumcision to them ^p who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* being yet uncircumcised.

13 ^q For the promise, that he should be the

^p 2 Pet. i. 1. Gal. 3. 7, 26—29. John, 9. 39. ^q Gen. 12. 3. & 13. 15, 17. & 15. 6, 7, 18—21. & 22. 17, 18. & 17. 8, 4. Gal. 3. 18. Heb. 11. 17.

namely, “the not reckoning of sin to any one;”—“the not putting sin to his account;” the Apostle, in these verses, using the expressions as equivalent. Hence the expression of *blotting out iniquity*, so frequently used in sacred Scripture, may be understood; that is, the striking it out of the account. The Greek word λογισθηαι, signifies to reckon or account; and, with a dative case, to put to any one’s account. See Locke on ver. 3. and the note on ver. 22.

Ver. 10. *Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision*] Faith was reckoned to Abraham for justification, Gen. xv. 6. but circumcision was not instituted till about fourteen or fifteen years after that, Gen. xvii. 1, 2, &c. for *faith was reckoned to Abraham* for justification before Ishmael was born, at least one year. Compare Gen. xv. and xvi. At Ishmael’s birth, he was eighty-six years of age (Gen. xvi. 16.); and at the institution of circumcision, Ishmael was thirteen, and Abraham ninety-nine years old. See Gen. xvii. 24, 25.

Ver. 11. *And he received the sign of circumcision*] Hence it appears, that the covenant established with Abraham, Gen. xvii. 2—14. is the same with that, Gen. xii. 2, 3. and Gen. xv. 5, &c. For circumcision was not a seal of any new grant, but of the justification which Abraham had received before he was circumcised; and that justification included the Gospel covenant, in which we are now interested: for *the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify us heathens through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed*, Gal. iii. 8. Gen. xii. 3. The whole of the Apostle’s argument in this chapter proves, that we believing Gentiles are the seed of Abraham, to whom, as well as to himself, the promise was made; consequently it is the Abrahamic covenant in which we now stand; and any argument taken from the nature of that covenant, and applied to ourselves, must be good and valid. It is also undeniably evident from this verse, as well as from Gen. xvii. 1—11. that circumcision was a seal or sign of the covenant of grace, and not merely of temporal promises; which consequently obviates the most considerable objection that has ever been urged against Infant Baptism. Mr. Locke observes, that the Apostle’s sense, at the close of this verse, properly runs thus: “That he might be the father of the Gentiles who believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also.” Ver. 12. “And the father of the Jews, that righteousness might be imputed, not to them who have circumcision only, but to them who also walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, which he had being uncircumcised.”

Ver. 13. *The heir of the world*] Abraham and his seed together are the *heir of the world*; for the promise is made to both; and the original word ἀντὶς includes both: and *his seed*, in the next verse, are called *heirs* as well as he;

that is to say, *heirs* of the world, not *lords* and *possessors* of it, as some suppose. The *world*, we conceive, must here be considered as a great family, and Abraham and his seed as the heir or heirs, to whom, by the free donation of God, belonged the birth-right, the double portion of the father’s goods, *the excellency of dignity*, and *the excellency of power*, Gen. xliii. 33. xlix. 3. Deut. xxi. 15—17. Agreeably to this sentiment, the Lord styles the whole body of the Israelites his *son*, his *first-born*, or *heir*; Exod. iv. 22. Jer. xxxi. 9. Hence the Christian church or congregation is called *the church of the first-born*, Heb. xii. 23. which is the thing the Apostle demonstrates in this chapter; namely, that we are *heirs*, or the *first-born of the world*, as we are by faith the seed of Abraham, to whom the promise was made, at the same time that it was made to him. *And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise*; Gal. iii. 29. This is a very just as well as a very beautiful way of representing the extraordinary privileges and blessings vouchsafed to the peculiar congregation and people of God: for, *first*, this gives us a clear idea in what sense the Apostle is here speaking of the justification both of Abraham and his seed; for the promise to Abraham and his seed, that he should be the heir of the world, is manifestly that justification, about which the Apostle is arguing from the beginning of the chapter. This, *secondly*, shews in what light we are to view the Gentiles, or those parts of the world who are not taken into the congregation of God; namely, not as wholly excluded from his favour and blessing, but as enjoying a less degree of advantage. The *heir* in the family possessed a double portion of the father’s goods, but the rest of the children had some share of the substance: so it is with the heathen; they have their part of God’s blessing, though we, as the first-born, enjoy the double portion. This also, *thirdly*, shews with how much propriety the Apostle uses the instance of Esau, Heb. xii. 16, 17. to caution Christians against the contempt and abuse of their present privileges. Esau, as Jacob’s *heir* or *first-born*, had a birth-right, an invaluable blessing, which for one morsel of meat he sold, and lost for ever; and we also, as the first-born, or heirs of our heavenly Father, have a birth-right, even the revelation and promises of all the blessings of the Gospel-covenant. This is our great happiness above the heathen, who have not the promises and grace of this covenant revealed to them: but we may forfeit this birth-right, and shall certainly lose it for ever, if we prefer the pleasures of sin before the favour of God, and that eternal life which he has given us in Jesus Christ our Lord; and then the virtuous *heathen*, who, through the secret influences of the Spirit of God, sincerely improves his lesser share of the divine goodness, shall, in the life to come, be received into the kingdom of God, through the alone merits of the Saviour of the world, while the profane and wicked *Christian*, who receives

heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect :

15 Because the law worketh wrath : where no law is, *there is* no transgression.

16 Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace ; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed ; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham ; who is the father of us all,

17 (As it is written, ^a I have made thee a father of many nations,) ^v before him whom he believed, *even* God, who ^z quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

18 ^a Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become ^b the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

19 And, being not ^c weak in faith, ^d he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb :

¹ Ver. 4. Ch. 11. 6. Gal. 3. 10, 18. & 2. 21. & 7. 4. ² Ch. 5. 20. & 7. 8, 10. & 3. 19, 20. John, 15. 22. 1 Cor. 15. 56. 2 Cor. 3. 7, 9. Gal. 3. 12. ³ Ch. 5. 13. 1 Cor. 15. 56. ⁴ Ch. 9. 11. & 11. 29. Gal. 3. 9, 16—18, 23, 29. & 4. 28. & 3. 9, 14. Col. 3. 11. Mat. 3. 11. ⁵ Gen. 17. 5. Heb. 11. 12. ⁶ Or like unto him. Ch. 3. 29. ⁷ Ch. 8. 11. John, 5. 25. 2 Cor. 4. 6. Eph. 2. 1, 5. 1 Cor. 1. 28. Mat. 3. 9 & 5. 11. 16. 43. 6. & 49. 12. & 55. 5. ⁸ 2 Chr. 20. 20. 16. 7. 9. Mark. 5. 35, 36. Acts, 27. 25. Job, 10. 15. ⁹ Gen. 12. 2. & 13. 16. & 15. 5, 6. & 17. 5, 6. & 22. 17, 18. & xxv. ¹⁰ Ch. 14. 1, 21. 1 Cor. 8. 7—12. ¹¹ Gen. 17. 17. & 18. 11. Heb. 11. 11, 12.

receives the grace of God in vain, shall be cast into outer darkness.

Ver. 14. For if they which are of the law be heirs] The Apostle here speaks of the performance of the law, with reference to a moral impossibility: for it seems evident from what follows, that the law is to be considered as insisting on an obedience absolutely perfect: so that those good men who were justified *under it*, were not justified *by it*, but by the dispensation of grace under which Abraham was; which, though not a part of the covenant of God by Moses, was not, and could not be abrogated by it. See Gal. iii. 17. and Doddridge.

Ver. 15. Where no law is, &c.] "Of that concerning which there is no law, with the sanction of a punishment annexed, there can be no transgression, incurring wrath or punishment." Thus it may be rendered, if we read the original word δ , with an aspiration, as some do: but whether it be taken to signify *where* or *whereof*, the sense will be the same; for the Greek word $\omega\sigma\sigma\epsilon\lambda\theta\omicron\iota\varsigma$ here, to make St. Paul's argument of force, must signify such a transgression as draws upon the transgressor wrath and punishment by the force and sanction of a law; and so the Apostle's proposition is made good,—that it is the law alone which exposes us to wrath, and that it is all which the law in this sense can do, for it gives us no power to perform. Locke.

Ver. 16. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace] By favour. Here it should be well observed, that *faith* and *favour* do mutually and necessarily infer each other; for the *grace* or *favour* of God in its own nature requires faith in us, and faith on our part in its own nature supposes the *grace* or favour of God. If any blessing is the free gift of God in order to influence our temper and behaviour, then in the very nature of things it is necessary that we be sensible of this blessing, and persuaded of the grace of God who bestows it; otherwise, it is not possible we should improve it. On the other hand, if faith in the goodness or favour of God, with regard to any blessing, is the prin-

ciple of our religious hopes and actions, then it follows, that the blessing is not due in strict justice, or upon the footing of law; but that it is the free gift of divine goodness. If the promise to Abraham, constituting him and his seed the heirs or first-born of the world, is of faith on our part, then is it by favour on the part of God; and *it is of faith that it might be by favour*. Favour, being the mere good-will of the donor, is free and open to all whom he chooses to make the objects of it: and the divine wisdom appointed faith to be the condition of that promise, because *faith*, or a persuasion of the truth of the promise, is on our part the most simple principle; bearing an exact correspondence to *grace* or *favour*, and reaching as far as that can extend; that so the happy effects of that promise might spread far and wide, take in the largest compass, and be confined by no condition, but what is merely necessary in the nature of things. See Bengelius, and Calmet. Mr. Locke observes, that the grammatical construction at the beginning of this verse does not seem much to favour *inheritance*, as the word to be supplied, (*therefore the inheritance is of faith*;) because it does not occur in the preceding verses; but he that observes St. Paul's way of writing, who more regards things than forms of speaking, will be satisfied that it is enough that he mentions *heirs*, ver. 13, 14. And that he means *inheritance* here, is put past a doubt by Gal. iii. 18.

Ver. 17. As it is written, &c.] That Abraham's being the father of many nations, has relation to the covenant that God made with him, may be seen Gen. xvii. 4, 5. *Behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations: neither shall thy name any more be called Abram; but thy name shall be Abraham: for a father of many nations have I made or constituted thee*, by virtue of my covenant with thee. Dr. Doddridge, instead of, *before him whom he believed, even God*, reads, *like God whom he believed*; for so he thinks the original word $\kappa\alpha\tau'\epsilon\lambda\theta\omicron\iota\varsigma$ may signify. The meaning of the last clause seems to be, "Who speaketh of things which do not yet exist, as if they

20 He ^e staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God,

21 And being fully persuaded that what he had promised ^f he was able also to perform.

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

24 ^g But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, ^h if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

25 ⁱ Who was delivered for our offences, and ^k was raised again for our justification.

^e Ver. 18, 19. James, 1. 6. Mark 5. 36. Acts 27. 25. 2 Chr. 20. 20. Luke, 17. 18. If. 7. 9. ^f Luke, 1. 37. Gen. 17. 1. & 18. 14. Jer. 32. 17, 27. Mat. 19. 26. Ch. 14. 4. & 11. 23. Heb. 7. 25. & 2. 18. 2 Cor. 9. 8. Pl. 115. 3. ^g Ch. 15. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 6, 18. 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. ^h Gal. 3. 16. 1 Peter, 1. 21. Ch. 1. 17. & 10. 4, 9, 10. Acts 2. 24. ⁱ If. 53. 4—12. Dan. 9. 24, 26. Zech. 13. 7. Mat. 20. 28. Ch. 3. 25. & 5. 6, 8. & 8. 3, 32. 1 Cor. 15. 17. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Gal. 3. 13. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Peter, 9. 19—21. & 2. 24. & 3. 18. 1 John, 1. 7. & 2. 2. & 4. 9, 20. Rev. 5. 9. ^k 1 Cor. 15. 17. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Rom. 8. 33, 34. Heb. 4. 14—16. & 1. 3. & 8. 1. & 9. 12.

“they were actually existing; because he knows they will “exist in due time.” See Markland on Arnold’s Comment. on Wisdom, xi. 25.

Ver. 22. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.] To what has been said concerning the word rendered *imputed* in ver. 8. we add the following remarks: All manner of *imputation* seems to be a metaphor taken from books of account between creditor and debtor; and from mercantile affairs, it is sometimes applied to *judicial*; as *crimes* to be accounted for, are also sometimes called *debts*. When the matter, however, is well understood in one view, it is easy to apply it to the other: to impute any act of sin, or of obedience to a person, is therefore properly no other than to *set it down to his account*. The great God of heaven and earth is represented in Scripture,—with humble condescension to our manner of acting and conceiving of things,—as keeping a most exact book of records and accounts, in which those things are registered concerning every one of us, which he will bring into that last review and survey, by which our characters and states shall finally be determined. And as the most exact and perfect obedience is a debt which we owe him as our great Creator, Benefactor, and Governor: so, on the breach of his law, we owe him some *proper satisfaction* for it. In this view we are all charged as debtors, poor miserable insolvent debtors, in the book of God. Innumerable *sins* are *imputed*, or set down to our account; and were things to go on in this course, we should ere long be arrested by the divine justice, and, being found incapable of payment, should be cast into the prison of hell, to come out no more. But God, in pity to this our calamitous state, hath found out a surety and a ransom for us; hath provided a *satisfaction* in the death and sacrifice of his only begotten Son. It is with a gracious regard to this,—to express his high complacency in it, and, if we may so speak, his pleasing remembrance of it, that all who are justified meet with divine acceptance and favour.—But then, it is an invariable rule in the divine proceedings, that this *atonement* and *satisfaction* of Christ be a means of justifying those, and only those who believe. Pursuant therefore to the above metaphor, when any particular person *believes*, this is set down to his account, as a most important *article*, or as a *memorandum*, if we may so express it, in the *book of God’s remembrance*, that such a one is now actually become a believer, and therefore is now entitled to justification through Christ. In this sense his *faith* is *imputed* for right-

eousness. Yet it is not regarded by God as the grand *consideration* which balances the account, or indeed as paying any of the former debt,—which it is impossible it should; but only as that which, according to the gracious constitution of the Gospel, gives a man a claim to what *Christ has paid*, and which God has graciously *allowed*, as a valuable consideration, in regard to which he may honourably pardon and accept of all who shall apply to him in his appointed way, or in the way of humble believing. Abraham the father of the faithful, had a clear view of this great Atonement in the visions of God. “He rejoiced to “see the day of Christ: and he saw it, and was glad,” John, viii. 56. And he believed, not only in the temporal promises relating to his natural seed, but above all in the spiritual promises which regarded the Messiah, himself, and his spiritual seed: and his faith was counted to him for righteousness. See the Notes on Gen. chap. xxii.

Ver. 24. But for us also] But for our sake also.

Ver. 25. Who was delivered for our offences] See chap. iii. 25. v. 6—10. Ephes. i. 7, 14. v. 2. Col. i. 14, 20—22. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Titus, ii. 14. 1 Cor. xv. 17. In these several texts of St. Paul may be seen his own explication of what he says here; namely, that our Saviour, by his death, atoned for our sins, and so the justified believer is made innocent of his past transgressions, and thereby freed from the punishment due to them; and yet still on the condition of persevering faith and love. But he rose again to ascertain eternal life for the faithful; for the reward of righteousness is eternal life, to which inheritance we have a title by adoption in Jesus Christ. But if he himself had not possessed that inheritance, if he had not risen into the possession of eternal life, we, who hold by and under him, could not rise from the dead; and so could never come to be pronounced *righteous*, and to receive the reward of it, if faithful, even everlasting life. Hence St. Paul tells us, that if *Christ be not raised, our faith is vain; we are yet in our sins*: that is, as to the attainment of eternal life, it is all the same as if our sins were not forgiven. And thus he rose for our justification, not only as his resurrection affords the most solemn confirmation of the whole new covenant, but also enables him consistently with the divine perfections to raise us from the dead, and to give us, dying in faith and holiness, eternal life. John, xiv. 19. See Locke.

Inferences.—It is the corrupt inclination of the heart of man to seek for something to justify himself in his own good

CHAP. V.

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, and joy in our hope; that since we were reconciled by his blood, when we were enemies, we shall much more be saved being reconciled. As sin and death came by Adam, so much more righteousness and life by Jesus Christ. Where sin abounded, grace did superabound.

[Anno Domini 58.]

THEREFORE, 'being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our

Lord Jesus Christ :

2 'By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only so, but we 'glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience ;

4 'And patience, experience ; and experience, hope :

* Ch. 4. 25, 45, 51, 11. & 3. 22, 25, 28. Gal. 2. 10. Phil. 3. 9. * If. 27. 5. Eph. 2. 13—15. Col. 1. 20. 2 Cor. 5. 19—21. Mic. 5. 5. If. 3—10. & 32. 17. & 57. 19. John, 14. 27. & 16. 33. * Eph. 2. 18. & 3. 12. 1 Peter, 3. 18. John, 10. 7, 9. & 14. 6. Heb. 10. 19—22. & 3. 6 & 12. 25. 1 Cor. 15. 17. Ch. 8. 23. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. * Acts, 4. 41. 2 Cor. 12. 9, 10. & 4. 17. & 8. 2. Mat. 5. 12. 1 Peter, 4. 13. & 1. 6. Phil. 1. 29. James, 1. 2, 3. * 2 Tim. 4. 17. 2 Cor. 1. 5, 10. John, 16. 20. 1 Peter, 1. 7, 8, 13. & 5. 10.

good will, and in his own will; which does not come from God, and which is owing only to himself. The sincere Christian, on the contrary, places all his joy in owing every thing to God, through Jesus Christ: and whoever is desirous to glory in any thing independently of Him, will meet with nothing but shame and confusion at the last. In this view Abraham is the first witness to grace, and the righteousness of faith before the law, ver. 1, 2. and the pattern of right conduct to every truly faithful person.

We are saved by a divine scheme, which allows us not to mention any works of our own, as if we had *whereof to glory before God*, but teaches us to ascribe our acceptance before God to the belief in Him who *justifieth the ungodly*. Nor need we be ashamed of flying to such a method: Abraham, the father of the faithful, had recourse to it himself, ver. 3—5. and built on it his eternal hope. May we share his disposition of mind, that so we may inherit the same promises: and thus we also, walking in the steps of our father Abraham, shall be called like him the friends and children of God; and sit down with the patriarchs and prophets of old in his heavenly kingdom!

If there be indeed any such thing as *happiness* to be enjoyed by mortals, it is the portion of *that man of whom David speaks*,—of him *whose iniquity is pardoned, whose sin is covered*, and who enjoys the manifestation of that pardon, ver. 7, 8. Well may such endure the greatest afflictions of life with cheerful submission, and look forward to death with comfort,—to that awful yet transporting day, when the sting of all these evils shall be taken out, and returning tokens of the divine favour convert them into blessings. How earnestly should we then supplicate the throne of grace, that this happiness may become ours! that the great and glorious Being, whom by our sins we have so offended, and in whom alone the right and power of pardon resides, would *spread the veil* of his mercy over our provocations, and blot them out of the book of his remembrance! Let us only, on the one hand, fix it in our minds, that it is the character of the man to whom this blessedness belongs, that *in his spirit there is no guile*: and on the other reflect, that it is in consequence of the righteous obedience of Christ unto the death of the cross and his infinite merit which *faith receives* and applies.

How common is it for men to glory in the piety and holiness of those to whom they bear any relation; but how

rarely do they *walk in their steps*, by imitating their example! see ver. 12. The faith which does not dispose us to forsake all for the sake of God, and to sacrifice every thing to his known will, is not the *faith* of a son of Abraham; not such a *faith* as can ever be *accounted for righteousness*.

Though by our manifold transgression of the perfect law of God, we can never *inherit* by any claim from that, which *only worketh wrath* and condemnation, in consequence of our breach of it (ver. 14, 15.); yet shall we, by believing and obeying the Gospel of our Redeemer, find the *promise sure* to us, as the spiritual seed of Abraham, (ver. 16.) and be for ever happy in the enjoyment of that better *Canaan*, where every earthly inheritance shall be no more.

Let us then bear continually in our minds the great, the venerable example of Abraham our father; labour to the utmost to trace his steps, and have *faith* in that omnipotent God, who at his pleasure *quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things which are not, as if they were*, ver. 17. If sense were to judge, it would pronounce many of those difficulties insurmountable, which seem to oppose the accomplishment of his promises;—but we have the truth of God pledged as our security, that they shall all be fulfilled to the faithful in their season. Surely no argument should be so effectual as this to render us *strong in faith*, and thus dispose our hearts to *glorifying God*, ver. 20. He hath *promised*, and he is *able also to perform*: for *with him all things are possible*. Already has he done *that* for us, which we had much less reason to expect or conceive, than we now have to hope for any thing remaining. He that *delivered up his Son Jesus for our offences* (ver. 25.), to redeem us by his blood from final and everlasting ruin;—*How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

Be it our daily joy, that this mighty Saviour was *raised again for our justification*. A belief of the *resurrection* of Christ comprehends every thing, since it includes the belief of all the mysteries and truths of Christianity, whether antecedent or subsequent; the *resurrection* being in fact the seal of every thing which the blessed Jesus did, suffered, taught, and promised. Let it therefore be continually considered as the noblest argument to establish our faith in him who performed this illustrious work of mercy and of power. So shall it be accounted to us likewise for righteousness, ver. 22, 23. Yea, so shall the righteousness of God be revealed to our souls from faith to faith to all the

5 ' And hope maketh not ashamed; because hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given the love of God is shed abroad in our unto us.

Phil. 1. 20. Pf. 22. 5. & 25. 2, 3. Titus, 3. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 22. Ch. 8, 15, 16.

the blessed purposes of our justification (see chap. i. 17.); and, if we perseveringly cleave to this adorable Saviour, we shall be accepted through his blood to all eternity.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, Abraham was the renowned ancestor, on their descent from whom the Jews so highly prided themselves. If therefore it can be made to appear, that he who was so eminent for his obedience was justified not by works but by faith, then surely none of his descendants, who came so short of his excellent character, may expect to be justified in any other way.

What shall we say then that Abraham, our father as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? Did he obtain justification by the efforts of his natural wisdom and strength, or by circumcision, or his other outward privileges and performances? No, in no wise. For,

1. If he were justified by works, he might have had room for boasting; but whatever excellence there was in his character before men, he had nothing whereof to glory before God. Therefore, when speaking of Abraham, the Scripture expressly observes, Gen. xv. 6. *Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness;* that which he believed respecting the promised seed, who should suffer in his stead, was reckoned to his account, as the ground of his justification before God, and not any doings or duties of his own.

2. If Abraham were justified by works, his reward would have been of debt, not of grace; for perfect obedience would have entitled him to eternal life: but God called Abraham when he was (*ασειν*) an ungodly person, and justified him through faith in the promised Messiah. *And to him that worketh not*, who is utterly unable to perform that immaculate obedience which the law requires, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, conscious that this is his character, and perceiving the absolute necessity of an infinitely meritorious sacrifice for his sins, even that which God hath provided in his Son; *his faith is counted to him* for his justifying righteousness and title to God's favour. If Abraham then must be justified as an ungodly sinner, as *one that worketh not*, it would be strange presumption in his descendants, or any others, to expect justification in any other way.

3. He argues the necessity of free justification from the declarations of the Psalmist, who describes him as the truly blessed man, not who has no sins to answer for, but who has them not counted or imputed to him, being justified from them all by the free grace of God, *without any works* of his own, of whatever kind, to recommend him to the divine regard.

2dly, The blessedness above described is, no doubt, most desirable; the question is, to whom it belongs? Is it peculiar to the circumcised Jews, or common to the uncircumcised Gentiles? The former would fain monopolize it as the sole privilege of those who were within the pale of circumcision; but the Gospel declares the uncircumcised Gentiles alike capable of receiving it.

It was faith, not circumcision, which was Abraham's justifying righteousness, as we have before shewn. This was imputed to him, and in consequence thereof he was a justified man, fourteen years before he was circumcised. It is evident therefore that when he afterwards submitted to this instituted ordinance of God, and received the sign of circumcision, it was not in order to his being justified, since that he had been long before, but as a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised: a visible token that God had taken him and his seed into the bond of the covenant, and an assurance to him, if faithful, of all the blessings which were to be procured by that Redeemer in whom he had believed. Thus, in this eminent instance of him who bore the distinguished title of father of the faithful, and from whom the Messiah should spring in whom all nations were to be blessed, the Gentiles, though uncircumcised, might behold the way of justification freely opened to them, and stand in the nearest relation to Abraham, whose faith they followed, as his spiritual children; and, though they were not his natural descendants, might share in all his most distinguished blessings, and righteousness be reckoned or imputed unto them also, in like manner as it was to him during his uncircumcised state.

And herein also God shewed to the Jews, that it was not their being the natural descendants of Abraham, and partakers of circumcision with him, which entitled them to pardon; but that the distinguishing privileges of that covenant of grace into which Abraham was admitted, belonged only to those who walked in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham which he had, being yet uncircumcised; and without which, circumcision, and all their other duties and performances, would never procure for them justification to life.

3dly, As circumcision was not a justifying righteousness to Abraham, nor to any of his seed; neither was the law, in which the Jewish people trusted. *For the promise, that he should be heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law of Moses, which was not yet given, nor in virtue of any personal obedience of his or theirs, but through the righteousness of faith.* For if they which are of the law be heirs, and the title to the blessings promised arose from the fulfilling the law, whether that of Moses or any other, then faith is made void; there is no place for the exercise of it; and the promise is of no effect, since the blessings of it would depend on our perfect and immaculate obedience: if that were not perfect and immaculate, the promise would be useless, which must necessarily be the case in our present corrupted state; because the law worketh wrath, and can only deliver over every man to the righteous judgment of God, as transgressors. Had there indeed been no law given, had no notice of God's will, traditionary or revealed, been afforded, there would have been no conscience of sin, for where no law is, there is no transgression; but now that there is a law, the offender is obnoxious to the curse, which is the sanction annexed to the transgression of it. Therefore, since none by their obedience

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some

1. Eph. 16. 3. Eph. 2. 1. Col. 2. 13. Gal. 4. 3—5. Heb. 7. 18. & 9. 10, 15. Ch. 8. 3. & 4. 25. 2 Peter, 1. 18—20. & 2. 24. Luke, 19. 10. Mat. 10. 28. & 1. 21. & 9. 13. 1 Tim. 1. 15. 1 John, 15. 13. 1 John, 3. 16.

obedience to any law, moral or ceremonial, could possibly be entitled to the promised blessings, God so ordained, that it should be of *faith*, that it might be of *grace*; that the promise, and all the blessings contained in it, might appear to be given of God's mere goodness, without the least desert on our part, faith stretching out its empty hand to receive the inestimable treasure, to the end the promise might be sure to every persevering believer, even to all the seed, to the spiritual seed of Abraham, even to every faithful soul; not to that only which is of the law, who live under the Mosaic dispensation, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, though Gentiles by birth and profession. yet who through faith become, in God's account, the children of this eminent patriarch, who is the father of us all, whether believing Jews or Gentiles; as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations. In a spiritual sense, before him whom he believed, even God, was he thus reputed as the father of nations; even before him who gave with the dead; Abraham and his wife, whose bodies were now as good as dead; or the Gentiles dead in trespasses and sins; or the bodies of the deceased in the last day and who, in virtue of his almighty power, calleth those things which be not as though they were, since whatever he will, at his word starts into being. Persuaded of this, notwithstanding all the difficulties which his faith had to encounter, Abraham against hope, if reason were consulted, needed in hope; and against all arguments which sense or experience urged, he rested satisfied in the fulfilment of the promise, that he should become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, Gen. xv. 5. when, pointing his eye to the stars, God assured him, so shall thy seed be, so numerous, so illustrious. Having this divine promise, he staggered not a moment through any improbabilities which unbelief might suggest, from the consideration of his own great age, which, with regard to his having children, rendered his body as if already dead, nor at the distance of Sarah's womb, long since past child-bearing; but persevering in faith, giving glory to God, with the fullest assurance expecting the fulfilment of what God had promised, and was able also to perform. And therefore it was reputed to him for righteousness; and what he saw about to be done by the promised seed, Christ Jesus, was now reckoned to his account, and he stood thereby justified before God. Note: Where God has promised, whatever objections carnal reason and unbelief may make, it is our wisdom to turn a deaf ear to every suggestion, and confidently wait the accomplishment of his word; and this gives God the highest glory.

Great was the faith of the patriarch, great the honour put upon him thereby! But this record borne to him of his acceptance before God was not written for his praise, historically to inform us of that which rendered him so eminent; but for us also, as a pattern, comfort, and encouragement to us, and an assurance that the same righteous acts shall be counted to us, for our justification.

if we, as true sons of this father of the faithful, believe as he did; on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who, as our substitute and surety, was delivered for our offences, to bear our sins in his own body on the tree; and, having so done, was raised again for our justification.

CHAP. V.

TO comfort the Roman brethren under the evils which the profession of the Gospel brought upon them, the Apostle, in the beginning of this chapter, enumerated the privileges which belong to believers in general. And from his account it appears, that the privileges of Abraham's seed, by faith, are far greater than the privileges which belonged to his seed by natural descent, and which are described, Rom. ii. 17—20.

The first privilege of the spiritual seed is, that, being justified by faith, they have peace with God through Jesus Christ, ver. 1. This, to the Gentiles, must have appeared an unspeakable blessing, as the Jews had constantly considered them as excluded from the privileges of the true religion, and from eternal life. Their second privilege is, By the command of Christ they are admitted through faith into the covenant made with Abraham, and into the Christian church.—Thirdly, they glory in the hope of beholding the glory of God in heaven;—a privilege far superior to that of beholding the glory of God in the tabernacle, and in the temple on earth, of which the natural seed boasted: for it is the hope of living eternally with God in heaven, ver. 2.—Their fourth privilege is, They glory in afflictions, especially those which befall them for the name of Christ: because afflictions improve their graces, and strengthen their hope of eternal life, ver. 3, 4.—But many, even of the believing Jews, denied that the Gentiles had any reason to hope for eternal life, while they did not obey Moses. Wherefore, to shew that the believing Gentiles are heirs of that and of all the blessings promised in the covenant to the seed of Abraham, by faith, equally with the Jews, the Apostle appealed to God's shedding down the Holy Ghost upon them, even as on the Jews, ver. 5.—and to Christ's dying for them in their ungodly state, ver. 6—8.—and told them, since they were already justified and reconciled, that is, received to pardon and favour by the blood of Christ, they might well hope to be saved in due time from wrath by his obedience unto death in the human nature; since in that nature he exercises the office of Lord and Judge of the world, ver. 9, 10.—The last privilege belonging to the spiritual seed, mentioned by the Apostle, is, that, being justified, they can glory in the true God as their God, equally with the natural seed, whose relation to God was established by the law of Moses only. And this privilege, he told them, they had obtained, like all the rest, through Jesus Christ, by whom they had received the reconciliation.

Having mentioned the reconciliation of the believing Gentiles, H the

would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his love toward

us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

^k John, 3. 16. ^l John, 4. 9, 10. ^m Peter, 3. 18. ⁿ If. 53. 6. ^o Ver. 6. 10.

the Apostle took occasion, in this place, to discourse of the entrance of sin and death into the world, and of the remedy which God has provided for these evils, and of the extent of that remedy; because it gave him an opportunity, not only of explaining what the reconciliation is, which believers receive through Christ, but also of displaying the justice of granting reconciliation to all mankind who shall believe according to the light of their dispensation, notwithstanding the greatest part of them never heard any thing either of the reconciliation, or of Christ who procured it for them: but still the whole proceeds from mere favour through the alone merit of Jesus Christ our Lord.

And first, to shew the justice of providing a reconciliation through Jesus Christ for all of the human race who truly believe according to the divine light bestowed upon them, notwithstanding many of them are ignorant of Christ as the Saviour, the Apostle reasoned in this manner: As it pleased God, through the disobedience of one man, to subject all mankind to sin and death, notwithstanding the greatest part of them never heard of that man's disobedience; so to render this determination consistent with justice, it pleased God, through the obedience of one man, to make all men capable of righteousness and life, notwithstanding the greatest part of them have no knowledge of the person to whom they are indebted for these great benefits, ver. 12.—This second member of the comparison, indeed, the Apostle has not expressed, because he supposed his readers could easily supply it, and because he was afterwards to produce this unfinished comparison in a complete form, by separating it into two parts, and adding to each part the clause of the omitted member which belongs to it. Wherefore, having enunciated the first member of the comparison, instead of adding the second, he proceeds to establish the first, because on it the truth of the second member, which he supposes his reader to have supplied in his own mind, depends. The proposition asserted in the first member is, that all men are subjected to death for Adam's sin. This the Apostle proves by the following argument: no action is punished as a sin, where there is no knowledge of any law forbidding it, ver. 13.—Nevertheless from Adam to Moses, death seized infants and idiots, who, being incapable of the knowledge of law, were incapable of transgressing law. Wherefore, having no sin of their own, for which they could be punished with death, they must have suffered for Adam's transgression; which shews clearly, that death is inflicted on mankind, not for their own, but for Adam's sin, who, on that account, may, by contrast, be called the type of him who was to come and restore life to all men, ver. 14.

Farther, it was a matter of great importance to prove, that all mankind are punished with death for the sin of the first man, because it shews, that the punishment of our first parents' sin was not forgiven, but only deferred, that the human species might be continued. Accordingly, by God's sentence pronounced after the fall, Gen. iii. 15—19.

Adam and Eve were allowed to live and beget children. And as in the same sentence, they were told, that the Seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head, it was an intimation, that on account of what the Seed of the woman was to do, a new trial, under a better covenant than the former, was granted to them and their posterity, that they might have an opportunity of regaining that immortality which they had forfeited. These things the Apostle supposes his readers to know; for he proceeds to compare the evils brought on mankind by Adam, with the advantages procured for them by Christ, that all may understand the gracious nature of the new covenant, under which the human race is placed since the fall.

From what the Apostle has said of the effects of Christ's obedience, compared with the consequences of Adam's disobedience, it appears, that the former are superior to the latter in three respects. The first is, Christ's obedience has more merit to obtain for all mankind a short life on earth, and after death a resurrection to a new life, in which such of them as are capable of it, are to enjoy happiness for ever, than Adam's disobedience had demerit to kill all mankind, ver. 15.—The second is, the sentence passed on mankind was for one offence only, committed by their first parents, and it subjected them all to death temporal; but the sentence which bestows the gracious gift of pardon, has for its object the offence of Adam, and all the offences which the faithful saints of God themselves may have committed during their own probation; and issues in their being accounted righteous, and entitled to eternal life, ver. 16.—The third is, In the life which they who are pardoned and accounted righteous, and have persevered in the obedience of faith, shall regain through Christ, they shall enjoy much greater happiness than they lose by the death to which they are subjected through Adam's offence, ver. 17.

Having thus contrasted the benefits procured for mankind by Christ with the evils brought on them by Adam, the Apostle sums up these particulars in two conclusions. The first is: As it was just, on account of one offence committed by Adam, to pass sentence of condemnation on all, by which all have been subjected to death; so it was equally just, on account of one act of righteousness performed by Christ (his dying on the cross), to pass sentence on all, by which all obtain the *justification of life*; that is, a short life on earth, and at the last day a resurrection from the dead, ver. 18.—The second conclusion is: As it was just, through the offence of one man to constitute all men sinners; that is, through the disobedience of Adam, to convey to all men a corrupted nature, whereby they are made liable to sin, and to eternal death; so it was equally just, through the obedience of one man, to constitute all mankind righteous; that is, to put them in a condition of obtaining righteousness here, and eternal life hereafter, ver. 19.—For in what manner could all mankind be constituted righteous, unless by granting them a personal trial under a new covenant, in which not immaculate obedience

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall

Ch. 5. 24. & 8. 1. 33, 34. & 11. 25. John. 5. 24. Rev. 12. 17. & Thess. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 19—27. Col. 1. 20—22. Eph. 2. 13—16. Ch. 3. 24, 25. & 4. 25. Rev. 1. 5. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Tim. 2. 5, 6. Heb. 7. 15. Rev. 1. 18. John, 14. 19. & 6. 40, 57. & 10. 28.

is required, in order to righteousness and life, but the obedience of faith. From these two conclusions, we learn what the *condemnation* is, which was brought on all mankind by Adam, and what the *reconciliation* is, which all mankind receive by Christ. By Adam mankind were made mortal, and liable to sin. By Christ they are allowed a temporary life on earth, and have a trial appointed them, under a gracious covenant, by which they may attain righteousness and eternal life through faith.

In the two conclusions just now mentioned, the unfinished comparison, with which the Apostle introduced this admirable discourse, is completed. For in the first conclusion, ver. 18. the entrance and progress of death through Adam's sin, being described as in ver. 12. its remedy is declared, which is there wanting. And in the second conclusion, ver. 19. after mentioning the entrance and progress of sin, as in ver. 12. its remedy, which is wanting there, is likewise described. This order the Apostle followed, because, though the entrance of sin was prior to that of death, he mentioned the entrance of sin last, that he might have an opportunity of speaking concerning the rule by which Adam and his posterity, now in this conditional or probationary sense reconciled, were to direct their actions, during the trial appointed them under the new covenant. For after telling us, that as all were constituted sinners by Adam's disobedience, so all shall be constituted righteous through the obedience of Christ, he adds, *But law silently entered*: that is, after the sentence was passed, Gen. iii. 15—19. whereby Adam was allowed to live and beget children, and with his posterity was placed under the new covenant, the law of God written on their hearts silently took place as the rule of their conduct under that covenant. And though the offence of actual transgression thereby abounded, grace has superabounded, in the resurrection of all who die in infancy and infancy, to a better life than that which they lost through Adam's disobedience, and by bestowing the same blessing on such adults as fulfil the requisitions of the gracious new covenant, under which they are placed, ver. 20.—And thus it has come to pass, that as the sin of the first man has exceedingly tyrannized over the whole species, by introducing actual transgression and death; so also the infinite goodness of God shall reign, by destroying sin and death through a righteousness of faith, which shall be granted to believers, and, producing as its natural fruit a life of holiness and obedience to the end, shall be rewarded with eternal life; and all through Jesus Christ our Lord, ver. 21.—Thus, according to the doctrine of the Apostle, all mankind are, and ever have been, included in the new covenant. Consequently the advantage which they have received by Christ, is much greater than the loss they have sustained through Adam. And it is reasonable to think it would be so; because the goodness of God more effectually disposes him to bestow blessings on mankind, on account

of Christ's obedience, than to inflict evils on them, on account of Adam's disobedience.

Before this subject is dismissed, it may be proper to observe:

1. That in this remarkable passage, we have the true account of the entrance of sin and misery into the world, and of the method in which these evils have been remedied; subjects which none of the philosophers or wise men of antiquity were able by the light of reason to fathom. Sin entered through the disobedience of our first parents, whereby they became liable to immediate death; and if God had executed his threatening, the species would have ended in them. But because, in due season, his Son was to appear on earth in the human nature, and to make atonement for the sin of men, God, in the prospect of that great act of obedience, suffered Adam and Eve to live and propagate their kind, and granted them a new trial under a covenant better suited to their condition than the former; in order that if, through his grace which should be offered to them, they behaved properly during their probation, he might raise them to a better life than that which they had forfeited. In this new covenant the obligation of the law written on their heart was continued; only immaculate obedience to that law was not required in order to life, but the obedience of faith. And although the punishment of their first sin took place so far, that the life granted to them and to their posterity was to be a gradual progress through labour and misery to certain death; yet, being all comprehended in the gracious new covenant, they are all to be raised to life at the last day, that such of them as are found to have given the obedience of faith during their probation, may receive a more happy life than that which was forfeited by the disobedience of their first parents, and be continued in that happy life for ever. Thus, by the remedy which God has applied, for curing the evils introduced by the first man's disobedience, the righteous will be raised to a greater degree of happiness, than if these evils had not taken place.

2. According to the view which the Apostle has given us of the ruin and recovery of mankind, the scheme of redemption is not a remedy of an unexpected evil, contrived after that evil took place. Christ's obedience unto death was appointed as the means of our deliverance, at the very time when the resolution permitting the entrance of sin was formed. And therefore, to make mankind sensible of this, the Apostle assures us, (Ephes. i. 4.) that *we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world*: and 2 Tim. i. 9. that *we are saved and called according to God's own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ, before the world began*: and 1 Pet. i. 20. that *Christ was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for us*.—And as the plan of our redemption was formed along with the divine resolution to permit our fall, so its operation was coeval with the introduction of that

be saved by his life.

11 And not only so, but we also joy in

God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

° Exod. 15. 1, 2. Pf. 33. 1. & 149. 2. Il. 45. 17, 25. & 61. 10. Luke, 1. 46, 47. Hab. 3. 18. Phil. 4. 4.

evil; and extends to all, so as to place all in a capacity of salvation. Hence Christ is called, Rev. xiii. 8. *The Lamb which was slain from the foundation of the world*; and he is said, 2 Cor. v. 15. *To have died for all*. And his death is termed, 1 John, ii. 2. *A propitiation for the whole world*.

3. From other passages of Scripture we learn, that *sin* and *death* were permitted to enter into the world, not only because by the remedy to be applied to these evils, God intended to make the faithful among mankind more happy than they would have been if these evils had not existed, but even to promote the good of the universe. Accordingly, in the scheme of redemption there is a higher display of the perfections of God to all intelligent beings, than could have been made, had there been no *sin* nor *miser*y to be remedied. So St. Paul teaches, Ephes. iii. 10. *That now unto governments and powers in the heavenly regions, the multifarious wisdom of God may be made known through the church*. Farther, the new display of the perfections of God made in the plan of redemption, by furnishing many powerful motives to holiness and virtue, whose operation is not confined to any one order of rational beings, nor to any particular time, will render God's moral government profitable and delightful to all his holy intelligent creatures for ever. See the *Introduction to the New Testament*.

4. By the illustrious display of the scheme of redemption, made in this admirable passage, and by showing that it has for its object not a single nation, nor any small portion of the human race, but believers of all nations, the Apostle has condemned the bigotry of the Jews, and of all who, like them, confine salvation to their own church, and exclude others from sharing in the mercy of God through Christ, merely because they are ignorant of him, not through their own fault, but through the good pleasure of God, who has denied them that knowledge: or, because they do not hold the same *objects* of faith with them, although they possess the same *spirit* of faith, and, through the secret influences of the Spirit of God, live piously and virtuously according to their knowledge. For his whole reasoning on this subject proceeds on the supposition, that if it was consonant to justice, that the demerit of Adam's disobedience should extend to all mankind, notwithstanding the greatest part of them never knew any thing either of him or of his disobedience; it must be equally consonant to justice, that the merit of Christ's obedience should extend to all mankind who are capable of being benefited by it, although many of them have had no opportunity of knowing any thing concerning that meritorious obedience. Besides, as the plan of redemption will, no doubt, be fully made known to the pious heathens, after they are admitted into heaven, the glory of God and the honour of Christ will be advanced by the discovery at that period, as effectually as if it had been made to them during their life-time on earth. And with respect to themselves, although the knowledge of Christ and of the method of salvation through him, is not bestowed on them, till they come into heaven, or till the day of judgment, it will then operate as power-

fully in making them sensible of the mercy of God, and in laying a foundation for their love and gratitude to Christ through all eternity, as if that knowledge had been communicated to them sooner. If so, to fancy that persons, who, notwithstanding their want of revelation, are through the grace of God actually prepared for heaven, will be excluded from that blessed place, merely because, while on earth, they were denied that knowledge of Christ, which, with equal effect, may be communicated to them in heaven, is to contradict all the representations given in the Scriptures of the impartiality of God, as the righteous governor of the universe.

Ver. 1. The Apostle, having proved in the former chapter, that the believing Gentiles are justified in the same way with Abraham, and in fact are his seed, included with him in the promise or covenant, he judged this a proper place (as the Jews built all their glorying upon the Abrahamic covenant) to produce some of those privileges and blessings in which the Christian Gentile could glory, in consequence of his justification, or his being pardoned; and taken into the covenant and peculiar kingdom of God by faith. And he chooses to instance in three particulars, which above others were adapted to this purpose; namely, *first*, the *hope* of eternal life, in which the law, wherein the Jews glorified, ch. ii. 17. was defective. *ver. 2.* *Secondly*, the *persecutions* and *sufferings* to which Christians were exposed, ver. 3, 4. and on account of which the Jew was greatly prejudiced against the Christian profession: and here, having shewn that *tribulations* have a happy tendency to establish our hearts in the hope of the Gospel, he wisely adds, to alleviate the frightful aspect of tribulation, some weighty reasons to prove, that the glorious hope of the Gospel will certainly be made good to faithful souls in their eternal salvation by Jesus Christ, ver. 5—11. *Thirdly*, an *interest in God*, as our God and Father; a privilege upon which the Jews valued themselves highly above all other nations. See ch. ii. 17. These three are the singular privileges belonging to the Gospel state, wherein we Christians may glory, as really belonging to us, and greatly redounding, if duly understood and improved, to our honour and benefit. See Locke.

We have peace with God] That is, we Gentiles, who are not under the law. It is in their names that St. Paul speaks in the last three verses of the foregoing chapter, and so on to ver. 11. as is evident from the illation here, —*therefore, being justified by faith, we,* &c. it being an inference drawn from his having proved in the former chapter, that the promise was not to the Jews alone, but to the Gentiles also; and that justification was not by the law, but by faith, and consequently designed for the Gentiles as well as the Jews. *We have peace with God*, is thus paraphrased by Dr. Doddridge: "Our guilty fears are silenced, and we are taught to look up to him with sweet serenity of soul, while we no longer conceive of him as an enemy, but under the endearing character of a friend and father."

Ver.

12 Wherefore, *as by one man sin entered death passed upon all men, * for that all have into the world, and death by sin; and so sinned:

† Gen. 2. 17. & 3. 6, 19. Ch. 6. 23. Ezek. 18. 4. 1 Cor. 15. 21. * Or in whom.

Ver. 2. *By whom also we have access, &c.]* By whom we have been introduced, by means of faith, into that grace, &c. The Greek word *προσαγωγή*, is often used as a sacerdotal phrase, and signifies being with great solemnity introduced, as into the more immediate presence of the Deity in his temple; so as by a supposed interpreter, thence called *προσαγωγός*, the introducer, to have a kind of conference with such a Deity. St. Paul uses the same word *rejoice* or *glory* for the convert Gentiles, which he had used before for the boasting of the Jews; and the same word he applied when he examined what Abraham had found, ch. iv. 2, &c.: which plainly shews us that he is here opening the advantages which the Gentile converts to Christianity have by faith, to those which the Jews gloried in with so much haughtiness and contempt of the Gentiles. Locke, Raphelius, and on chap. ii. 17.

Ver. 4. *Experience] Full proof.* The Greek word *πειράζω*, has this signification, and is a metaphor taken from gold proved by purifying fire. See 1 Pet. i. 7. 1 Cor. ii. 5. and Saurin's Serm.

Ver. 5. *Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts]* poured out into our hearts. The original word *ἐκκεχυται*, is commonly used, as Whitby remarks, when the effusion of the Holy Ghost is spoken of. Wherefore, as the Apostle, in this passage, had in his eye the gifts of the Spirit bestowed on the Gentiles, as proofs of God's love to them, he adds for their comfort and encouragement, that the love of God was poured out into their hearts along with the spiritual gifts.

By the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.] The spiritual gifts bestowed on the first Christians were clear proofs, especially in the case of the Gentiles, of the love which God bore to them, and of his will that they should be saved. And therefore, when the Jewish believers, who reproved Peter for preaching the Gospel to Cornelius and his friends, heard that they had received the Holy Ghost, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, *Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life*, Acts, xi. 18. Further, the ordinary influences of the Spirit, bestowed on believers, by renovating their nature, afford them the fullest assurance of pardon and acceptance through faith: hence they are said to be *sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance*, Eph. i. 13, 14. and is said, Rom. viii. 16., to *bear witness with their spirit, that they are the children of God*.

Ver. 6. *In due time Christ died, &c.]* Christ seasonably died in the stead of the ungodly. See Albert. Observ. Sacr. p. 324. and Raphel. Annot. ex Xenoph. in v. 8. where he has abundantly demonstrated that the phrase *ὀπίθ' ἡμῶν ἀπέθανε*, signifies, *he died in our room and stead*. Nor does it appear, that the phrase *ἀποθανεὶ ὑπὲρ τινος*, has ever any other signification than that of rescuing the life of another at the expence of our own. And the very next verse, independent on any authority, shews how evidently it bears that sense here, as one can hardly imagine any

one would die for a good man, unless it were to redeem his life by giving up his own.

Ver. 7. *For scarcely for a righteous man, &c.]* Now scarcely, &c. for *γὰρ* cannot have the force of an illative particle here. He may in common speech be called a *just* or *righteous man*, who gives to every man what is by law his due; and he a *good* or *benevolent man*, who voluntarily abounds in kind and generous actions, to which no human laws can compel him. There may possibly be some allusion here to a rabbinical distribution of mankind into three classes, *good men, righteous men, and sinners*. See Gonwin's Jewish Antiq. lib. i. c. 6.

Ver. 8. *But God commendeth his love, &c.]* St. Paul gives them here another evidence of the love of God towards them.—The ground they had to glory in the hopes of eternal salvation is the death of Christ for them while they were yet in their unconverted Gentile state, which he describes by calling them, ver. 6. *ἀσθενεῖς, without strength*:—*ἀσθενεῖς, ungodly*; *ἁμαρτωλοὶ, sinners*; ver. 8.: and *ἐχθροί, enemies*, ver. 10. These four epithets are given to them as Gentiles, they being used by St. Paul as the proper attributes of the unconverted Heathen world, considered in contradistinction to the Jewish nation. What St. Paul says of the Gentiles in other places will clear this. The helpless condition of the Gentile world, in the state of Gentilism, signified here by *ἀσθενεῖς, without strength*, he terms, Col. ii. 13. *dead in sin*; a state surely, if any, of utter weakness. And hence he says to the Romans converted to the Lord Jesus Christ; *yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and yourselves as instruments of righteousness unto God*, ch. vi. 13. How he describes *ἀσθενεῖας, ungodliness*, mentioned ch. i. 18. as the state of the Gentiles in general, we may see ver. 21. 23. That he thought the title *ἁμαρτωλοὶ, sinners*, belonged peculiarly to the Gentiles, in contradistinction to the Jews, he puts past doubt in these words, *We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles*, Gal. ii. 15. See also ch. vi. 17—22. And as for *ἐχθροί, enemies*, you have the Gentiles in general before their conversion to Christianity so called, Col. i. 21.

If it were remembered that St. Paul, all along through the eleven first chapters of this epistle, speaks nationally of the Jews and Gentiles as it is visible he does, and not personally of single men, there would be less difficulty and fewer mistakes in understanding this epistle. This one place that we are upon, is a sufficient instance of it. For if by these terms here we shall understand him to denote all men personally, Jews as well as Gentiles, before they are savingly ingrafted into Jesus Christ, we shall make his discourse disjointed, and his sense mightily perplexed, if at all consistent.

That there were some among the Heathen as holy in their lives, and as far from enmity to God as some among the Jews, cannot be questioned. Nay, that many of them were worshippers of the true God, if we could doubt of it, is manifest out of the *Acts of the Apostles*: but yet St. Paul,

is

13 (For 'until the law sin was in the world: ' but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless 'death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression,

¹ Gen. 6. 5, 12. & 8. 21. & 13. 13. with Exod. xx. Ch. 5. 21. & 6. 23.

² Ch. 4. 15. ³ 1 Cor. 15. 56. John. 3. 4.

⁴ Gen. 4. 8. & v. vii. xi. xxiii. xxv. xxxv. xlii.

in the places above quoted, pronounces them all together, ἀσεβείς and ἄθεοι, *ungodly and without God*. (for that by these two terms applied to the same persons, he means the same, that is to say, such as did not acknowledge and worship the true God, seems plain). He therefore uses the terms *ungodly* and *sinners of the Gentiles*, as nationally belonging to them in contradistinction to the people of the Jews, who were the people of God, while the other were the provinces of the kingdom of Satan: not but that there were sinners, heinous sinners among the Jews; but the nation, considered as one body and society of men, disowned and declared against and opposed itself to those crimes and impurities which are mentioned by St. Paul, ch. i. 24, &c. as woven into the religious and politic constitutions of the Gentiles. There they had their full scope and swing, had allowance, countenance, and protection. The idolatrous nations had by their religions, laws, and forms of government, made themselves the open votaries and were the professed subjects of devils. So St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 20, 21. truly calls the gods which they worshipped and paid their homage to. And suitably hereunto, their religious observances, it is well known, were not without great impurities, which were of right charged upon them, when they had a place in their sacred offices, and had the recommendation of religion to give them credit. The rest of the vices in St. Paul's black list, which were not warmed at their altars and fostered in their temples, were yet by the connivance of the law cherished in their private houses, made a part of the uncondemned actions of common life, and had the countenance of custom to authorize them, even in the best regulated and most civilized governments of the Heathens. On the contrary, the frame of the Jewish commonwealth was founded on the acknowledgment and worship of the only true invisible God, and their laws required an extraordinary purity of life and strictness of manners.

That the Gentiles were styled ἐχθροί, *enemies*, in a political or national sense, is plain from Ephes. ii. where they are called, *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant*. Abraham, on the other side, was called *the friend of God*, that is to say, one in covenant with him, and his professed subject who owned God to the world: and so were his posterity, the people of the Jews, while the rest of the world were under revolt, and lived in open rebellion against him, Isai. xli. 8. And here in this epistle St. Paul expressly teaches, that when the nation of the Jews, by rejecting of the Messiah, put themselves out of the peculiar kingdom of God, and were cast off from being any longer the peculiar people of God, they became enemies, and the Gentile world were reconciled. See ch. xi. 15. Hence St. Paul, who was the Apostle of the Gentiles, calls his performing that office *the ministry of reconciliation*, 2 Cor. v. 18. And here in this chapter, ver. 1. the privilege which they receive by the

accepting of the covenant of grace in Jesus Christ, he tells them is this, that they have peace with God, that is to say, are no longer incorporated with his enemies, and of the party of the open rebels against him in the kingdom of Satan, being returned to their natural allegiance in their owning the one true supreme God, in submitting to the kingdom that he had set up in his Son, and being received by him as his subjects and children. Suitably hereunto, St. James, speaking of the conversion of the Gentiles, says of it, that *God did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name*. Acts, xv. 14. and ver. 19. he calls the converts, *those who from among the Gentiles are turned to God*.

Besides what is to be found in other parts of St. Paul's epistles to justify the taking of these words here, as applied nationally to the Gentiles, in contradistinction to the children of Israel, that which St. Paul says, ver. 10, 11. makes it necessary to understand them so. *We*, says he, *when we were enemies were reconciled to God*, and so we now glory in him, as our God. *We* here must unavoidably be spoken in the name of the Gentiles, as is plain not only by the whole tenor of this epistle, but from this passage of *glorying in God*, which he mentions as a privilege now of the unbelieving Gentiles, surpassing that of the Jews, whom he had taken notice of before, ch. ii. 17. as being forward to glory in God as their peculiar right, though with no great advantage to themselves. But the Gentiles who were reconciled now to God by Christ's death, and taken into covenant with God, as many as received the Gospel, had a new and better title to this glorying than the Jews. Those who now are reconciled, and glory in God as their God, he says, were enemies. The Jews, who had the same corrupt nature common to them with the rest of mankind, are no where that I know called ἐχθροί, *enemies*, or ἀσεβείς, *ungodly*, while they publicly owned him for their God, and professed to be his people. But the heathens were deemed enemies, for being aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise. There were never but two kingdoms in the world, that of God, and that of the devil; these were opposite, and therefore the subjects of the latter could not but be in the state of *enemies*, and fall under that denomination. The revolt from God was universal, and the nations of the earth had given themselves up to idolatry, when God called Abraham, and took him into covenant with himself, as he did afterwards the whole nation of the Israelites; whereby they were re-admitted into his kingdom, came under his protection, and were his people and subjects, and no longer enemies; whilst all the rest of the nations remained in the state of rebellion, the professed subjects of other gods, who were usurpers upon God's right, and enemies of his kingdom. And indeed if the epithets given by St. Paul to the heathens, as mentioned above, be not taken as spoken of the Gentile world in this political and truly evangelical sense, but in the ordinary systematical

who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one

1 Cor. 15. 21, 22, 45. 2 John, 1. 26. 1 John, 4. 9, 10. John, 1. 16. Eph. 1. 6, 7. & 2. 4-9. Mat. 26. 28. & 26. 28. Ver. 19-21.

systematical notion applied to all mankind, as belonging universally to every man personally, whether by profession Gentile, Jew, or Christian, before he be actually regenerated by a saving faith and an effectual thorough conversion, the illative particle *wherefore* in the beginning of ver. 12. will hardly connect it and what follows to the foregoing part of this chapter. But the first eleven verses must be taken for a parenthesis, and then the *therefore* in the beginning of this 5th chapter, which joins it to the 4th with a very clear connection, will be wholly insignificant, and, after all, the sense of the 12th verse will but ill connect with the end of the 4th chapter, notwithstanding the *wherefore* which is taken to bring them in as an inference. Whereas these first eleven verses being supposed to be spoken of the Gentiles, makes them not only a piece with St. Paul's design in the foregoing and following chapters, but the thread of the whole discourse goes on very smooth, and the inferences (ushered in with *therefore* in the first verse, and with *wherefore* in the 12th verse) are very easy, clear, and natural, from the immediately preceding verses. That of the first verse may be seen in what we have already said, and that of the 12th verse in short thus: "We Gentiles have by Christ received the reconciliation, which we cannot doubt to be intended for us as well as for the Jews, since sin and death entered into the world by Adam, the common father of us all. And as by the disobedience of that one, condemnation of death came upon all; so by the obedience of One, justification to life came upon all."

Ver. 9. From *wrath*] See on chap. i. 18. and 1 Thess. i. 10.

Ver. 11. *And not only so*] These words join this verse to the third. The Apostle in the second verse says, "We, the Gentiles who believe, glory in the hopes of an eternal, splendid state of bliss." In ver. 3. he adds, "And not only so, but our afflictions are to us matter of glory;" which he proves in the seven following verses; and then, returning to his subject, adds, "And not only so, but we glory in God also as our God, being reconciled to him in Jesus Christ:" and thus he shews that the convert Gentiles had whereof to glory, as well as the Jews, and were not inferior to them, though they had not circumcision and the law, wherein the Jews gloried so much, but with no ground; in comparison of what the Gentiles had to glory in, by faith in Jesus Christ now under the Gospel. The verse may be paraphrased; "It is true, we Gentiles could not formerly glory in God, as our God; that was the privilege of the Jews, who alone, of all the nations, owned him for their King and God, and were his people in covenant with him: All the rest of the kingdoms of the earth had taken other lords, and given themselves up to false gods to serve and worship them; and so were in a state of war with the true God, the God of Israel: but now we being reconciled by Jesus Christ, whom we have received and owned for our Lord, and thereby being returned into his kingdom, and to our

"ancient allegiance, we can truly glory in God as our God; which the Jews cannot do, who have refused to receive Jesus his eternal Son for their Lord, whom God hath appointed Lord over all things." As our translators have rendered the Greek verb *καταλλάσσω*, by *reconcile* in the foregoing verse and in all other places, and the Greek word *καταλλάξω*, in all other places, by *reconciliation*; it should certainly have been so rendered here.

Ver. 12.] Here the Apostle advances his *third* and last argument, to prove the extensiveness of the divine grace, or that it reaches to all mankind as well as to the Jews. His argument stands thus: "The consequences of Christ's obedience extend as far as the consequences of Adam's disobedience; but those extend to all mankind; and therefore so do the consequences of Christ's obedience." Now if the Jews will not allow the Gentiles any interest in *Abraham*, as not being naturally descended from him, yet they must own that the Gentiles are the descendants of *Adam*, as well as themselves; and being all equally involved in the consequences of his sin, that is to say, temporal death and its concomitants, from which they shall all equally be released at the resurrection, through the free gift of God, respecting the obedience of Christ,—they could not deny the Gentiles a share in all the other blessings included in the same gift. This argument, besides proving the main point, serves to shew, 1st, That the grace of God in the Gospel abounds beyond, or very far exceeds, the mere reversal of the sufferings brought upon mankind by Adam's one offence, as it bestows a vast superabundance of blessings, which have no relation to that offence, but to the many offences that mankind have committed, and to the exuberance of the divine grace. 2dly, To shew how justly the divine grace is founded upon the obedience of Christ, in correspondence to the dispensation that Adam was under, and to the consequences of his disobedience. If his disobedience involved all mankind in death, it was proper that the obedience of Christ should be the reason and foundation, not only of reversing that death to all mankind, but also of any other blessings which God should see fit to bestow upon the world. 3dly, It serves to explain, or set in a clear view, the difference between the law and grace. It was the *law*, which for Adam's one transgression subjected him and his posterity, as included in him when he transgressed, to death, without hopes of a revival. It is *grace*, or the favour of the law-giver, which restores all men to life at the resurrection; and, over and above that, has provided a gracious dispensation for the pardon of their sins; for reducing them to obedience; for guarding them against temptations; for supplying them with strength and comfort; and, if faithful to the grace of God, for advancing them to eternal life. This would give the attentive Jew a just notion of the law which himself was under, and under which he was fond of bringing the Gentiles.

The order in which the Apostle handles the argument is this: *First*, he affirms, that death passed upon all mankind by Adam's one offence, ver. 12. *Secondly*, He proves this,

many be dead, much more the grace of God, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.
and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, 16 ^{*} And not as *it was* by one that sinned,

^{*} Gen. 3. 1—16. ver. 12. with Isai. 1. 18. & 43. 25. & 44. 22, Jer. 33. 8. Eph. 1. 7. Rev. 1. 5. Acts, 2. 39. Col. 2. 13.

this, ver. 13, 14. *Thirdly*, He affirms that there is a correspondence between Adam and Christ, or between the offence and the free gift, ver. 15. *Fourthly*, This correspondence, so far as the two opposite parts answer each other, is fully expressed, ver. 18, 19.; and there we have the main or fundamental position of the Apostle's argument, in relation to the point which he has been arguing from the beginning of the Epistle; namely, the extensiveness of the grace of the Gospel, that it actually reaches to all men, and is not confined to the Jewish peculiarity. *Fifthly*, But before he lays down this position, it was necessary he should shew that the correspondence between Adam and Christ, or between the offence and the gift, is not to be confined strictly to the bounds specified in the position, as if the gift reached no farther than the consequences of the offence, when in reality it extends greatly beyond them, ver. 15—17. *Sixthly*, Having settled these points as previously necessary to clear up his fundamental position, and fit it to his argument, he then lays down that position in a diversified manner of speech, ver. 18, 19. just as in 1 Cor. xv. 20, 21. and leaves us to conclude from the premises laid down, ver. 15—17. that the gift and grace, or favour of God, in its utmost extent, is as free to all mankind who are willing to accept of it, as this particular instance, the resurrection from the dead. *Seventhly*, Having thus shewn the extensiveness of the divine grace, in opposition to the direful effects of the law, under which Adam was, that the Jew might not overlook what he intended he should particularly observe, the Apostle puts him in mind, that the law given to Adam, *transgress and die*, was introduced into the Jewish constitution by the ministry of Moses; and for this end, that the offence, with the penalty of death annexed, might abound, ver. 20. But to illustrate the divine grace, by setting it in contrast to the law, he immediately adds, *where sin* subjecting to death *hath abounded,—grace hath much more abounded*; that is to say, in blessings bestowed, it has stretched both far beyond Adam's transgression, and the transgressions under the law of Moses; ver. 20, 21. Upon this argument the two following general remarks may be made: *First*, As to the order of time, the Apostle carries his arguments backward, from the time when Christ came into the world (chap. i. 17. to chap. iv.) to the time when the covenant was made with Abraham, chap. iv. and to the time when the judgment of condemnation pronounced upon Adam came upon all men; chap. v. 12. to the end. And thus he gives us a view of the principal dispensations from the beginning of the world. *Secondly*, In this last case, as well as the two former, he uses law or forensic terms; *judgment for condemnation,—justification,—justify,—made righteous*; and therefore as he considers both Jews and Gentiles at the coming of Christ, and Abraham when the covenant was made with him, so he considers Adam and all men as standing in the court before the tribunal of God; and this was the clearest and concise way of representing his arguments.

Wherefore, as by one man, &c.] The sense and connection of this verse seems well kept up, if the *and*, in the second clause be considered as redundant, which it frequently is, 1 Cor. xiv. 27. 2 Cor. i. 6. *As by one man sin entered,—so, or even so, death passed upon all men.* And thus the positions in each clause aptly and regularly answer each other. All other interpretations of the verse seem greatly to embarrass the construction and the sense. *Wherefore, διὰ τούτο*, frequently signifies *in relation to* the affair going before, not by way of inference from it, but to denote a farther enlargement upon it, or the advancing of something which enforces or explains it. *For that all have sinned*, is rendered by some *unto which all have sinned*; that is, "all are so far involved in the consequences of Adam's first transgression, as by means of it to become obnoxious to death." St. Paul is here evidently speaking of that mortality to which all men became subject in consequence of Adam's transgression. Volumes have been written to prove, that the death inflicted upon all mankind, as a punishment for that transgression, was not only natural, but spiritual and eternal; but after all that has been controverted on the subject, it appears a mere *strife of words*. *That in Adam all die*, or become subject to temporal death, is a fact which we too fatally experience: that this death was the consequence of sin is equally certain; and if there be any meaning in the words, sin is certainly the spiritual death of the soul: the spiritual death therefore introduced the natural; and that the sinful soul dying to this life cannot be admitted into the life of glory with God, is a fact equally certain, upon the authority of revelation, with those already advanced. If therefore it be allowed, that by one man sin entered into the world, and natural death by sin, it must be allowed that from the same source proceeds the spiritual and eternal, as well as the natural death. With all this I do not on any account mean to assert, that this death is inflicted upon all mankind as their punishment for Adam's transgression. The plain fact stands only thus:—that we are subject to sin and death, in consequence of sin and death introduced into the world by Adam.

Ver. 13. For until the law, sin was [counted] in the world] The Apostle's doctrine, that all have received the reconciliation through Christ, being founded on the fact, *that all have been subjected to sin and death through Adam*, he immediately enters on the proof of that fact, by appealing to the death of infants and others, who, not being capable of actual sin, cannot be thought to die for their own transgression. But to see the argument in its full force we must supply the word *counted* or *imputed* in the first clause, which is inserted by the Apostle in the second: *sin was counted in the world* to all men: that is, all men without exception suffer death, the punishment of sin.

But sin is not imputed, when there is no law] By law Mr. Locke understands a revealed positive law threatening death for every offence. But on that supposition, no sin could be punished before the law of Moses was given, contrary

is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of

¹ Or by one offence. Gen. 3. 6. ² Ver. 12, 14, 21. ³ John, 1. 16. Eph. 1. 6, 7, & 2. 4—7. If. 61. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Cor. 4. 8. 1 Tim. 2. 12. John, 10. 10. Rom. 8. 23. Rev. 1. 6. & 5. 10. & 20. 4. & 22. 5.

contrary to what happened to the antediluvians. And after it was given, none but the sins of the Jews could be punished. Whereas the Apostle affirms, chap. i. 32. that the Gentiles know, that they who sin against the law written on their heart, are worthy of death. I therefore think that the expression, *Where there is no law*, is general, and means, where no law of God is known; and that the Apostle had in his eye the case of infants and idiots, to whom certainly there is no law, as they are not capable of the knowledge of law; consequently they are not capable of sinning actually like Adam. Wherefore since death reigns over them, equally as over others, it is evident, that, having no sin of their own, they die through Adam's sin alone.

Ver. 14. *Who is the figure of him that was to come?* Adam is said to be the figure of him who was to come, that is, of Christ the Messiah; for this is one of the marks or signs by which the Jews signified the expected Messiah. See Luke, xxiv. 21. John, vi. 14, 15. xi. 27. Heb. x. 37. In the Greek it is τύπος, the type of him that was to come. A type signifies such a mark or impression as is made by a stamp or a seal. It is used, John, xx. 25. to signify the mark which the nails made in our Saviour's hands when he was nailed to the tree, and it is rendered the print of the nail. See also Acts, vii. 44. Heb. viii. 5. A type therefore is a relative word, signifying a thing to which another is to answer or agree, as the figure upon the wax answers, is like to, and agrees with, the figure upon the seal; or as the thing which is made, answers to the pattern after which it is made. Hence St. Paul several times applies it to moral action, under the notion of an example, namely, when the behaviour of one man is made the seal or stamp to be impressed upon another man; or when one man's actions are made a pattern to be copied after by another man, as Philip, iii. 17. 1 Thess. i. 7. 2 Thess. iii. 9. 1 Tim. iv. 12. Tit. ii. 7. In the place before us, when Adam is said to be a type of him that was to come, no doubt can be made that St. Paul intends thereby to denote, that there was something with reference to Christ which was to bear a correspondence or to answer to something with reference to Adam; or that he draws a comparison between something which Adam did, and the consequences thereof, and something which Christ did, and the consequences thereof. This comparison he begins at ver. 12. and carries on to the end of the chapter; and it consists of three parts,—two affirmative propositions, and the connection or relation between them, thus:—PROPOSITION I. "By Adam's disobedience death came upon all men." CONNECTION: Adam in this was a type or figure of Christ; or in respect to this, Christ is the counterpart to Adam. PROPOSITION II. "By Christ's obedience life is restored to all men." The attentive reader will observe how methodically the Apostle proceeds in clearing the first proposition and the

connection, before he advances to the second proposition. It may be proper just to remark, that this and the preceding verse form an instance of the perspicuous brevity for which St. Paul was remarkable. One shall hardly find in any other author an argument so justly managed, so fully established, attended with such a variety of instructive sentiments, in the compass of thirty words:—for, setting aside the articles, there are no more in the Greek. It is by this unparalleled art that the Apostle has brought such a variety of arguments, instructions, and sentiments, all stated, proved, and sufficiently guarded, explained, and defended, within the limits of this Epistle, as have made it a magazine of the most real, extensive, useful, and pleasant knowledge.

Ver. 15. *But not as the offence*] This evidently shews that the Apostle in this paragraph is running a parallel, or making a comparison between the offence of Adam and its consequence, and the opposite free gift of God and its consequences; and in these three verses he shews, that the comparison will not hold in all respects, because the free gift bestows blessings far beyond the consequences of the offence, and which therefore have no relation to it; and this was necessary, not only to prevent mistakes, concerning the consequence of Adam's offence, and the extent of Gospel grace; but it was also necessary to the Apostle's main design; which was, not only to prove that the grace of the Gospel extends to all men, so far as it takes off the consequence of Adam's offence; but that it likewise extends to all men with respect to the surplusage of blessings, in which it stretches vastly beyond the consequence of Adam's offence; for both the grace which takes off the consequence of Adam's offence, and the grace which abounds beyond it, are included in the same χάρις, free gift, which should be well observed; for in this I conceive lies the connection and force of his argument. The free gift, which stands opposed to Adam's offence, and which appears to have been bestowed immediately after his offence (Gen. iii. 15.), includes both the grace which answers exactly to the offence, and also that part of the grace which stretches far beyond it. And if the one part of the gift be freely bestowed upon all mankind, as the Jews allow, why not the other? especially considering that the whole gift stands upon a reason and foundation, in excellence and worth vastly surpassing the malignity and demerit of the offence; and consequently capable of producing benefits vastly beyond the sufferings occasioned by the offence? This is the force of the Apostle's argument; and therefore supposing that in the letter of verses 18, 19. he compares the consequences of Adam's offence and Christ's obedience, only so far as the one is commensurate to the other; yet his reasoning, ver. 15—17 plainly shews, it is his meaning and intention that we should take into his conclusion the whole of the gift, so far as it can reach to all mankind.

I.

Many

righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

18 Therefore as * by the offence of one judgment^b came upon all men to condemnation; even so † by the righteousness of one *the free*

gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

19 For^c as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners,^d so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

* Or by one offence. b Ver. 12, 10. Ch. 3, 10, 20. John, 12, 32. Heb. 2, 9. † Or by one righteousness. c Ver. 17, 14, 15—18. 1 Cor. 15, 21, 22. d Dan. 9, 24. If. 57, 4—6, 10—12. & 45, 24. & 54, 17. & 61, 10. Jer. 23, 5, 6. & 33, 15, 16. Mat. 20, 28. & 26, 28. Rev. 1, 5, 6. & 5, 9, 10. & 7, 1, 9, 14. & 19, 8.

Many be dead—unto many.] The many died—unto the many. I suppose, says Mr. Locke, that the phrase *οι πολλοι*, and the other *τα; πολλοις*, may stand here for the multitude or collective body of mankind: for the Apostle in express words assures us, 1 Cor. xv. 22. that *in Adam all died, and in Christ all shall be made alive*; and so here ver. 18. *all men* fell under the condemnation of death, and *all men* were restored unto justification of life: which *all men*, in the very next words, ver. 19. are called *οι πολλοι*, *the many*. So that *the many* in the former part of this verse, and *the many* at the end of it, comprehending all mankind, must be equal. The comparison, therefore, and the inequality of the things compared, lie not here between the number of those who died, and the number of those who shall be restored to life; but the comparison lies between the persons by whom this general death and this general restoration to life came;—Adam the type, and Jesus Christ the anti-type: and it seems to lie in this, that Adam's lapse came barely for the satisfaction of his own appetite and desire of good to himself; but the restoration was from the exuberant bounty and good-will of Christ towards men; who at the cost of his own painful death purchased life for them. I may add to what Mr. Locke has advanced, that since all mankind were made mortal for Adam's sin, the Apostle by *οι πολλοι*, *the many*, certainly means *all mankind*. Besides, Christ, in speaking of this very subject, used the word in that extensive sense (Matt. xxvi. 28.); *This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed (περι πολλων) for many*; that is, for the collective body of mankind. And as *the many* who died, are all mankind; so *the many* in the end of the verse, to whom *the gift by grace* is said to have abounded, are all mankind. For *the abounding of the gift by grace*, as is plain from ver. 19. means only that, by the gracious gift of God, all mankind, for the sake of Christ's obedience, are allowed a short life on earth, and a trial under a better covenant than that under which Adam fell; and that all are to be raised from the dead at the last day, to receive according to their deeds. Hence we are told, 1 Cor. xv. 22. *As by Adam all die; so by Christ all shall be made alive*. See also the following, ver. 16. where *many offences* signifies *all offences*.

By one man Jesus Christ.] The Apostle calls the Lord Jesus Christ a *man*, to shew that in comparing him with Adam, his actions in the human nature chiefly are considered.

Ver. 16. And not as it was by one that sinned, &c.] The Apostle here manifestly enters upon another respect, in which the *gift* reaches beyond the offence: *και*, *and*, has nearly the same force as *also*. See on chap. i. 17. and the introduction to the present chapter.

Ver. 17. Much more they which receive, &c.] *The abounding of grace here*, is without all doubt the same as *the grace of God which hath abounded to many*, ver. 15. and *the gift of righteousness or justification*, is the same as *the gift by the grace of one man, Jesus Christ*, ver. 15. There, *the grace* and *the gift* are considered simply and absolutely,—*as free to the many*, or to all mankind: here, they are considered as *received*, or duly improved by some of the many, or some part of mankind, in order to their eternal happiness. *Grace* is the favour or good-will of the donor; the *gift* of justification is one of the great benefits that he has bestowed. Instead of *reigned by one,—in life by one*, we may read *through one*.

Ver. 18, 19. Therefore, as by the offence of one.] *Therefore as through one offence all men fell under condemnation; even so through one righteousness all men are restored unto justification of life.* *Αγα ον*, *therefore*, always denotes the grand point the Apostle is aiming at, and which, after having given reasons, distinctions, or explications, he at last lays down as fully cleared or established. See ch. vii. 3, 25. viii. 12. ix. 16, 18. xiv. 12, 19. And so in this and the following verse he closes his argument, and finishes the comparison which he left incomplete in the 12th verse. It seems as if the comparison in these two verses should be understood only so far as the consequences of Christ's obedience are of the same extent with the consequences of Adam's disobedience. The very form of the sentence leads us to this opinion; and this exact comparison is the just and true ground of the Apostle's argument, taken from Adam's offence, for the conviction of the Jew. The stress of the argument evidently lies upon the phrase, *all men*; and to fix a conviction upon the Jew the *restoration of all men to life*,—which he owned, and which he must own was the effect of grace,—was the most proper topic to be insisted on. It may be objected, that *justification of life*, and *being made righteous*, seem too strong terms for expressing the general resurrection: but consider, *first*, the Apostle uses law or forensic terms in his two foregoing arguments, and therefore no wonder if he uses them in his third and last argument. *Secondly*, *Justification of life* is opposed to *condemnation*; and *being made righteous*, is opposed to *being made sinners*. Now if our common mortality is signified by *condemnation*, and *made sinners*, what impropriety is there, in supposing that the resurrection which stands opposed to that mortality is signified by *justification of life*, and *being made righteous*? *Thirdly*, *Justification—being justified or made righteous*, are terms applicable to any instance of deliverance from suffering. See Judg. v. 11. Psalm iv. 1. xxii. 31. xxxi. 1. *Fourthly*, In the two foregoing arguments faith is insisted on as, on our part, the condition

20 Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded,

grace did much more abound :

21 That as sin hath reigned unto death,

¹ Ch. 1. 10, 20. & 4. 15. & 6. 1, 15. & 7. 5, 8, 11, 13. Gal. 3. 19, 25. John, 15. 22. ² Luke, 7. 47. 1 Tim. 1. 11—16. If. 1. 18. & 43. 24, 25. & 44. 22. Jer. 3. 1, 4, 5, 14, 19, 22. & 31. 31—34. & 33. 8. & 50. 20. Micah, 7. 18, 19. Mat. 9. 13. John, 10. 10. 1 Cor. 6. 2—11. Eph. 1. 2—9. & 2. 1—9. Titus, 3. 3—7.

condition of justification ; but here St. Paul mentions no condition at all. He does not say, *justification of life by faith,—many shall be made righteous by faith;*—and consequently thus directs our thoughts to some unconditional discharge. But, after all, as the sense of ver. 15—17. is intended and understood in ver. 18, 19. and as the drift of the Apostle's conclusion is to shew that the gift, in its utmost extent, is free to all mankind ; if any one shall judge that *justification of life, and shall be made righteous,* do directly denote not only the resurrection, but the free gift in its full latitude, as free to all mankind who receive and improve the grace of God ; and that *the many shall be made righteous,* is to be understood as *the grace of God,* and the gift hath abounded unto many, ver. 15. there is certainly no need to contend ; for the difference is not very material, the Apostle's argument being the same either way. See Doddridge and Calmet.

Ver. 20. *Moreover, the law, &c.] But the law, &c.* There can be nothing plainer than that St. Paul, in this and the next verse, makes a comparison between the state of the Jews, and that of the Gentiles, as it stands described in the eight preceding verses ; to shew wherein they differed or agreed, so far as was necessary to his present purpose, of satisfying the convert Romans, that in reference to their interest in the Gospel, the Jews had no advantage over them by the law. With what reference to those eight verses he wrote this and the following, appears by the very choice of the words. He tells them, ver. 12. that *death by sin entered (εἰσῆλθε) into the world;* and here he tells them, that the *law, (for sin and death were entered already,) εἰσῆλθε, entered a little;* a word which set in opposition to εἰσῆλθε, gives a distinguishing idea of the extent of the law, such as it really was ; little and narrow as were the people of Israel whom alone it reached in respect of all the other nations of the earth, with whom it had nothing to do ; for the law of Moses was given to Israel alone, and not to all mankind. The Vulgate, therefore, rightly translates the word *subintravit ; it entered,* but not far : that is to say, the death which followed upon the account of the Mosaic law, reigned over but a small part of mankind, viz. the children of Israel, who alone were under that law ; whereas, by Adam's transgression of the positive law given him in Paradise, death passed upon all men. The Apostle, as we have observed, uses the word *law* in various senses ; sometimes for a rule in general, chap. iii. 27. ; sometimes for the whole Jewish code, or the Old Testament, chap. iii. 19. ; sometimes for a rule of action, chap. iii. 20. ; sometimes for a rule of action with a penalty of death annexed, as here and chap. vi. 15. vii. 4. &c. Such a law Adam was under ;—*On the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die :* and such a constitution the law of Moses was, subjecting those who were under it to death for every transgression. For observe, it is the very nature of law, whether divine or human, (for law in

its nature and properties is the same, whether enacted by God or man,) never to remit the penalty or forfeiture. The law of England makes felony *death.* The criminal, when convicted, is *dead in law;* and when executed, should he come to life again, the law slays him again that very moment ; and orders him again to execution, and so on for ever. The everlasting language of law to every one that breaks it, and consequently for every breach and transgression of it, is, *Thou shalt die, or thou shalt be punished.* Law never does, nor can pardon ; but all the world knows and allows that it is the prerogative of every law-giver to pardon or remit the penalty, as he sees fit : and therefore the language of law, *dying thou shalt die,* though it may also be considered as the language of the lawgiver, yet it is not to be understood of the event, as if the threatening must and would certainly and eventually be executed, but of the demerit of transgression ; reserving to the wisdom of the governor liberty to execute, mitigate, or totally remit the penalty, as he shall judge proper. *Shall die,* in the language of lawgivers enacting laws, must be understood not as the language of private persons, but as implying and including a reserve in favour of the governor's prerogative to mitigate or remit the penalty. Were it not so, all mankind must have perished in Adam, and all the Jews under the law had been lost for ever ; and every felon in England must have been actually executed. Now, when the lawgiver or governor mitigates the penalty, or suspends the execution,—granting the sinner the benefit of repentance, and promising pardon and life ; this is *Gospel ;* then he is *not under law* but under *grace* or *favour ;* not under law, subjecting to death for every transgression, but yet under law as a rule of action which he is as much as ever obliged to obey, though every act of disobedience does not bring him under unpardonable wrath and condemnation. This is the dispensation, in greater or lesser degrees of light, under which all mankind have been, from the time of the promise (Gen. iii. 15.) to this day ; excepting that the law in its rigour was introduced among the Jews. To us Christians the grace of God is clearly displayed : yet so, that we are at the same time expressly assured, that if it is perferingly rejected and abused, we must expect no farther efforts of the divine goodness for our salvation ; Heb. vi. 4—8. x. 26, 27. If, despising God's present patience and forbearance, we live after the flesh, the law at the last day will take place, or be executed, and we shall die, chap. viii. 13. ; for the law is so holy, and good, and just, that it can be relaxed only in favour of the sinner's repentance. But in the case of impenitents and incurables, it must and will take place ; that is to say, in other words, it is perfectly right and fitting that they, being the corruption and nuisance of God's creation, should be destroyed as tares and chaff in the fire.

The Apostle says, *the law entered that the offence might abound,*

even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

abund, or rather *so that the offence might abound*. See chap. iii. 19. The meaning is not, that the law was brought in among the Jews to make them more wicked, or guilty of more sins than they were before; but the meaning is, that by the entrance of the law every sin which the Jew committed made him liable to death; and so the offence of the same nature with Adam's was multiplied. Mr. Locke is of opinion, that the last clause of this verse is spoken with special relation to the Jews, and denotes all that surplussage of grace which God vouchsafed to them above the rest of the world. But though this may be true, there is no necessity for excluding the grace which extends to all mankind; and the following verse, as it is the concluding stroke of the Apostle's argument, naturally leads our thoughts to take in the whole compass of sin, and its effects upon all the world, as well as the whole of God's grace, not only to the Jews, but to all mankind. See Locke, Doddridge, and Whitby.

Inferences.—As the fall of man happened in a higher and very different order of nature from the present, it is not possible for us to have a clear and adequate knowledge of it. But there are numberless degrees between a perfect knowledge and a total ignorance. We are told all that it concerns us to know; and that we should attend to as an important part of our own history. In forming our notion concerning it from the account given in Scripture, we must make due allowance for the imperfection of human language, which cannot express spiritual things otherwise than by figures founded in that analogy which subsists between the visible and the invisible world.

But it may be asked, Whence came evil into the world? This has been deemed a question of great intricacy; but it may be solved by considering only whence *moral* good proceeds. Does it not arise from the right use which a free agent makes of his liberty, when he *chooses* that which is proper for him, and rejects the contrary? whether the power so to do, refers to man in his original state of innocence; or to man in his fallen state, unable as of himself to do any thing good, but able to do all things through Christ strengthening him? Evil therefore flows from the abuse of moral liberty; and it is needless to attempt to account for its existence from any other source. Take away moral liberty, that is, the power of choosing what is good, and avoiding what is evil, and there can be no moral good in man.

Adam by the abuse of his free-will *pulled down destruction upon himself*. He disobeyed his Creator, and he had in part the punishment he deserved. So far, I think, there is no ground for objection. But the consequence of his fall involving all his race, and *making infirmity permanent*, as Eldras speaks; this is a great offence to many. We are apt to say with him, *That it had been better not to have given the earth to Adam; (not to have trusted him with the fate of his posterity;) or else when it was given him, to have restrained him from sinning*. This sentiment, though a rash one, is very natural to our frailty and ignorance; as is also the exclamation which follows: *O Adam, what hast thou done!*

for though it was thou that sinnedst, thou art not fallen alone, but we all that come of thee. Such complaints and such expostulations have been common among men; but it is common to complain without reason; and if we saw the whole plan of Providence with relation to mankind, I am fully persuaded that we should find this complaint very unreasonable, and even most ungrateful to our Redeemer; who has provided an ample remedy for all damages arising from Adam's transgression, by atoning not only for original sin, but also for the many actual offences of penitent sinners, as is shewed at large in the chapter before us.

I would only observe in this place, that the reason why we are so prone to complain and lament ourselves, is, because we now feel the inconveniences of our present state, and are not sufficiently apprised of many of its advantages, nor of the greater disadvantages which other *initiating states* may be liable to. It is very probable, that every intelligent being has a time of trial or probation. Some of the angels are fallen irreparably. Our father Adam was placed in a lower station than they: his fall consequently was less, and by the mercy of our great Mediator, he and Eve, the companion of his fall, are now fully restored. We find ourselves, not originally by our own fault, at the bottom. But a ray of light reaches down to us, and a way is opened for our ascent. That light and that way is our dear Redeemer, who is ever present with and in the believer, to enlighten, guide, and assist him in his passage.

But why (it may be said) did not God make us happy at once? Why should he suffer his creatures to run any hazard of being miserable? He might have made justice as natural and necessary as respiration; and thereby spared us all the pains which we must now be at before we can be happy upon the terms which he has set us?

To this we might answer in the words of the Apostle: *Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him who formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay?*—&c. Thus we might answer, and thereby satisfy a pious mind: although these words were spoken only concerning God's electing a peculiar people, called to the distinguished privileges of the Gospel dispensation; and were not intended to be applied, as they have since been, to the bulk of mankind, whose sentence, as well as ours, at the last day, will be according to their works: which I remark here, because this way of arguing, which resolves difficulties by vouching divine supremacy, has been so abused. To those therefore who move this question, "Why did not God make us happy at once, without our passing through any state of probation?" it will be more satisfactory, if we can intelligibly unfold this knot, instead of cutting it by dint of sovereign power.

The objectors would be dispensed from all probationary states; they would take no trouble, and run no hazard: they would have nothing to do, but to enjoy; they would be immutably, eternally, infinitely, happy. They want no more of God; they have no other cares or desires.

Let it now be considered, whether such desires are reasonable. Are they not, on the contrary, most ungenerous and

CHAP. VI.

We may not live in sin, for we are dead unto it, as appeareth by our baptism. Nor are we to let sin reign any more, because we have yielded ourselves to the service of righte usness: and death is the wages of sin.

[Anno Domini 58.]

WHAT shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may

^a Ch. 3. 5. & 4. 1. & 7. 7. & 9. 14. ^b Ch. 7. 7. 8. & 5. 22. 21. & 2. 4. 5. ^c Ch. 3. 5. Mat. 4. 10. Titus, 2. 11, 12. James, 1. 15. ^d Col. 3. 3. 1 Peter, 2. 24. Gal. 6. 14. Col. 2. 11, 13. Gen. 39. 9. Pl. 119. 104. ^e Mat. 28. 19. Act. 10. 5. Gal. 3. 27. Col. 2. 12. 1 Peter, 3. 21. ^f Or *Abel*. ^g Ch. 2. 12. & 3. 4. Ver. 3, 5, 6, 8, 11.

and bafe; arguing a frame of mind quite unworthy of the favour to which it makes pretension? We are all *children* of the Almighty Father, and consequently under fuch obligations as that relation infers. Suppose then a *son* quite averfe to giving himself any trouble about pleasing his father,—one who thinks it a hardship to be bid do any thing but what he himself inclines to: who grudges that any service should be required of him; yet wants an inheritance,—wants that his father should do all he can for him. Such are they who make the objection; and God, who bids us *not to cast pearls before swine*, will not squander his blessings upon fuch unworthy selfish fpirits.

Even in this state of confufion, we think it *wrong* when a worthless man is possessed of great wealth or preferment. Though these are far from being any real good, yet, as men value them, they judge them misplaced in the hands of a fool. In the kingdom of heaven there will be no fuch preposterous distribution; but excellence shall be the measure of bliss; and *none shall be crowned, but those who have conquered*.

And this may serve for an answer to those, who are inclined to charge God foolishly, for permitting the influence of the first man's transgression to infect all his race. This infection we commonly call *original sin*, which has been denied by some, and misrepresented by others, with fuch gross aggravations, as render it offensive to common sense, and inconsistent with the revealed doctrines, particularly those of this Epistle.

As for those who deny it, I shall not dispute with them; for who would debate with a blind man about darkness? And they must be blind indeed, who perceive not evil in their natures. The truth here is to be felt, and needs no foreign proof.

I shall here just take notice of the account of original sin given in the articles of faith of the church of England: which was made to render us the more sensible of our obligations to the Redeemer, and is expressed in terms which are literally true in a certain sense, yet may easily be mistaken. As where it is said [the IXth article] that original sin is not only the *corruption*, but the *fault of the nature of every man*, and *deserves condemnation*. When we call it a *fault*, we must remember to distinguish it from our own actual faults, and remark, that the article calls it *the fault of our nature*. *Fault* is used here, as we apply it to inanimate beings, and in the same sense, as when we say of a vessel, that it is *faulty*, that is to say, defective, useless, deserving to be rejected and cast away. However, for

abound?

2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as * were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was

the present, it has spoiled us, it makes us abominable: for a fault is a fault, and corruption is corruption, whichever way it came, or whatever use may be made of it. It has happened without our crime, and it may have an issue un-fpeakably to our advantage. But neither of these are here considered. Regard is had only to the present nature of man in his fallen and unregenerate state, which is notoriously unjust, and as fuch deserves condemnation, as a *dead tree cumbering the ground*, if there were no *reviving power*, if there were no *Redeemer*. But this is putting a case, which never was, nor could have been. For the Almighty, *who inhabiteth eternity*, and whose all-feeing eye reaches through the whole extent of it, foreknowing the lapse of the first Adam, had, *before the foundation of the world*, provided a second head of human nature, through whom to derive his blessings to the whole race, when the first channel was polluted and spoiled. And as by the first channel *death* came into the world, so *resurrection* proceeds from the second: for *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive*. And *those who have done good, shall come forth to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of condemnation*.

The present life is our time of trial, during which our gracious Redeemer administers proper assistances to each man particularly according to his capacity. For *as he has tasted death for every man; so he is the Saviour of all men, and the light of all men, having written the law in their hearts*, and offering grace to fulfil it.

As for us, who have the light of revelation, we have so much more to answer for. Let us not then waste our time in vain complaints, or absurd cavils at the divine dispensation. We see indeed but little of God's ways, yet what we see is sufficient for our conduct, and to silence all reasonable objections; since we are assured that the merits of Christ are co-extended with the demerits of Adam, and that every man at the last day shall be judged only according to his own deeds. Then the mercy, as well as the justice of God, will be exerted in a manner which far transcends all notions that we can now form of them; the clouds, which now cover the ways of Providence, will be dissipated; wisdom will be justified of her children; and even those who shall be then reprobated, will be forced to acknowledge the equity of their condemnation.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The sinner's justification before God through faith being set forth, the blessed effects of it are here described.—Not that faith is the meritorious cause

of

raised up from the dead by ^e the glory of the Father, even so ^h we also should walk in newness of life:

5 ¹ For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection :

^e John, 11. 40. Col. 1. 11. Eph. 3. 16. 2 Cor. 13. 4. 1 Cor. 6. 14. Ch. 8. 11. ^h 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. Eph. 4. 22—24. Col. 3. 9—13. 1 Peter, 4. 1, 2. & 2. 1, 2. Ch. 7. 4, 6. & 12. 1, 2. Heb. 12. 1, 2. 2 Peter, 1. 4—9. Ver. 19. ¹ Ch. 8. 13. Phil. 3. 10, 11.

of our justification, but the alone and infinite merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Being now justified,

1. *We have peace with God.* The dreadful breach which sin had made is repaired, the enmity between God and us is removed, and being restored to a state of favour and reconciliation with him, we have that peace of God in our souls which passeth all understanding, and which none can know or taste, till they have, through Jesus Christ our Lord, received the atonement.

2. *We have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand;* have freedom and liberty to approach a throne of grace, as in a state of acceptance before God; and are assured that all our requests which are agreeable to his will, shall through our great High-priest be heard and answered.

3. *We rejoice in hope of the glory of God,* that glory which shall be revealed at the day of the appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, and which we can now antedate by faith.

4. Even our severest trials now have in them matter of abundant joy. *And we can not only rejoice in the prospect before us, but we glory in tribulations also,* in all our afflictions, persecutions, sufferings, and reproaches for Christ, *knowing that,* however grievous to flesh and blood these things at present may be, in the issue they shall prove that they have been blessings in disguise; while *tribulation worketh patience,* and gives us an opportunity to exercise God's holy will; and, without repining, cheerfully to resign ourselves into his hands, neither angry at the instruments of our troubles, nor resenting their indignities. *And patience brings experience* of God's power, grace, and faithfulness, supporting us under our trials, and extricating us out of them; and of our own frailty and fidelity, while we feel how weak we are in ourselves, yet that we can do all things through Christ strengthening us. *And experience begets hope;* every support which the Lord ministers, every deliverance which he gives, confirms and encourages our hope in him; and *hope maketh not ashamed,* gives us a holy but humble boldness to approach the throne of grace, *because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us;* and our hope rests not on any goodness or strength in ourselves, but on him whose free and boundless love has, in the most copious streams, poured forth the Holy Ghost into our hearts in the richest manifestations, and produces these blessed and happy effects.

2dly, The Apostle, having mentioned that delightful theme, the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, cannot but expatiate thereon. It is amazing love, if we consider the persons to whom it is shewn, the manner in which it is expressed, and the blessings thence derived. (1.) The persons were ungodly wretches, apostates from God, desperately wicked, sunk in the lowest abyss of misery, sinners in nature and in practice, and exposed to all the terrible wrath of an offended God, without strength

to afford themselves the least relief, in order to escape the just and inevitable destruction which was before them; yea, enemies, determinately set on evil, and rebels open and avowed against God's crown and dignity. (2.) In this state of deadly guilt and hopeless misery, *in due time,* according to the divine appointment, *Christ died for the ungodly;* an instance of such transcendent grace and love as never had appeared on earth before. Were we to search the world throughout, scarcely could we find a man who, for the most righteous, excellent, and amiable person, would lay down his own life to ransom him: *though peradventure for a good man,* whose public usefulness was eminent, or to whom he owed the deepest obligations, one might be found so generous and grateful, as even to dare to die in his stead. And with what astonishment would such an heroic action be heard, and preserved in the records of fame, for the admiration of all succeeding ages. But lo! with infinitely transcending glory does God commend the surpassing excellence of *his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us,* took our nature, stood in our place, endured the curse which we had deserved, and by the ransom of his own blood redeems every believer from his state of guilt, misery, and despair. Hear it, ye angels, with admiration and astonishment! Hear it, ye sinful sons of men, with wonder and love; and henceforth let heaven echo and earth resound with the praises of redeeming love! (3.) Inestimable are the blessings derived to all the faithful through this love of God in Jesus Christ.

1. *We are now justified through his blood, and reconciled to God by his death.* All the enmity between us is done away, his favour is restored, and we are accepted in the beloved.

2. Much more then may we depend upon it, as a most assured truth, that if we are now justified before God, and cleave to Jesus to the end, (which must be implied according to the whole analogy of faith,) *we shall be saved from wrath through him.* For if, when enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being now in a state of reconciliation, and having an advocate in our ascended Jesus, to whom all power is given in heaven and in earth, and cleaving perseveringly to him, *shall we be saved by his life.*

3. Such a prospect ministers the most enlivening delight to the soul. *Not only* are we reconciled, and raised superior to all tribulations, but having *through Jesus Christ now received the atonement,* and being actually made partakers of justification and acceptance, which, by his obedience to the death of the cross, he purchased for us; we joy in God *through our Lord Jesus Christ,* as our God, our portion, and exceeding great reward. Blessed and happy the people that are in such a case!

3dly, From the 12th verse to the end of the chapter, the Apostle draws a parallel between the two covenant heads,

6 Knowing this, that ^k our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

^k Ch. 7. 24. Gal. 2. 20. & 5. 24. & 6. 14. Col. 2. 11, 12. & 3. 5, 9. Eph. 4. 22.

heads, Adam and Christ; between the guilt and misery derived from the one, and the blessedness obtained by the other: where it appears how men came into the wretched state of sin in which at present they appear, and how rich is that love of God which draws the faithful out of it.

By one man sin entered into the world; one sin opened the flood-gates of ungodliness, and deluged the world, overwhelming it with miseries unutterable; and death by sin, in every tremendous form, seized on the human nature; and by death, the wages of sin, passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Adam was the common parent and covenant-head of mankind, and at that time possessed the whole human nature; so that all his posterity, being in his loins, (Hk. viii. 9, 10.) fell with him. So that it appears hereby that Jews as well as Gentiles are in the same state of depravity. *For until the law, before the revelation of God's will on mount Sinai was made, sin was in the world, with death and all its attendant miseries; but this supposes some law in force, before that which was given by Moses; for sin is not imputed when there is no law, nor would any punishment have been inflicted where there was no offence committed.* But though the law of Moses was not in being, nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, not only over actual transgressors grown up to the knowledge of good and evil, but even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, multitudes of infants suffering in the deluge and in the delations of Sodom and Gomorrah; and daily their dying groans and agonies testify that sin is in them, because the wages of it is exacted from them, and evidently proves, that they are implicated in the curse inflicted for that one man's disobedience by which sin and death entered into the world; and who is the figure of him that was to come, the type of our second covenant-head and representative, Jesus Christ, who in the fulness of time should become incarnate; that as sin and death are communicated to us by the one, so should righteousness and life be obtained for us by the other. *But, though the parallel between them is striking, yet comparing them the latter far excelleth: for not as the gift, so also is the free gift; the benefit accruing from the infinite merit of Christ's obedience to the death of the cross, does not barely answer the dire effects of the first man's sin; it does much more. For if through the offence of one, many be dead, the dreadful sentence being passed upon them; much more the grace of God, and the gift by which life is by one man, Jesus Christ, who has made that perfect atonement, by which the most unfearchable riches of divine grace are procured for his faithful saints, both extended unto many, securing to all persevering believers, not merely such a life as Adam had in innocence, but one far surpassing in glory, and eternal in its endurance. And as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; the dissimilitude is considerable with regard to the efficacious influence of the transgressions of the two great covenant-heads: for the judgment was by one sin, of one man, to the condemnation of all his posterity whom he represented; but the free gift of God,*

through the Redeemer's obedience to death, reaches not to the pardon of one sin, but of many offences unto justification; and it is through faith in him, that all true believers are freely and fully delivered from all condemnation, and accepted as righteous before God. *For if by one man's offence, or by one offence, death reigned by one, and set up the pillars of his throne, bringing the whole human race under his mortal power, much more they which receive abundance of grace, even all that fulness which is laid up for them in Jesus Christ, and of the gift of righteousness, living up to the privileges of their high and holy dispensation through grace, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ, triumphant over sin, its guilt and power, quickened to spiritual life here, and looking for that life of glory hereafter, when they shall reign with Jesus in heaven, and see sin and death and hell for ever destroyed. Therefore as by the offence of one, or by one offence, judgment came (or sin entered, as it may be supplied) upon all men to condemnation, and they were exposed to death thereby; even so by the righteousness of one, the second man, the Lord from heaven, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life. For where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; God taking occasion, even from the creature's vileness, to magnify the more transcendently the riches of his own free mercy, in pardoning, justifying, and saving lost souls, and raising the faithful to higher glory than that which they had lost by the first man's disobedience. So that as sin hath reigned unto death, and, usurping the throne, spreads its dire dominion over the fallen sons of men; even so might victorious grace erect her throne on the ruins of these vanquished foes, and reign through righteousness, by Jesus Christ our Lord, over all the faithful saints of God unto eternal life; rescuing them from the power of sin and death, bringing them into a state of favour with God, which is better than life itself, quickening them to spiritual life here, and to eternal life hereafter. Thou God of all grace, set up this blessed kingdom in my heart, and reign for ever there!*

CHAP. VI.

ST. Paul's design in this and the two following chapters, was to confute the slanderous report mentioned chap. iii. 5. namely, that the Apostles ordered their disciples to sin, that grace might abound in their pardon: also to prove, in opposition to the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, that the doctrine of justification by faith without works of law, does not render law useless, but rather establishes it as highly useful, chap. iii. 31. His transition to these subjects is elegant. For, in the foregoing chapter, having shewn that all mankind die for the sin of Adam; also having discoursed, chap. v. 20, 21. of the superabounding of grace, through Christ, in producing the righteousness of faith, and in rewarding that righteousness with eternal life, he begins this chapter with asking, Whether any one could seriously think that he could be so inconsistent as to order men to sin, that grace might the more abound in their pardon? ver. 1. —Persons, said he, who teach as we do, that God has subjected

7 ¹ For he that is dead is * freed from sin.

8 ^m Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

9 Knowing that Christ ⁿ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

¹ 1 Peter, 4. 1. Ch. 8. 33. John, 8. 30. Job, 3. 19. * Gr. *justifid.* ^m 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 5. 1. Gal. 2. 20. John, 14. 19. Ver. 4, 5, 22. Ch. 7. 4. & 8. 11, 13. ⁿ Acts, 2. 24. Heb. 9. 28. & 7. 25. & 10. 12, 14. Rev. 1. 13. Pl. 15. 11. & 21. 4.

subjected the whole human race to death for the one offence of the first man, never can fancy that God will bestow eternal life the more abundantly on men, because they continue in sin, ver. 2.—Next, to shew that the Apostles, who taught the doctrine of *justification by faith without works*, did not mean thereby to set their disciples free from the obligations of morality, he observed that, in baptism, the rite of initiation into the Christian church, the baptized person is as one put to death with Christ on account of sin, in order that he may be strongly impressed with a sense of the malignity of sin, and excited to hate it as the greatest of evils, ver. 3.—Moreover, in the same rite, the baptized person is taught that he shall be raised from the dead with Christ, by the power of the Father, to live with him for ever in heaven, provided he is prepared for that life by true holiness, ver. 4, 5.—Farther, by their baptism, believers are laid under the strongest obligations to holiness, because it represents their *old man*, their old corrupt nature, as crucified with Christ, to teach them that their body, which sin claimed as its property, being put to death, was no longer to serve sin as its slave, ver. 6.—By calling men's body *the body of sin*, the Apostle represents *sin*, or *evil desire*, as a person who, by overcoming the first man, had made him and all his posterity his slaves by right of conquest, and who, as their master, was continually demanding from them, with rigour, the ignominious service of wicked actions. And because the Greeks and Romans were well acquainted with the manner in which slaves were acquired, and with the laws by which their lives and services were regulated, he appealed to these known customs, to prove that, by the death of Christ their federal head, the claim which sin has set up to the persons and services of mankind, in consequence of the fall of the first man, is utterly destroyed.

Sin, says the Apostle, claims you as his slaves, in consequence of having subdued your first parents, and taken them captives: but I will shew you by the laws of slavery, that that claim is now cancelled, and that it is both your right and your duty to shake off the yoke of that tyrannical master. Sin having put you to death with Christ, ye are no longer his slaves. *For the slave of sin who is dead, is freed from the dominion of sin*, even as every slave who is put to death by his master, is freed from the dominion of that master, ver. 7.—But though we died with Christ on the cross, we live at present, and shall afterwards, if faithful, live together with him in heaven; and therefore we are now, of right, his servants, ver. 8, 9, 10.—Farther, that the Romans might rightly understand this argument, the Apostle desired them to conclude, from what he had told them, that at the fall they had been killed, both corporally and spiritually, by the sin of their first parents, but were made alive, both in body and spirit, by Christ, who on that account was become their rightful Lord, ver. 11.—Wherefore, it was both their duty and their interest, not

to allow sin to rule them any longer, in the life which they had acquired through Christ, but to employ both the members of their body, and the faculties of their mind, in the service of God, as persons, who have been made alive from the death brought on them by sin, ought to do, ver. 12, 13.

Next, in answer to the calumny, that the Christian teachers encouraged their disciples to sin, by telling them that they were not under law, but under grace, the Apostle affirmed that that doctrine has the direct contrary tendency. *Sin shall not lord it over you, for this very reason, that ye are not under law, but under grace*: and he had good reason to say so, because he had shewn, ver. 11. that under grace, that is, under the new covenant, men are made spiritually alive by God; consequently they have sufficient strength communicated to them for conquering evil desires, and for working righteousness; and great encouragement to do so, by the promise of pardon which is made to them in that covenant. Whereas law, by rigorously requiring perfect obedience to all its precepts, and by refusing pardon to sinners, drives them to despair, and hardens them in their sins, ver. 14.—These, said the Apostle, being the doctrines which we constantly preach, can you believe that we ever said, *Let us sin, because we are not under law, but under grace?* ver. 15.—In the mean time, I must inform you, that the advantages which you enjoy under grace, though very great, are of such a kind as to leave you still at liberty to give yourselves up, either to holy affections, or to sinful desires, as you choose; and that, to whomsoever of these masters you yield yourselves slaves, you give him the absolute direction of you, ver. 16.—However, I thank God, that ye Romans, though formerly the slaves of sin, have obeyed the form of doctrine into which ye were delivered, as into a mould, ver. 17.—and are become the servants of righteousness, ver. 18.—Withal, to prevent the Romans from being surpris'd at the things that he had written, he told them, that, on account of the weakness of their understanding in spiritual matters, he had reasoned from the laws and customs of men respecting slaves, to give them a just idea of the power of men's affections. And therefore, as formerly, through the power of their lusts, they had employed themselves wholly in wickedness, he exhorted them now, by the aid of the Spirit of God, (without whom they could do nothing,) through the influence of holy affections, to employ themselves wholly in working righteousness, ver. 19, 20.—Then he contrasted the miserable condition and end of the slave of sin, with the happy state and reward of the servant of God: from which it appears, that even under the gracious new covenant, the wages of sin obstinately continued in, is death; but the reward of holiness, is everlasting life, ver. 21, 22, 23.

The metaphors in this chapter are extremely bold; yet, being taken from matters well known, they were used with

10 ° For in that he died, he died unto sin
once: ° but in that he liveth, he liveth unto
God.

11 ° Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to
be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

• Heb. 9. 14, 26, 28. 1 John, 4. 10. Titus, 2. 14. Mat. 26. 28. 1 Peter, 2. 24. & 3. 18. ° Luke, 20. 38. Heb. 10. 12—14. ° Gal. 2. 19, 20. Col. 3. 3, 5. 2 Cor. 5. 15. Phil. 1. 11.

with great advantage. For the influence of sinful passions, in contraining wicked men to commit evil actions, could not be better represented to those who were acquainted with the condition of slaves, and with the customs by which their lives and services were regulated, than by the power which a tyrannical lord exercised over his slaves. Neither could any thing more affecting be devised, to shew the miserable condition of a person habitually governed by his lusts, than to liken it to the state of a slave under a severe unprincipled master, who rigorously requires him to spend the whole of his time and strength in his work, who exacts from him things both painful and ignominious, and who, by the severity of the services which he imposes, miserably puts an end to the lives of his slaves.

Ver. 1.] The Apostle having now proved, by three distinct arguments, that both Gentiles and Jews can be pardoned, and made partakers of the privileges and blessings of the kingdom of God under the Messiah, no otherwise than by the grace of God, through faith alone; he next proceeds, in proper order, to shew the obligations that both Gentiles and Jews were under to a life of holiness in this their new state, and the means and advantages which they enjoyed for that purpose. This he does, not only to instruct the Christians, and to prevent their mistakes, but also to wipe away a calumny industriously spread, as if, in asserting justification by grace without works, he had taught that we are under no obligation to obedience, chap. iii. 8. Against this objection, mistake, or calumny, he puts in a caveat, chap. iii. 31. and handles the point at large. See the introductory notes to this chapter.

Ver. 2, 3. How shall we, that are dead, &c.] The objection which carnal minds are naturally apt to make against justification by God's free grace, through the infinite merit of Christ, is not to be answered by allowing that our own righteousness is to be joined in part with his to justify us; for, on that supposition, there would be no room for the objection, and the assertion would be contrary to the whole analogy of faith. But it is to be answered by shewing, as the Apostle does, the indispensable necessity of personal holiness in them who are justified, and the inseparable connection which is fixed, by the ordination of God in the Gospel, between these things; without blending them together, or confounding one with the other. While therefore we, after the Apostle's example, adhere strictly to the doctrines of grace, and guard in this manner against the abuse of them, we may be satisfied that our doctrine is the same, and fully answers the objection with his: and while we keep both these points in view, in our dealings with God, and walking in the ways of life before him, we need not fear a miscarriage in our way to heaven. The Apostle's answer is, No, by no means: this would be the vilest abuse of this most precious and comfortable truth, and directly contrary to its true nature and design. For, though we cannot be justified

by any of our own works; yet how can we, who profess and are obliged to die to sin, and who are really mortified in our affections to it, as to the worst of evils, if we be sincere believers; how, I say, in any consistence with our state and character, and with a sense of duty and gratitude; or with what conscience, hope, or peace, can such as we are, go on any longer in a course of sin, or allow ourselves in the practice of any known iniquity? It is monstrously absurd to suppose it.

Ver. 4. Buried with him by baptism] As the ordinance of baptism seems plainly to be sometimes represented, by sprinkling or pouring water; as particularly when God is said to save us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour (Tit. iii. 5, 6): so some have thought that it is here mentioned with an allusion to the laying of a body under water; and yet, according to this mode of reasoning, it more naturally alludes to the throwing of earth upon the dead corpse, in which the body is entirely passive, and not at all active in going down into the grave, than to plunging it into the earth or water. But, after all, I am very much of opinion with Mr. Henry, or his continuator, Dr. Evans, who, in the exposition of this passage, says, "Why this burying in baptism should so much as allude to any custom of dipping under water in baptism any more than our baptismal crucifixion and death should have any such reference, I confess I cannot see. It is plain, that it is not the sign, but the thing signified in baptism, that the Apostle here calls being buried with Christ; and the expression of burying alludes to Christ's burial. As Christ was buried, that he might rise to a new and more heavenly life; so we are in baptism buried, that is to say, cut off from the life of sin, that we may rise again to a new life in faith and love." Others have thought, that the reference is only to the benefits of spiritual baptism, and that nothing can be concluded about the external mode of baptism from this verse, more than from the next, which speaks of our being therein symbolically planted together in the likeness of Christ's death; or than from the figure of baptism saving us, as represented by the floating of Noah's ark, when the few that were in it were saved by water; 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21. But no mode of baptism can be signified by either of these. As the church at Rome seems to have been planted about the year 43, and this Epistle was written in the year 58, that is, fifteen years after; and yet the Apostle speaks of the converted Romans in general as baptized; it must be supposed that baptism was administered to those whose parents had been Christians at the time of their birth. See Gale's Sermon. vol. ii. p. 202.

Ver. 5. If we have been planted together] Planted does not completely express the Apostle's sentiment. The expression *κατασφύρα*, means such plants as grow the one upon and in the other, deriving sap and nourishment from it;

12 ' Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 ' Neither yield ye your members as

* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin : but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

^r Pl. 19. 13. & 119. 133. Ch. 7. 23, 24. James. 4. 1. Col. 2. 11. Eph. 4. 22. & 3. 5, 9. Gal. 5. 24. ^s Ch. 12. 1, 2. 1 Peter, 4. 2. Col. 3. 5. Ch. 8. 15. & 7. 4—6. Heb. 9. 14. Gal. 2. 19, 20. Luke, 1. 74, 75. 2 Cor. 7. 1. * *Gr. arms, or weapons.*

it ; as mistletoe upon the oak, or the scion upon the stock into which it is grafted. Some commentators have translated the words thus : *For if we have been made growers-together with Christ in the likeness of his death* [or in that which is like his death], *we shall be also growers-together with him in the likeness of* [or in that which is like] *his resurrection.* It appears to be a metaphor, and a very beautiful one, taken from *grafting*, or making the scion grow together with the new stock. Homberg would render it, *If we have been united with him by the image of his death, we shall,* &c. See Wells, Beza, and Raphelius.

Ver. 6. Our old man] Our wicked and corrupt fleshly self, Gal. v. 24. Ephes. iv. 22. Col. ii. 11. 1 Pet. iv. 1. The utter destruction of the body of sin in us, is certainly intended in the Gospel ; but the particular import of the Greek word *καταργηθῆ*, is, *to make void, debilitate, enervate, disannul, abolish, or depose.* Compare chap. iii. 31. iv. 14. 1 Cor. ii. 6. xiii. 8. xv. 24. Ephes. ii. 15. 2 Tim. i. 10. It will conduce much to the understanding of St. Paul in this and the two following chapters, if it be observed that these phrases, *to serve sin*,—*to be servants of sin*,—*sin reigning in our mortal bodies*,—*to obey sin in the lusts of our bodies*,—*to yield our members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin*, or *servants of uncleanness*,—and of *iniquity unto iniquity*,—*to be free from righteousness*,—*to walk, live, or be after the flesh*,—*to be carnally-minded*, all signify one and the same thing ; namely, the giving ourselves up to the conduct of our carnal and sinful appetites ; allowing any of them the command over us, and the conduct and prevalency in determining us. On the contrary, the *walking after the spirit*, or in *newness of life*,—*the crucifixion of the old man*,—*the destruction of the body of sin*, the *deliverance from the body of death*,—*to be freed from sin*,—*to be dead to sin*, and *alive unto God*,—*to yield ourselves unto God*, as *those who are alive from the dead*,—*to yield our members servants of righteousness unto holiness*, or *instruments of righteousness unto God*,—*to be servants of obedience unto righteousness*,—*made free from sin*,—*servants of righteousness*,—*to be after the Spirit*, to be *spiritually-minded*,—*to mortify the deeds of the body*,—do all signify a constant steady purpose and sincere endeavour to obey the law and will of God in every thing through grace ; these several expressions being used in several places, as best serves the occasion, and illustrates the sense.

Ver. 7. He that is dead is freed from sin] St. Peter seems to paraphrase this verse, 1 Pet. iv. 1. *He that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin* ; as if he had said, "The Christian who is so resolute, by the power of the Spirit of God, as to resist all temptation to sin, and chooses rather to suffer any temporal calamities than commit sin, or neglect his duty, is the only man who has done with sin ;—who is effectually delivered from the power and

"condemnation of it." The Greek word *δικαιοσθαι*, frequently signifies in Scripture to be *saved* or *delivered*. See *Isai.* xlv. 25. James, ii. 25. and on *ch. v.* 16. Mr. Locke paraphrases this passage thus : "For he that is dead is set free from the vassalage of sin, as a slave is from the vassalage of his master." St. Paul makes it his business, in this chapter, not to *tell* the Jews what they certainly *are* ; but to *exhort* them to be what they *ought* and are engaged to be, by becoming Christians ; namely, that they ought by the power of grace to emancipate themselves from the vassalage of sin ; not that they were so emancipated without any danger of return : for then he could not have said what he does, ver. 1, 12, 13. which supposes it in their power to continue in their obedience to sin, or return to that vassalage if they would.

Ver. 10. For in that he died, &c.] Dr. Doddridge translates and paraphrases the passage thus : "For whereas he died, he died once for all, as a sacrifice for sin, to atone the injured justice of God, and repair the honours of his violated law : and as he liveth he liveth to God for ever ; his immortal life is entirely appropriated and devoted to his service ; wherein we ought to make it our constant care to imitate his example." See chap. viii. 17. Gal. ii. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 21. iv. 1.

Ver. 11. Likewise, &c.] Thus then reckon ye yourselves, &c. See Col. iii. 3.

Ver. 12. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body] Sin is here spoken of as a person ; a *prosopopœia* made use of throughout this and the following chapter ; which must be observed if we will understand them right. See 1 Pet. iv. 1. Dr. Heylin renders this verse, *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, so as to obey it by indulging the appetites of the body.* Mr. Locke observes, that the preposition *in*, in the Apostle's writings, often signifies *by* ; and as here, as well as in the following chapter, ver. 18. and 24. and elsewhere, he places the root of sin in the body, the sense seems to be, "Let not sin reign over you, by the lusts of your mortal body." The force of St. Paul's argument appears to be this : "By your baptism you are engaged to become conformable to Christ's death and resurrection : he once died for sin, so do you count yourselves dead to sin : he rose to life, wherein he lives wholly to God ; so must your new life be under the vassalage of sin no more ; but you must live entirely to the service of God, to whom you are devoted."

Ver. 13. Your members as instruments] Sinful lusts, at least those to which the Gentiles were most eminently enslaved, seem so much placed in the body and the members, that they are emphatically called *the members*. See Col. iii. 5. The word *ἔπλα*, rendered *instruments*, properly signifies *weapons* ; and in this sense has a beautiful propriety. See Locke, Doddridge, and Mintert.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are

to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

¹ Micah, 7. 19. Titus, 2. 14. Ch. 5. 20, 21. Heb. 8. 10. Gal. 3. 13. & 4. 5. with ch. 7. 4, 5, 8, 11. ² Ver. 1, 2. ³ 1 Cor. 9. 21. Gal. 5. 18. & 13. ⁴ 1 Cor. 7. 1. Jude, 4. ⁵ John, 8. 34. ⁶ 2 Pet. 2. 19. Mat. 6. 24. with ver. 13, 19, 21—23. ⁷ 1 Cor. 6. 9—11. Titus, 3. 3—7. ⁸ 1 Tim. 1. 13. ⁹ 1 Thess. 1. 5. & 2. 13. ¹⁰ 2 Tim. 1. 1, 13. Heb. 6. 1, 2. Ch. 2. 20. ¹¹ Or *subteritio* ye were delivered. ¹² John, 8. 32, 36. ¹³ 1 Cor. 7. 21, 23. Gal. 5. 1. 1 Peter, 2. 16. Luke, 1. 74. 75. Titus, 2. 11, 12, 14. Pl. 116. 16.

Ver. 14. For sin, &c.] That is, "Sin shall not be your master, to dispose of your members and faculties in its drudgery and service as it pleases: you shall not be under its controul, in subjection to it, unless by your own free choice you enthrall yourselves to it, and by a voluntary obedience give it the command over you, and are willing to have it your master." We must bear in mind, that St. Paul here, and in the following chapter, personifies sin, as striving with men for mastery to destroy them. The force of his reasoning here stands thus: "You are obliged, by your taking on you the profession of the Gospel, not to be any longer slaves and vassals to sin, not to be under the sway of your carnal lusts; but to yield yourselves up to God, to be his servants, in a constant and sincere purpose and endeavour to obey him in all things. This if you do, sin shall not be able to procure you death; for you are not now under a law which condemns to death for every the least transgression, though it be but a slip of infirmity; but by your receiving Jesus Christ with genuine faith you are entered into the covenant of grace: and being under grace, God accepts of you, and, if you persevere in that faith which works by love, will give you eternal life through Jesus Christ. But if you, by a willing obedience to your lusts, make yourselves vassals to sin, Sin, as the lord and master to whom you belong, will pay you with death, the only wages he has to give." Compare ver. 23. Mr. Locke is of opinion, that by law and grace the Apostle here means the Jewish and Christian dispensations. See the next chapter. But others observe, that by law is here meant strict rigid law, which was but a part of the Jewish dispensation, threatening death to every transgression; and that by grace are meant the gracious terms, provisions, and discoveries of the Gospel; and that both are to be understood as they relate to sanctity of life, the subject upon which the Apostle is writing.

Ver. 16. Obedience] That which he calls here simply obedience, in other places he calls *obedience of faith*, and *obedience of Christ*; meaning a reception of the Gospel of Christ. The Apostle explains the obligations of Gentile Christians in their present state, in opposition to the Gentile or heathen state, by the case of slaves, at that time well understood all over the world. A *servant* or *slave* was his master's property, a part of his goods, which he might keep for life, sell to another master, or manumit and set

free, as he pleased. Consequently the servant must be employed, as the master that he was under was either good or bad; and must fare according as his master happened to be rich or poor, good-natured or churlish, niggardly or liberal: and his being released from a bad master, and put into the hands of a good one, kind and generous, must be a very desirable and happy alteration in his circumstances. See Locke.

Ver. 17. But God be thanked] Here the Apostle thanks God, that whereas they had been *heathens*, and so ranked among the *servants of sin*, they were now become Christians, and consequently ranked among the servants of the Gospel, or such as were obedient to it. This he explains by a metaphor taken from the coining, stamping, or casting of metal in a die or mould. The *τυπη*, (the *form*, as we translate it,) that is, the *stamp, die, or mould*, is the doctrine of the Gospel. Their *being put into* or under this mould, was their passing out of the heathen into the Christian state. By the counsel of God, who had before determined to take the Gentiles into his Gospel church; by the preaching of the Gospel, whereby they were called into the church; and by their willingly embracing the genuine faith of the Gospel, they were put, or *delivered*, into or under the die or mould, from which they had received a new impression, or were fashioned into new creatures. And their *obeying from their heart the mould, or model of doctrine*, refers to their first faith, at their conversion. By this they were put or delivered into the die or mould of the Gospel: and their farther and continued obedience is what the Apostle in this chapter earnestly exhorts them to; namely, that as they had, through the grace of God, the doctrine of the Gospel, and were now put into it, so they would labour to admit a clear, fair, and full impression upon their hearts and lives. The figure upon the die is the image of God in righteousness and true holiness: for the *new man* (Ephes. iv. 24.), or the Gospel state, is *created or created in righteousness and holiness after the image of God*. This therefore is the figure upon the stamp or mould: this the image and superscription of God: and the Christian's duty and great work is, to be conformed to this image; to take care that a full and fair representation of it be struck upon all his principles and actions: that in the disposition of his mind, and in every part of his conversation, he may shew the image and superscription of God, bright and perfect, as upon a newly-coined piece of money. See on chap. v. 14. Elfner, and Sykes on Christianity, p. 178.

19 ^b I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: ^c for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

20 ^d For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free ^e from righteousness.

21 ^f What fruit had ye then in those things

whereof ye are now ashamed? ^g for the end of those things *is* death.

22 ^h But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, ⁱ and the end everlasting life.

23 For ^j the wages of sin *is* death; ^k but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

^b Ch. 7. 5. John, 3. 12. Gal. 5. 15. ^c Ver. 12, 16, 18. 1 Peter, 4. 2, 3. ^d John, 8. 31. Eph. 2. 1, 2. Titus, 3. 3. Mat. 7. 18. ^e Gr. *to righteousness*. ^f Ch. 1. 24—32. & 7. 5. Ezek. 16. 63. & 36. 37. Job, 40. 4. & 42. 6. Ezra, 9. 6. 2 Cor. 7. 11. Luke, 15. 18, 19, 21. ^g See ver. 23. ^h Ver. 2, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15. Pl. 116. 16. & 119. 32. Luke, 1. 74, 75. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Heb. 12. 14, 28. Ch. 8. 2. ⁱ See ver. 27. ^j Ver. 21. Gen. 2. 17. Ch. 5. 12. James, 1. 15. Ezek. 18. 4. Ch. 7. c. & 8. 13. & 2. 8, 9. Il. 3. 11. Gal. 6. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Rev. 21. 8. & 22. 15. ^k Ver. 22. Ch. 2. 7. & 5. 10, 17, 18, 21. 1 John, 2. 25. & 5. 11, 12. Titus, 1. 2. John, 3. 14—17, 36. & 6. 40, 54, 57. & 17. 2. & 10. 10, 28, 29. Eph. 2. 8. 1 Peter, 1. 3.

Ver. 19. I speak after the manner of men] There was a necessity for some little kind of apology for a figure of speech, which he dwells upon quite to the end of this chapter. This first clause should be read in a parenthesis.

Ver. 23. For the wages of sin is death] The *wages of sin* does not here signify the wages which are paid for sinning, but the wages which sin pays. This is evident not only from the opposition which is here put between the wages of sin, and the gift of God; namely, that sin rewards men with eternal death for their obedience; but that which God freely gives to those, who, believing in Jesus Christ, labour sincerely after righteousness, is life eternal: but it farther appears by the whole tenor of St. Paul's discourse, wherein he speaks of *sin* as a person and a master, who is served and obeyed. And so the *wages of sin*, being the wages of a person here, must be *what it pays*. We may observe, that sin pays death to those who are its obedient vassals: but God rewards the obedience of those to whom he is Lord and Master, by the gift of eternal life. Their utmost endeavours and highest performances can never entitle them to it of right; and so it is to them not *wages*, but a free gift. See chap. iv. 4. and Locke.

Inferences.—How groundless and injurious are all charges of licentiousness on the doctrine of justification alone by the free grace of God, through the infinite merit of Christ! Though no good works of our own bear any part in our justification before God, yet they stand in a close and necessary connection with it; and nothing can be more detestable than to continue in sin, that grace may the more abound in pardoning it. For how shall we who are by profession and obligation, and, if true believers, are in fact dead to sin, live any longer therein? This would be a flat contradiction to our baptismal engagement, and to all that was signified by it, and is answerable to it; would be absolutely inconsistent with our character, privilege, and duty as members of Christ, who have communion with him in his death and resurrection, and with all realizing views by faith of deliverance from sin and wrath, and of an advancement to eternal glory through him.—How excellent is the effect of regenerating grace! it includes both a mortification of sin, that the old man may be de-

froyed, and spiritual quickenings to a holy and heavenly life, that we may walk before God with new principles and ends, and according to a new rule in imitation of Christ, and by virtue derived from his death and resurrection to the glory of God. How certainly may we judge whether sin or holiness has the ascendancy in our hearts and lives! Whichever of these we willingly yield ourselves up unto, *that* is the lord who rules over us. We all once were the servants of iniquity, as appeared by our choosing its works, obeying its dictates, and taking pleasure in violating every bond to holiness: but, blessed be God, true believers are moulded into the spirit of the Gospel, which, under divine influence, has a transforming efficacy upon them; they are set at liberty from the power of sin; they hate and abhor it, and by no means approve of it in any instance whatsoever; and they are become, in their very hearts, servants to God and righteousness. How concerned then should they be to live under a constant sense of what belongs to their state as Christians! They should reckon themselves to be intirely dead to sin, as those who have nothing more to do with it; but alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. And how great are their inducements and assistances to quit the service of sin for the service of God! Though they are still under the law as a law of life, they are not under it as a severe and impracticable covenant, nor under its curse; but are taken under the covenant of grace, which contains the strongest encouragements against sin's recovering its dominion over them; and they are freed from the dreadful lordship of sin. What fruit has any one ever found worth having, in its ways and works, even while he was employed in them? They are matter of the greatest shame, and their just wages are all miseries unto eternal death. But there is a present pleasure in the ways of holiness; and its happy issue is everlasting life, not indeed as the wages of righteousness, but as the mere gift of God's free grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

REFLECTIONS.—The riches of the grace which he had displayed in the former chapter, the Apostle clearly foresaw would furnish objections against his doctrine, which he therefore states and obviates. *What shall we say then? Is this a licentious doctrine? and shall we continue in sin, that*

CHAP. VII.

No law hath power over a man longer than he liveth. The law is not sin, but holy, just, and good.

[Anno Domini 58.]

KNOW ye not,^a brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) ^b how that

^a Ch. 9. v. 1. & 2. 18. ^b Ch. 7. 19. with 6. 14. * Or it. ^c Gen. 2. 23, 24. Mal. 2. 16. Numb. 5. 29. Prov. 6. 29, 32. Mat. 19. 4-7. 1 Cor. 7. 2, 10, 39. Lev. 22. 1, 13.

the law hath dominion over a man as long as * he liveth ?

2 For ^c the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth ; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband.

that grace may abound? God forbid: the Apostle rejects the thought with abhorrence, as the vilest abuse of this most blessed truth. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? under its power and dominion: how inconsistent would it be with our character; how contrary to the obligations of gratitude and duty lying upon us; and how destructive of our peace and hope! Our very baptism represents our profession, and intimates to us the consecration becoming the name that we bear. Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, into the faith of his name, and obedience to his authority, were baptized into his death? that we should resemble him, dying to sin, as he died for it, and corresponding with his great design in suffering, which was to redeem us from all iniquity. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; partaking of the benefits of his death; and, as a temple laid in the grave, which ceases from the actions of life, so should we shew an abiding deadness to sin; that like Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, by his almighty power, even so we also should walk in newness of life, quickened by virtue derived from him, our head of vital influence; and having received a new nature, new principles, and new hearts from him, we are bound to shew forth to his praise, in all holy conversation and godliness, the real and universal happy change which is put upon us to the praise of the glory of his grace. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death; engrafted into him, and one with him as the members of his body mystical, sharing in the blessed effects of his death, and experiencing its efficacy in separating our souls from him, as death separated his body and soul; we shall be also raised in the likeness of his resurrection; quickened by his divine power, and enabled to walk before God in holiness: Know ye not, that our old man, that fallen nature derived from Adam and coeval with our very being, is crucified with him; so that in every genuine believer its condemning guilt is abolished, and its tyrannizing power is at least broken: for we know that Christ died, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; should no longer be the slaves of corruption as before; and that possibly its very being in us might be at an end. For he that is dead is freed from sin: as a man that is dead can have no further claims laid against him, so if we are crucified with Christ, we are freed from the power and dominion of our former master. Now if we be thus dead with Christ, through an union with this crucified Saviour, and virtue thence derived; we believe and hope that we shall also live with him, quickened to a life of grace here, and shortly to be raised to a life of eternal blessedness and glory to reign with him in heaven.

From these glorious views which the Apostle sets before us of our union and communion with Christ in his death and resurrection, the Apostle proceeds to urge upon the faithful two things: (1.) That they should reckon themselves dead indeed unto sin; not only discharged from its condemning guilt, but delivered from its power and dominion, so as henceforward to have no more fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, ceasing from them as a dead man does from the actions of life. (2.) That they should reckon themselves alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord; quickened by his grace, as the divine principle, to newness of life, and engaged and inclined to live to his glory as their great end.

This being then the great privilege, dignity, and duty of believers, we are most powerfully urged to walk agreeably thereunto. *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.* We are particularly called upon to deny the cravings of bodily appetite, by which the strongest temptations to sin enter; that, however beset, we may not yield obedience to the former lusts, in which we walked in the days of our ignorance. *Neither yield ye your members, neither those of your bodies, nor the faculties of your souls, as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, to war in that hateful cause, under so foul a captain: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead; and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God,* living henceforward for his glory, and employing body, soul, and spirit in his blessed service, and to advance his kingdom and interests in the world, fighting under his banners, and faithful unto death.

But some man might object to this, that if this be the case, and we are no more under the law, we may live as we list. The Apostle prevents and refutes the objection: *What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid: this would be to act in opposition to the whole design of the Gospel salvation, and inconsistently with all our professions as children of grace. For know ye not, that it is a truth obvious and incontestable, to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servant ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?* No man can serve two masters utterly contradictory in their commands. The servants of sin, who willingly surrender themselves to this tyrant's will, must infallibly reap eternal death as the wages of their work; while the faithful servants of God are servants of obedience unto righteousness, his interests being thus perseveringly served and advanced, and their end is eternal life. According therefore to the service in which we are employed, we shew what master we serve, and to whom we belong. *But God be thanked, that though ye were, in times past, the servants*

3 ^d So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: ^e but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no

^d Numb. 5. 20, 21. Judges, 14. 20. Mat. 5. 32. See ver. 2. ^e Ruth, 1. 13. 1 Tim. 5. 14. Lev. 22. 12, 13.

servants of sin, ye do not continue so; but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you; both in heart and conduct now cast into the mould of the glorious Gospel, and bearing all its amiable lineaments, in the most blessed and happy conformity to him who is the great Author of it, Jesus Christ.

Being then made free from sin, by the power of the eternal Spirit through the Gospel effectually operating to destroy the dominion, tyranny, and love of sin, ye became the servants of righteousness; discharged from the hateful servitude of iniquity, and entered into the service of a better Master, which is perfect freedom, the willing subjects of the holy Jesus, your rightful Lord and Sovereign. I speak after the manner of men, representing this matter under the familiar images of masters and servants, because of the infirmity of your flesh, the understanding being still dark, and most easily receiving spiritual ideas, when communicated under the veil of sensible objects. For as, in time past, ye yielded your members, both body and soul, servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, willing slaves to every vile affection, going from evil to worse, and fulfilling all the corrupt desires of the flesh and of the mind; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness; let every member of your body and faculty of your soul be as freely, delightfully, constantly, and universally employed in the service of the blessed Jesus your Master, and in the practice of righteousness and true holiness, as by nature they were before engaged in the service of sin.

And surely the strongest obligations now lie upon you thus to walk in holiness: *for when ye were the servants of sin, wholly devoted to its service, ye were free from righteousness; not from the obligations to it, which are immutable and eternal; but ye cast off all restraint, were utterly averse to the rule of righteousness, and boasted of liberty, when the most wretched slaves of corruption. And a moment's reflection will now convince you of the misery of that state in which you lay; for what fruit had ye then in those things, whereof ye are now ashamed? did not the curse of sin follow you close as your shadow? did not the sting of it at times torment and make you miserable in the midst of your enjoyments? did not the very pursuits in which you were engaged involve you in trouble, disappointment, vexation? and were you not always unsatisfied; and did you not feel an aching void, which nothing that you possessed could fill? and with what shame, horror, and remorse, do you now reflect upon your past conduct! for, careless and thoughtless as you then were, you now know, that the end of those things is death eternal, which must have been your miserable lot, if you had not been plucked through divine grace as brands from the burning. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, since this blessed exchange of masters, ye have your fruit unto holiness, walking in that good conversation and godliness which brings glory to God, and is most comfortable to your own souls and the blessed end and issue of which to the faithful soul will be everlasting life: For the wages of sin,*

the accursed master whom ye formerly served, is death, including all miseries, both here and hereafter, of soul and body, and that to eternity: but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let us then examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith, and with deepest self-application consider what the Apostle has here advanced. Our everlasting hopes depend on our experience of these things. We most fatally deceive ourselves, if we talk of grace, and promise ourselves heaven, and live and die the servants of corruption.

CHAP. VII.

THE Apostle, having in the preceding chapter confuted the slanderous report mentioned chap. iii. 8. that he and his brethren taught their disciples to sin, that grace might abound, judged it necessary in this chapter to repel the objection which the Jewish scribes and heathen philosophers urged against his doctrine of justification without works of law, chap. iii. 31. that it made law useless. This objection the Apostle now examined the more carefully, not only because it gave him an opportunity of explaining to the Jews the nature and obligation of the law of Moses; but because he foresaw that, in after-times, the same objection would be urged by infidels against the doctrine of justification without works of law, to discredit the Gospel. His discourse he begins with observing, that the law of Moses, as the law of God's visible kingdom and church among the Jews, had dominion over a man, that is, was obligatory, only while he lived, ver. 1.—His assertion he proved, by likening the law of Moses to the law of marriage, which binds the wife to the husband, only while the husband liveth. But if he die, she is loosed, and may marry another, ver. 2, 3.—Wherefore, as the death of either party dissolves their marriage, the Jews, having been put to death by the curse of the law in the person of Christ, were now loosed from their marriage with God as their king, and from the law of Moses by which God's kingdom among them was governed, that they might be married to Christ by entering into the Gospel church, and, in that new marriage, bring forth fruit unto God, ver. 4.—It is true, this argument, at first sight, may perhaps seem inept. But if we consider it attentively, it will appear strong and in point, being founded on those passages of Scripture where God represents his connection with the Jews as their king, under the idea of a marriage solemnized at Sinai, when he gave them his law, Ezek. xvi. 8, 38. Jer. ii. 2. iii. 14. For by that similitude, God intimated to the Jews, that as marriages are dissolved by the death of either of the parties, his connection with their nation as their king, was to end at the time when they, with the rest of mankind, should be put to death in the person of Christ. The Apostle therefore argued justly, from the Jews being put to death in the person of Christ, that their marriage or connection with God as their king was dissolved, and that they were loosed from the law of Moses, as the law of God's temporal kingdom. Besides, it was fit

adulterers, though she be married to another man.

4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ;

† Ch. 6. 14. & 8. 2. Gal. 2. 19, 20. & 5. 18. Col. 2. 14. Gal. 3. 13. & 4. 4, 5. 1 Peter, 2. 24. Titus, 2. 14.

fit that that kingdom and its law should end at the death of Christ. For the temporal kingdom having been erected among the Jews, for the sake of publishing, in the law of Moses, the curse of the law of works originally given to man in Paradise (see Gal. iii. 10.), that they might be sensible of the grace of the Gospel, it is evident that, when Christ removed the curse of the law of works, by suffering it for all mankind, and opened the Gospel dispensation, the kingdom of God among the Jews, and the law of Moses, were no longer of use, but were set aside, that the Jews might be at liberty to enter into the Gospel church, and there bring forth fruit to God.

Next, to shew them the true nature of the law of Moses, and to convince them that it was not intended as a rule of justification, the Apostle told the Jews, that while, by their belief descent from Abraham, they were placed under the law of Moses as the law of God's temporal kingdom, their sinful passions wrought effectually in their members, to make them do such actions as, by the curse of that law, subjected them to death. For this, in effect, was to tell them, that the law of Moses was a mere law of works, which required perfect obedience under the penalty of death, and granted pardon to no sinner. Consequently, neither that law, nor any other law of works, could be a rule of justification to sinners, ver. 5.—And therefore at the fall, though Christ had not died, yet because he was to die, to buy off all mankind from the curse of the law, Gal. iii. 13. God was pleased, in the prospect of his death, immediately to loose Adam and his posterity from the law of works as a rule of justification, and to place them under a new law, in which not immaculate obedience, but the obedience of faith, was required in order to life. And to shew this, he told them, that as soon as Christ died, the Jews were not only loosed from the law of Moses (which, considered merely as a law, to every transgression of which the curse was annexed, appears to have been similar to that law of works under which Adam fell); but as persons delivered from the law of works, by their dying with Christ in the nature in which they were tied to that law, they were admitted into the Christian church, that they might thenceforth serve God according to the new manner of the law under which mankind were placed at the fall, and not any longer according to the old manner of the law of works, ver. 6.

But lest, from the Apostle's telling the Jews, ver. 5. that their sinful passions under the law had put them to death, and from his affirming, ver. 6. that they were loosed from the law on that account, they might suspect that he thought the law of Moses a bad institution, he assured them that he entertained no such opinion. That law, though it could not justify the Jews, was of excellent use as a rule of duty. By its prohibitions, it made them sensible of their sins; and by its curse it shewed them what their sins deserved. As an instance, he mentioned their not being able to know that the strong desire of things forbidden is sin, unless the law had said, *Thou shalt*

not covet, ver. 7.—Wherefore when he told them, that their sinful passions under the law had wrought in their members to put them to death, his meaning was, that their sinful passions, and not the law, had wrought in them strong desires of things forbidden, which, by the curse of the law, subjected them to death: for without law, sin is *dead*; it has no power to kill the sinner, ver. 8.—Farther, to shew the excellent nature of law, as it makes men sensible both of their sins, and of the demerit of their sins, he observed, that while men are ignorant of law, they fancy themselves without sin, and entitled to life: but when, by the operation of law upon their conscience, they come to the true knowledge of their own character, they are sensible that sin lives in them, and that they are dead by the curse, ver. 9.—Thus it has come to pass, that the law of works, which was originally intended to give life to mankind, has occasioned their death, ver. 10.—Because the sinful passions of the unrighteous, which law cannot subdue, deceive them into the commission of evil actions, which, according to the tenor of the law of works, subjects them to death, ver. 11.—From all which it appears, that instead of being a *sinful thing*, the law of works, as published in the law of Moses, is *holy*, even in its curse, and all its commandments are *holy, and just, and good*, ver. 12.

To this, however, a Jew is introduced replying; the good law, which you so highly praise, notwithstanding its goodness, has been, by your own acknowledgment, the occasion of my death. This objection the Apostle introduced, that he might have an opportunity of shewing more fully the excellent nature of law. For he affirmed a third time, that it is not the law, but sin, which kills the sinner, through the curse of the law: and that it was fit the sinner should be so punished, to shew all the subjects of God's government the exceeding malignity of sin, in destroying the peace and order of the world, ver. 13.—Farther, to display the excellency of law still more clearly, the Apostle observes, that through the grace of God awakened sinners know the law to be *spiritual* or *holy*, and that, by comparing themselves with the holy law, the unregenerated by the Spirit of God become sensible that they are carnal, and fold under sin, ver. 14.—The *spirituality* or *holiness* of the law, every awakened sinner must know by this, that when he does the things which the law forbids, he does not approve of them. On the other hand, the corruption of his own nature, and his inability to do good, the penitent feels, *first*, by his habitually neglecting to practise what the law enjoins, notwithstanding he has some feeble inclinations to comply with its good injunctions; and *next*, by his habitually doing what the law forbids, notwithstanding he has some faint hatred of these evil actions, ver. 15.—Now these feeble volitions and ineffectual aversions demonstrate that the reason and conscience of an awakened sinner assent to all the precepts of the law as *good*, ver. 16.—But reason and conscience being the higher part of our nature, and the principal part of ourselves, the evil actions which we do in opposition to their dictates, are

that ye should be married to another, *even* we should bring forth fruit unto God.
to him who is raised from the dead, ^h that 5 For when we were ⁱ in the flesh, the

^a 2 Cor. 11. 2. Hosea, 2. 19, 20. ^b Mat. 5. 16. John, 15. 8. Phil. 1. 11. with Pf. 127. 3. Luke. 1. 42. ⁱ Ch. 8. 8. Eph. 2. 1. Titus, 3. 3.

are not so much our work, the work of our higher part, as the work of the sinful passions, which predominate in the animal or lower part of our nature, ver. 17.—Thus by the law, applied by the Spirit of God, men are made sensible that in their flesh, or animal part, no good thing dwells: and that being by nature wholly governed by that part, though the penitent has some inclination to what is good, he finds it extremely difficult to practise it. This inability, even in the awakened sinner, to do the good to which he inclines, the Apostle insisted on, not to drive him to despair, but to make him put a just value on the Gospel, which, as he afterwards observes, is alone able to deliver us from the slavery of sin, and to raise the higher part of our nature to its proper superiority, ver. 18.—Next he tells us, that the extreme difficulty of the thing, is the true reason that the awakened, but yet unregenerate, do not the good they incline to, but the evil to which they do not incline, ver. 19.—And from this he infers, that sin is not the work of the higher part of their nature, which is in a sense their real selves, but the work of their carnal part. This he had said before, ver. 17. but he repeats it here, not with any view to excuse the awakened sinner, by laying the blame of his evil actions on the prevalence of his passions, but to shew that all the credit which sinful actions derive, whether from the general practice of the world, or from the station and abilities of the individuals who are guilty of them, is entirely destroyed by this consideration, that they are contrary to the reason and conscience of mankind, and, in the end, that there can be no justification before God but through the alone merits of his only begotten Son, and no holiness but by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit.

To this account of the discovery which law makes, of the state wherein men are by nature, the Apostle subjoins a description of the struggle between reason and passion, which arises in the mind of the sinner when awakened through the Divine Spirit by the operation of law on his conscience. Such a person finds, that when he is most strongly inclined by his better part to do what is excellent, evil presents itself to him as a desirable object, and that so constantly, and with such alluring influence, that it may be termed a *law*, ver. 21.—So that, notwithstanding he is pleased with the law of God in his *inward man*, or spiritual part, ver. 22. he feels an opposite law in his *members*, or carnal part, warring strongly against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin, which is in his members, ver. 23.—And as mere law supplies neither strength nor hope to the awakened sinner, but, after shewing him sin and death in all their frightful colours, leaves him under the power of sin, and under the condemnation of the curse, the Apostle introduces him crying out, terrified lest being overcome in the conflict he be subject to eternal death, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* ver. 24.—Then, to shew whence his deliverance cometh, he makes the awakened and now believing sinner thank God, who graciously delivers him

from the slavery of sin, and from the curse of the law, through Jesus Christ, whose Gospel offers the assistance of God's Spirit, and promises eternal life to the penitent and faithful soul. The effect of this happy deliverance the Apostle sets forth, by making the delivered sinner declare with joy, that he does not now, as formerly, serve God only with the ineffectual approbations and volitions of his *mind*, and, with his *flesh* or animal part, the law of sin; but as one delivered from that law, he habitually serves God, both with his *mind* and with his *flesh*, ver. 25.

Although the Apostle, in this chapter, has spoken more immediately of the Jews, as placed under the law of Moses; yet, as the arguments by which he has proved their freedom from that law *as a rule of justification*, are equally forcible for proving the freedom of mankind from the law of nature, *as a rule of justification*, I have not in this illustration departed from the truth, in supposing that the Apostle designed this passage for both.—Further, as the moral precepts and curse of the law of Moses are in effect the precepts and curse of the law of nature; what the Apostle has written to shew the excellent nature and operation of the law of Moses, in making the Jews sensible of their sins and of their inability to deliver themselves either from the power or from the punishment of their sins, consequently in leading them to seek pardon and sanctification from the grace of God published in the Gospel, is equally applicable to the law of nature written on the hearts of men: for when enforced by the Spirit of God (who must operate on the sinner's heart in both cases to produce any genuine effect), it has the same operation and influence, in making sinners sensible both of their sins and of their danger, and in leading them to Christ. We may therefore believe that the Apostle had both laws in his eye, when he wrote this excellent passage.—His principal design, however, was, to wean the Jews from their extreme attachment to the law of Moses, and to make them sensible of the absurdity of pressing that law upon the Gentiles; because, however excellent it might be in itself, or however useful for certain purposes, it was, through the corruption of human nature, as ineffectual for the sanctification of mankind, as for their justification.

Ver. 1. *Know ye not, &c.*] In the foregoing chapter, the Apostle shews the converted Christians the obligations that they were under to a life of holiness, and the advantages which they enjoyed for that purpose, now that they were taken into the kingdom of God. From this verse to chap. viii. 11. he addresses himself upon the same subject to both Jews and Gentiles, but particularly to the Jew. The *Gentile* had nothing to oppose to the Gospel: a man just emerged from the darkness and impurity of an idolatrous state, wanted no arguments to convince him of the necessity of a farther dispensation for his instruction, justification, and sanctification; and as for what any of the philosophers had taught, he found all that, and indeed every moral truth which human reason can discover, transcribed and incorporated into the Gospel, with the addition of a surprising

* motions of sins, which were by the law,
 † did work in our members to bring forth fruit
 unto death :

6¹ But now we are delivered from the law,
 † that being dead wherein we were held ;
 † that we should serve in newness of spirit,

• Cr. *peccata*. † Gal. 5. 19—21. & 6. 8. Ch. 6. 19, 21, 23. Titus, 3. 3. Mat. 15. 19. James, 1. 15. † Ver. 4. Ch. 6. 14. & 8. 2. Gal. 1. 19, 20. † Or being dead to that. † Ver. 4. Ch. 6. 4, 11, 13, 19, 22. Juba, 4. 23, 24. Phil. 3. 3. 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7. Ch. 2. 29. Luke 1. 74, 75. Gal. 5. 22, 23.

prising degree of light, utterly beyond the unassisted reach of human reason. But the *Jewish Christian*, either from his own prejudices, or the suggestions of his unbelieving courtiers, might be diverted from the due improvement of the Gospel. It might be suggested, "You cannot own the Gospel as a rule of life and sanctification, or put yourself under it, without renouncing the law; which is in effect to renounce your allegiance to God, whose authority hath established it, and obliges you to adhere to it. Besides, you do not want the Gospel; the law is in all points *holy, just, and true*, and we acknowledge and esteem it as such:—What occasion have we for the Gospel?"—To confirm the unbelieving Jews against such suggestions, is the particular design of the Apostle in this chapter. The Jews rested in their law, as sufficient both for justification and sanctification.—That it was insufficient for justification, St. Paul has already shewn: that it is insufficient for sanctification, he proves in this place; and introduces his discourse by shewing that the Jew is now discharged from his obligations to the law, as peculiar to himself, and at liberty to come under another and much happier constitution, even that of the Gospel in Christ Jesus; chap. vii. 1—4. In the 5th verse he gives a general description of the state of a Jew in servitude to sin, considered as under *mere law*. In ver. 6. he gives a summary account of the state of a *Christian or believing Jew*, and the advantages that he enjoys under the *Gospel*. Upon the 6th verse he comments from ver. 7. to the end of the chapter; and upon ver. 6. in chap. viii. 1—11. I. Commenting upon ver. 5, he shews, *First*, that the law reached to all the branches and latent principles of sin; ver. 7.—*Secondly*, that it subjected the sinner to death (ver. 8—12.) without the benefit of pardon.—*Thirdly*, the reason why the law was put under it, ver. 13.—*Fourthly*, he proves that the law, considered as a rule of action, though it was spiritual, holy, just, and good in itself, and though the Jews owned and approved it as such, yet was insufficient for sanctification, or for freeing a man from the power of sin and sin; because the prevalency of sensual appetite does not wholly extinguish reason, or silence conscience; and therefore a man's reason and conscience might own and approve the law as good, just, and holy, and yet his passions might reign within him, and keep him in servitude to sin, while the law supplied no power to deliver him from them; ver. 14—24. It is only the grace and favour of God in Christ, which supplies that power; ver. 25.—II. Commenting upon the 6th verse of chap. vii. the Apostle shews, *First*, that under the Gospel, and by genuine faith in Jesus Christ, the Jew was wholly delivered from the condemnation of the law, chap. viii. 1.—*Secondly*, that the power of the Spirit of God to invigorate and renew our minds, and to free us from the dominion of sin, attends the Gospel dispensation; chap. viii. 2—4. *But, thirdly*, whereas it might, through mistake, be sup-

posed, that this sanctifying principle, the Spirit of God, would work without any care or thought on their part; or whereas it might be objected, that notwithstanding this life-giving Spirit, many who professed the Gospel were wicked men; either to prevent this mistake, or to obviate this objection, the Apostle shews, that no constitution would save them from the power of sin, or from condemnation, who willfully choose to remain under its dominion.—According to the immutable nature of things, such must perish, as well under the Gospel, as under the law itself; chap. viii. ver. 4—11. The reader should carefully remember, that it is the state of a *Jew in the flesh* (ver. 5.) enslaved to sin by the force of sensual appetite, and yet sensible of his unhappy condition, upon which the Apostle discourses, and by which he proves the insufficiency of mere law for sanctification in the chapter before us.

The law hath dominion, &c.] The law is to be understood as the nominative case to *liveth*. The law hath dominion over a man so long as it lives or subsists. So Amos, viii. 14. *The manner* [the idolatrous institutions] *of Beersheba liveth*. Antigone, in her noble speech to king Creon, comparing laws made at pleasure by men, with the eternal obligations of truth and right, says,

Not now, nor yesterday, but evermore, the laws
 Unwritten live, and none when published first can tell.
 SOPHOCLE. ANTIG. l. 45.

When the laws are duly executed, they are said *vigere*, to be in a *healthy flourishing* state; when not executed, to *seep*.—Thus Juvenal, *Ubi nunc lex Julia?*—*Dormis*. Where is now the Julian law?—Thou sleepest. The Apostle, Heb. viii. 13. describes the first covenant or constitution as labouring under the infirmities and decays of old age, and ready to vanish away, or die, as men do; James, iv. 14.

Ver. 2. For the women, &c.] St. Paul goes on to explain his meaning by a familiar instance. He chooses to set the Jew in a more honourable light while under the law, than he does the Gentiles while under their heathen state. The *Gentiles* are compared to *slaves*, in a state of the lowest and vilest servitude; chap. vi. 16. &c. —the *Jews* to a *wife*, in a state of subsistence indeed, but far more honourable than that of a slave. See Doddridge.

Ver. 3. If—she be married to another man] *If—she become the property of another; or become another man's*. The Apostle here speaks in the general, not entering exactly into every excepted case which might be imagined. To infer therefore, contrary to our Lord's express decision elsewhere, that adultery is not a sufficient foundation for divorce, seems very unreasonable.

Ver. 4. Wherefore, my brethren] The original word *ὅθεν*, rendered *wherefore*, is used in comparison for *ut, scilicet, as, so*.—*You are become dead to the law*, means, "because the law is become dead to you;" an *hypallage*, like that of

and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

7 What shall we say then? ^a *Is* the law

sin? God forbid. ^o Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known

^a Ver. 5, 8, 11, 13. 1 Cor. 15, 56.

^o Exod. 20. 17. Deut. 5. 21. with ch. 3. 19, 20.

date classibus austris, "give the winds to the fleet." By this manner of expression, the prejudice of the Jew is favoured; who might have been disgusted, had the Apostle said, that *the law*, for which the Jew had so great a veneration, was *dead*; and yet the sense is the same, because the relation is dissolved, whichever of the parties be dead; as it is all one, whether the fleet be given to the winds, or the winds to the fleet. The Apostle adds, *By the body of Christ—who is raised from the dead*. The resurrection of the dead, which is the gift of God to the obedience of Christ, is a direct and full abolition of the law, which condemns the transgressor to death without hope of a revival: and Christ's resurrection, as an earnest of the general resurrection, confirmed the abolition of the damnable sentence of the law, as it stood in the old original covenant with Adam, and in the law of Moses. St. Paul, in the last clause of this verse, alludes to the wife's bringing forth the fruits of the womb to her husband, which is one way of engaging his affections: see Gen. xxx. 20. The *law* was an impotent husband, the *Gospel* is fruitful. St. Paul visibly in these words refers to chap. vi. 10. where he says, that Christ, *in that he liveth, liveth unto God*: and therefore he mentions here his being raised from the dead, as a reason for their *bringing forth fruits unto God*; that is, living to the service of God;—obeying his will to the utmost of their power; which is the same with what is said chap. viii. 11. Mr. Locke observes, that one thing which made the Jews so tenacious of the law was, that they looked upon it as a reward or blessing from God; and as a disloyalty to him, their king, if they retained not the law that he had given them. St. Paul endeavours to correct this mistake by the instance of a woman marrying a second husband, the former being dead. It may be worth our notice, that St. Paul having all along, from the beginning of the chapter, and even in this very sentence, said *ye*; here on a sudden changes *ye* into *we*;—*that we should bring forth*;—probably to press the argument the stronger, by shewing himself to be in the same circumstances and concern with them; he being a Jew, as well as those to whom he spake. See Locke.

Ver. 5. For when we were in the flesh, &c.] The design of this chapter is, to convince the Jews how unfavourable the law, in its rigour, is to the recovery and sanctification of a sinner; as it affords neither hope of pardon, nor power to conquer sin. And in this verse St. Paul gives a general description of the state of a Jew in servitude to sin, while under the law, which state he comments upon from ver. 7. to the end of the chapter. The words rendered *motions of sins*, are literally *passions of sins*;—*Παθηαία τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν*, that is, *sinful passions or lusts*; for in the Scripture Greek, the genitive case of the substantive is often put for the adjective. *To bring forth fruit unto death*, is opposed to *bringing forth fruit unto God*, the only author of life, ver. 4. And therefore, the fruit which the Gospel produces is living fruit; but the fruit of sin under the law, is, as we may say, *still-born*,—is fruit unto death. *Members,*

in this clause, does not barely signify the *fleshy parts* of the body, in a restrained sense, but the animal faculties and powers; all in us that is employed as an instrument in those *works of the flesh* which are reckoned up, Gal. v. 19—21. some of which do not require the members of our body, taken in a strict sense for the outward gross parts, but only the faculties of our minds, for their performance. See Locke, Pyle, and Vigerus.

Ver. 6. But now we are delivered, &c.] *But now*,—that is, under the Gospel. *Now* is frequently used in this sense;—which should be well observed, as it may prove a key to many texts. However, here, as the Apostle had given in the foregoing verse a summary account of the state of the sinner under the law, he gives us in this verse a summary description of the nature and design of the Gospel: and this he resumes and comments upon, chap. viii. 1—12. The Jews, who had not a living faith in the true Messiah, were held in obedience to the whole letter of the law, without regarding the spiritual meaning which pointed at Christ. This the Apostle calls here *servings in the oldness of the letter*; and this he tells them they should leave, as being freed from it by the death of Christ, who was *the end of the law for the attaining of righteousness* (chap. x. 4.); that is, in the spiritual sense of it, which in 2 Cor. iii. 6. he calls *spirit*. That chapter and the present verse give light to one another. *Servings in the newness of spirit*, opposed as it is to the *oldness of the letter*, must signify, following the law so far as it is revised, and as it is explained in the Gospel for the attaining of evangelical righteousness. But for the farther elucidation of this matter, it may be worth while to inquire, how far the law is *abolished*, and how far *not*? I. The law is abolished only in three respects. 1st, As it was a *polity*. God was the king of the Jewish nation, as much as any men are the kings and governors of other nations: and as the king of the Jewish nation, God delivered the law to them. By this means religion was incorporated into their civil government, and their polity was religious, and their religion political. But in this respect, the law to us Christians is quite abolished; religion under the Gospel, is set upon its original bottom; stands entirely independent of all civil government, and is quite exempt from the authority and jurisdiction of the civil magistrate. 2dly, The law is also abolished, as it was a *dispensation of types and figures*, wherein, under earthly emblems, external rites or ceremonies, the good things which were to come under the Gospel were shadowed and represented; the divine wisdom judging this in those times a proper means of instruction. But *now this veil is done away*, and *we all with open face, as in a glass, behold the glory of the Lord*. 3dly, The law, as it was the *ministration of death*, and subjected the transgressors of it to the curse, and to condemnation, without affording any hope or remedy, is also happily abolished. II. But on the other hand, the law of Moses is not abolished; *first*, as it contains the *moral law*; as such it must stand under every dispensation—the Gospel, as well as any other,—in its full force and extent;

*lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

8 But sin, ^ptaking occasion by the com-

mandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. ^qFor without the law sin *was* dead.

^p Or concupiscence. ^q Ch. 4. 15. & 5. 20. 1 Cor. 15. 56. Ver. 5, 9, 11. ^r Mark, 10. 20. Luke, 18. 11, 12. John, 15. 22. 1 Cor. 15. 56. Gal. 3. 19.

ment; that is, requiring and obliging us, so far as our capacities reach, to perfect obedience: for God can never require imperfect obedience, or by his holy law allow us to be guilty of any one sin, how small soever: and if the law, as a rule of duty, were in any respect abolished, then we might in some respects transgress the law, and yet not be guilty of sin. The moral law is truth, everlasting and unchangeable, and therefore, as such, can never be abrogated. On the contrary, our Lord Jesus Christ has promulgated this law anew under the Gospel, and having added to its precepts the sanction of his own divine authority, and the powerful and attractive motives of the law of God, and of his own love to mankind, with the brightest hopes and prospects of eternal life, he has hereby enforced and secured the observance of it, infinitely beyond any thing that the wisest philosophers ever could find in the law of nature, and far beyond any thing plainly and expressly offered in the Mosaic constitution. See Ephes. ii. 15. Secondly, Nor is the law, as it is the ministration of death, so abolished as never more to be in force. It is indeed so far abolished, through the mercy of the Law-giver, that although a man does transgress, yet he is not at present irrecoverably subjected for his transgressions to final wrath and condemnation, though he may at present be so far involved in guilt, as to be *nigh unto cursing* (Heb. vi. 8.); but is allowed the favour of repentance and pardon; and if he continues sincerely obedient, is sure of eternal life, and *shall never come into condemnation*, or under the power of the law, for any of his past transgressions. This demonstrates that no man in this world is under law, the covenant of works, or the broken law of works, for if we were now at any time under the broken law of works, then should we be in a state of final and eternal damnation, without hope or remedy, because *there remains no more sacrifice for sins*, Heb. x. 26—29. See 2 Cor. vi. 2. Heb. ii. 3. xii. 25. 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

[*Ver. 7. Is the law sin?*] *Unrighteousness?*—as giving any assistance, or contributing any thing to sin. See ver. 12. The skill which St. Paul uses in dexterously avoiding, as much as possible, the giving offence to the Jews, is very visible in the word *I*, in this verse. In the beginning of the chapter, where he mentions their knowledge in the law, he says *ye*; in the 4th verse, he joins himself with them and says *we*; but here, and so on to the end of the chapter, where he represents the power of sin among the Jews, and the inability of their law to subdue it, he leaves them out, as it were, and speaks altogether in the first person; though it is plain, he means all those who were under the law. So chap. iii. 7. he uses the singular pronoun *I*, when he evidently means the whole body of the unbelieving Jews. We may also observe here another masterly stroke of honest art; namely, his demonstrating the insufficiency of the law, under colour of vindicating it. He knew the Jew would take fire at the least reflection upon the law, which

he held in the highest veneration; and therefore he very naturally introduces him catching at that expression, ver. 5. *the motions of sins*, &c. "What!" says he, "do you vilify the law, by charging it with favouring sin?"—"By no means," answers the Apostle. "I am very far from charging the law with favouring sin; *the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good*;" ver. 12. Thus he writes in vindication of the law, and yet at the same time sets forth its deficiency. See the note on the first verse of this chapter. We have another instance of the same ingenious turn of writing, chap. xiii. 1—7. Some read the second clause of the verse, *By no means, but I should not have known sin, had it not been for the law*, &c.

[*Ver. 8. Sin, taking occasion, &c.*] *Taking advantage.* This is the proper signification of the Greek word *Ἀφορμῶν*. Observe, that in this and the three following verses, the Apostle comments upon, or at least explains those words, 1 Cor. xv. 56. *The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law*; and those also of this Epistle, chap. v. 13. *Sin is not imputed when there is no law*. Death, in a figurative way of speaking, is represented as armed with a dreadful sting; that sting is sin; but death would have no power to thrust that sting into the sinner's heart, were it not for the law of God condemning him to death: for did not the law, or constitution of the law-giver, condemn him to death, he might, notwithstanding his sin, live for ever, because his sin might from time to time be passed over. Therefore the law is the force, by which the terrible sting is plunged into the sinner's vitals: for *without the law, sin, the sting of death, is itself dead*, and quite unable to slay the sinner. Hence it is that the Jew (ver. 9.) *was alive without law once*; *χωρὶς νόμου, when law was set aside*; namely, before the giving of the law from mount Sinai; for before the giving of the law, or the Sinai covenant, he was for the space of 430 years under the Abrahamic covenant, or the covenant of grace by itself (Gal. iii. 16, 17.) *without having the law* subsisting at the same time: for from the time Adam sinned and broke the law, the law was not re-enacted till it was given by Moses, as appears from chap. v. 13, 14. The Jew was then *alive*, because he was not under the law subjecting him to death for every transgression; but *when the commandment came*, with the penalty of death annexed, *sin revived*, and the Jew *died*. Then the sting of death acquired life, and the Jew, upon the first transgression, was *dead* in law. Thus sin, the sting of death, *received force or advantage* to destroy by the commandment, (ver. 8, 11.); and whereas sin *works concupiscence* in all men, and *deceives* all men, it wrought concupiscence in the Jew, and deceived him under this singular and extraordinary circumstance of having received a destructive power from the law, and so rendered him a dead man in law; which was not the case of the rest of mankind, who then were, as they had always been from the time of the promise (Gen. iii. 15.), under the general covenant of grace,

9 For 'I was alive without the law once : but 'when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

10 And the commandment, 'which *was ordained* to life, I found *to be* unto death.

11 "For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew *me*.

12 Wherefore *the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. 'But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good ; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

14 For we know that the law is ²spiritual : but I am ²carnal, sold under sin.

15 ^bFor that which I do I allow not : for what I would, that do I not ; but what I hate, that do I.

^r Mat. 19. 20. Luke, 18. 11, 12. Phil. 3. 5, 6. ^s Ch. 3. 19, 20. & 10. 5. Gal. 3. 10. Ver. 5, 7—14. Pf. 38. 4—8. & 40. 12. ^t Ch. 10. 5. Lev. 18. 5. Ezek. 20. 11. with 2 Cor. 3. 7. Ch. 3. 19, 20. ^u Ver. 8, 9. 1. Heb. 3. 13. Jer. 17. 9. James, 1. 15. 1 Cor. 14. 56. ^x Pf. 19. 7—9. & 119. 59, 106, 137, 138. 1 Tim. 1. 8. ^y Ver. 8—11. Ch. 3. 20. & 4. 2. John, 15. 22. ^z Heb. 4. 12. Mat. 5. 22, 23. & 22. 37. Lev. 19. 17. ^a Ver. 14, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25. 1 Cor. 3. 1, 3. If. 6. 5. & 64. 6. with 1 Kings, 21. 20. 2 Kings, 17. 17. II. 50. 1, 10. ^b Gal. 5. 17, 24. Ver. 18, 19, 21, 23—25.

given first to Adam, and afterwards to Noah. The reader will observe, that the stress of the Apostle's affirmation lies in these words, *having received free*, because he adds, *for without law sin is dead*, which is manifestly giving the reason of sin's receiving a destructive force by the commandment of the law. *In me*, is emphatical : "*In me*" distinguished "from other men who were not under the law." See Doddridge, and Dunlop's Sermons, vol. ii. p. 46.

Ver. 10. *Ordained to life*] *Intended for life*. The law, which was just, and such as it ought to be, in having the penalty of death annexed to every transgression of it. (Gal. iii. 10.) came to produce death, by not being able to remove the depravity of human nature, and subdue carnal appetites, and keep men free from trespasses against it, the least whereof by the law brought death. See chap. viii. 3. Gal. iii. 21.

Ver. 11. *For sin, taking occasion*] "Sin, taking the opportunity of my being under the law, slew me." See the note on ver. 5. Instead of *deceived me*, Mr. Locke reads, *insuigled me*; and observes, that St. Paul here seems to allude to what Eve said in a like case, Gen. iii. 13.; and he uses the word rendered *deceived*, in the same sense as she did ; that is, *drew me in*.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore the law is holy*] In ver. 7. the Apostle laid down this position, "*that the law was not sin*." In ver. 8. to 11. he proves it, by shewing that the law was very strict in forbidding of sin, so far as to reach the very mind, and the internal acts of concupiscence ; and that it was *sin* remaining under the law (which annexed death to every transgression) that brought death on the Israelites.—He here infers, that the law was not sinful, but righteous, just, and good ; just such as by the eternal rule of right it ought to be.

Ver. 13. *Was then that which is good, &c.*] This is an exact translation of the text, according to the order of the words in the Greek. It may be thus paraphrased : Jew.—"And yet you say, we were made subject to death by the commandment.—Could that which is good be made deadly to us?" Apostle.—"No, take me right : it was not the commandment itself which slew us, but sin. It was sin which subjected us to death, by the law justly threatening sin with death :—which law was given us, that sin might appear, might be set forth

"in its proper colours, when we saw it subjected us to death by a law perfectly holy, just, and good ; that sin, "by the commandment, or by the law might be reprobated, what it really is, an exceeding great and deadly evil." Hence it is manifest, that the Apostle here assigns the reason why the law was given to the Jews, not only as a rule of action, but also with a penalty of death annexed. The reason was, not to destroy the Jew, but to discover the true demerit of sin, that it might appear to the sinner's conscience as an exceeding hateful and destructive evil. And indeed the law should answer the same end to us now : though we are not under it, yet we should thence learn the heinous nature of guilt, that we may dread iniquity, and be thankful to God for grace, and the benefit of pardon. Ellner reads the verse, *Was then, &c.?* No, by no means ; but sin was ; and so sin wrought death in me by that which is good ; for that sin by the commandment would become exceeding sinful.

Ver. 14. *But I am carnal*] The Apostle is here demonstrating the insufficiency of the law, in opposition to the Gospel ; but it by *I* he meant himself, or any other person who had embraced the Gospel, than his argument would prove the insufficiency of the Gospel, as well as of the law. The verse may be paraphrased thus : "For we all are agreed that the law is spiritual, requiring actions pure and rational, and quite opposite to those which our carnal affections dictate. But I, the sinner, am carnal, under the dominion of sensual appetite and the habits of sin, and for that reason condemned by the law : the fault is not in the law, but in me the sinner, as appears hence ;—that which I do, I allow not," &c. *Sold under sin*, implies a willing slavery, as *Abah had sold himself to work evil*, 1 Kings, xxi. 20. and the Jews, *Isai. l. 1. Ye have sold yourselves to your iniquities* : he does not mean that the sinner is forced to sin. Buying and selling are often used metaphorically in Scripture ; where we are said to buy, when we diligently use the proper means to gain knowledge and good habits ; and to sell, when we neglect and abandon ourselves to ignorance and vice. See *Isai. lv. 1, 3. Prov. xxiii. 23. Matt. xiii. 45, 46. Rev. iii. 18. Deut. xxxii. 30.*

Ver. 15. *That which I do, I allow not, &c.*] From ver. 7. to the present, the Apostle denotes the *Jew in the flesh* by a

16 If then I do that which I would not, ^c I consent unto the law that *it is* good.

17 Now then ^d it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.

19 ^e For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a ^f law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in the law of God after ^g the inward man:

23 But I see ^h another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

^c Ver. 14, 12. Dan. 9. 5. ^d Ver. 20, 22—25. ^e Gen. 6. 5. & 8. 21. Job, 14. 4. Ps. 51. c. If. 1. 6. & 61. 6. ^f Ver. 16, 22, 23. Phil. 1. 13. & 3. 12. Gal. 5. 17. 2 Cor. 3. 5. ^g See ver. 15—17. ^h Ver. 21, 2. Ch. 8. 2. Ver. 17, 20, 21. Gal. 5. 17. Eph. 6. 12. Col. 3. 5. c. Ch. 6. 6. If. 1. 6. & 61. 6. ⁱ Pl. 1. 2. & cxix. & 19. 7—11. & 40. 8. & 119. 77, 97, 111. Ver. 12, 14, 16. ^k Ch. 2. 29. 2 Cor. 2. 16. Eph. 3. 6. Luke, 17. 21. 1 Peter, 3. 4. 1 John, 3. 7. Col. 3. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 17. John 3. 3, 5, 6. ^l Job, 40. 4. Ps. 38. 4, 5. If. 6. 5. & 41. 6. Ver. 23, 24, 25. Gal. 5. 17. James, 4. 5. & 3. 2. 1 Peter, 2. 11. Ch. 6. 13, 19. Prov. 24. 16. Eccl. 7. 20. 1 Kings, 6. 33, 46.

single I. Here he divides that *I* into two *I's*, or figurative persons, representing two different and opposite principles which were in him. The one *I*, or principle, *assents to the law as good*, and wills and chooses what the other does not practise, ver. 16. This principle, he expressly tells us, ver. 22, is the *inward man*,—the *law of the mind*, ver. 23; the *mind*, ver. 25, or *rational faculty*: for he could find no other *inward man*, or *law of the mind*, but the rational faculty, in a person who was in the *flesh*, and *sold under sin*, or in servitude to sin. The other *I*, or principle, transgresses the law, ver. 23, and does those things which the former principle allows not. This principle he expressly tells us, ver. 18, is the *flesh*, the *law in the members*, or *sensual appetites*, ver. 23; and he concludes in the last verse, that these two principles were consistent with each other. Therefore it is evident that these two principles residing and counteracting each other in the same person, are *reason*, and *sin*, or *sin that dwells in us*; and it is easy to distinguish the two *I's* or principles in every part of this elegant description of iniquity; or the habits of lust domineering over the light in the soul which is only awakened to a sense of sin. For instance, ver. 17. *Now then it is no more that I do it, but sin that dwells or reigns in me.* The *I* here is opposed to indwelling or governing sin, and therefore plainly denotes the principle of reason; the *inward man*, or *law of the mind*. These two different principles he calls, the one the *flesh*, the other the *spirit*, Gal. v. 16, 17, where he speaks of their contrariety in the same manner as he does here. And we may give a probable reason why the Apostle dwells so long upon the struggle and opposition between those two principles; it is most likely, to answer a tacit but very obvious objection. The Jew would allege, "But the law is holy and spiritual; and I assent to it as good, as a right rule of action, which ought to be observed: yea, I esteem it highly; I glory and rest in it, convinced of its truth and excellence: and is not this enough to constitute the law a sufficient principle of sanctification?" The Apostle answers, "No; wickedness is consistent with a sense of truth. A man may assent to the best rule of action, and yet be under the dominion of lust and sin: from which nothing can deliver him off equally, but a principle and power communicated from the Fountain of life."—A heathen

poet gives us a description of the combat between reason and passion, similar to this of St. Paul's before us:

My reason this, my passion that persuades;
I see the right, and I approve it too,
Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue. HOR.

Ver. 17. *Sin that dwelleth in me*] That is, *reigneth in me*. So God is said to dwell among the Israelites, as their king and governor; Exod. xxv. 8. xxix. 45. Numb. xxxv. 34. *Dwell*, here and ver. 20, has the same sense in the language of the Jew, as *reign* or *have dominion over*, in the language of the Gentile; chap. vi. 12, 13, 14.

Ver. 20. *I would not*] *I*, in the Greek, is very emphatical, and denotes the man in that part, which is chiefly to be counted himself; and therefore with the like emphasis, ver. 15, it is called *αυτῶς ἐγώ*, *I myself*; "I, the man, with all my full resolution of mind." The two words *αυτῶς* and *ἐγώ* might have both of them been spared, if nothing more had been meant here than the nominative case to the verb *δοκῶν, serve*. This verse seems no more than a repetition of ver. 17.: but it is a graceful and expressive repetition, and shews how near the affair lay to the heart of the person thus complaining; and in what sad and frequent successions the complaints were renewed. The beautiful passage in the 6th book of Xenophon's *Cyropædia*, where Artaspas complains of two souls contending within him, (a passage which it is very possible St. Paul might have read,) contains an agreeable illustration of this portion of Scripture. See Locke, Doddridge, and Wettstein.

Ver. 23. *Another law in my members*] St. Paul having in the foregoing verse spoken of the *law of God*, he here speaks of natural inclination as of a law;—as of *a law in the members*, and *a law of sin in the members*; to show that it is a principle of operation in men even under the law, as steady and constant in its direction and impulse to sin as the law of God should be to obedience, and failed not to prevail in the unregenerate soul. The Apostle here, as in the former chapter, uses the word *members* for the lower faculties and affections of the animal man, which are as it were the instruments of action. Plato uses the phrase *ὁ ἐν ἡμῶν ἀλογικὸς* for the rational part of our nature. See ver. 22.

Ver.

24 ^m O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from * the body of this death?

25 ⁿ I thank God through Jesus Christ our

^m 1 Kings, 8. 38.

* Or *this body of death*.

ⁿ Pl. 103. 2-5.

1 Cor. 15. 57. Phil. 4. 6. Col. 3. 27. Eph. 5. 20. 2 Cor. 12. 9.

Ver. 24. Who shall deliver me? &c.] It has been thought by some, that in this phrase there is an allusion to a cruelty, which is said to have been practised by some tyrants, on miserable captives who fell into their hands; and whom they compelled to drag along with them, wherever they went, a dead carcase fastened to their bodies.

Ver. 25. I thank God, &c.] The Clermont and other Greek MSS. which are followed by the Vulgate, read, *The grace, or favour of God.* Thus stands the argument—the law cannot deliver from the body of death; that is, from those carnal appetites, which produce sin, and so bring death; but the grace of God, through Jesus Christ, [which not only gives strength to conquer, but] which pardons lapses where there is genuine repentance and faith, delivers us from this body, so that it does not destroy us. Whence naturally results this conclusion, *There is therefore now no condemnation,* &c. chap. viii. 1. a chapter which should by no means have been separated from the present, as it is in such immediate connection with it. St. Paul says, *I serve, or I make myself a vassal, δουλεύω,* “I intend, “and devote my whole obedience.” The terms of life to those under grace, he tells us at large, chap. vi. are, “to become vassals to righteousness and to God;” consonantly whereto, he says here “*I myself, I the man, being now a Christian, and so no longer under the law, but under grace, do what is required of me in that state. I become a vassal to the law of God; that is, dedicate myself to the service of it, in sincere endeavours of obedience; and so I, the man, shall be delivered from death;*” for he, who, being under grace, makes himself a vassal to God, in a steady persevering purpose of sincere obedience, shall from him receive the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (see chap. vi. 18, 22.). And thus St. Paul, having shewn here in this chapter, that the being under grace alone, without being under the law, is necessary to the *Jews*,—as in the foregoing chapter he had shewn it to be to the *Gentiles*,—hereby demonstratively confirms the Gentile converts in their freedom from the law; which is the scope of the Epistle thus far. I would just add, that the words, *I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin,* is not to be understood of St. Paul or any other Christian believer; because *ἀγαθὸν* shews it is the grand inference from the whole preceding discourse, as if he had said, “The same person may find in himself “two opposite principles; the one subscribing to and approving the law of God; and the other, notwithstanding, “bringing him into captivity to sin.” *Serving the law of God,* is not a stronger expression than *hating sin,* ver. 15. and *delighting in the law of God,* ver. 22. But those expressions are applied to the *Jew in the flesh,* or enslaved by sin; consequently, so may *-serving the law of God.* But *-serving with the flesh the law of sin,* cannot be applied to a true Christian, or such a one as St. Paul was, because he *walked not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,* and was made *free from the law of sin* in his members, and *from death,* the consequent of sin: chap. viii. 1, 2. See also ver. 8, 9.

of that chapter, where it is said, that they *who are in the flesh cannot please God;* and it is pronounced of true Christians, that they *are not in the flesh.* The truth is, that the *I,* of whom the Apostle here says, *αὐτὸς ἐγὼ, the same I,* is manifestly the *ἐγὼ,* the *I,* spoken of in his preceding argumentation: and here, after a very lively touch upon the grace of redemption, he sums up what he had proved, thus: “You are delivered from the dominion of sinful “lusts, and the curse of the law; and obtain salvation, “not by any strength or favour which the law supplies, “but by the grace of God in our Lord Jesus Christ; for “which we are bound to be ever thankful to him. To “conclude: the sum of what I have advanced, concerning “the power of sin in the sensual man, or even in the merely “awakened man, is this; namely, that the same person, in “his inward man, his mind and reason, may assent to and “approve the law of God; and yet, notwithstanding, by “his fleshly appetites, may be brought under servitude to “sin.” See on chap. viii. 1.

Inferences.—There are few chapters in sacred Scripture which have been more misrepresented or misunderstood, than that before us. We have endeavoured, by the assistance of the most able and impartial commentators that we could meet with, to give its true and genuine meaning: and we observe farther, in the words of one of them, that, should we be mistaken in the sense of any single period in the chapter, yet surely the subject and drift of the Apostle’s argument are evident beyond a doubt: *certainly* he runs a comparison between the law and the Gospel, with regard to the *Jew in the flesh.* He here infallibly speaks of the *law,* and of the state of the *law,* and of the state of a sinner under the law, which leaves him enslaved to sin without help, and subjected to death without pardon. Then in chap. viii. he undeniably turns to the *Gospel,* and shews what provision is there made for recovery from the bondage of sin, to sanctity and happiness. Consequently he cannot be supposed, by the wretched character above given, to describe the state of a Christian, unless he can be supposed to represent the Gospel as weak and defective as the law itself. For if, after faith in Christ, and such obedience to him as we can now perform, the Christian still remains under the dominion of sin and the condemnation of the law, (which is the true state described in the above chapter,) then the *grace of God* is of no use to us, nor are we any nearer to life, by *being in Christ and walking after his Spirit* according to our present abilities; but still we want a new redemption, and ought to cry out, *O wretched man!—who shall deliver me? &c.*

But here it may be objected,—“Are not even good and “holy men attended with such sensual appetites and affections; and therefore may we not very justly apply to “them the Apostle’s description of a *Jew in the flesh?*”—To this we answer, it is undoubtedly true, that even good and holy men are attended with various appetites and affections, and such as will exercise vigilance, self-denial, faith,

Lord. So then °with the mind I myself the law of sin.
serve the law of God, but with the flesh

° Ver. 15—24. Gal. 5. 17—24.

faith, and patience, while they are in the body. For this cause St. Paul kept *his body under*, and brought it into subjection, lest that by any means, when he had preached to others, he himself should be a cast-away. But still this will not justify us in applying what the Apostle says here of the Jew in the flesh, to true Christians,—to good and holy men: because though such have, and while in this world will have, flesh and blood, as well as principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places, to struggle with, yet they are not such as prevail, and bring them into captivity to sin; for then they would lose their character, and cease to be good and holy men. They are not such appetites and affections as conquer them, but such as they oppose, conquer, and mortify, at least. And therefore it is false and injurious to true religion, to set them upon a level with the Jew here in the flesh, who is supposed to be conquered, and brought into captivity to the law of sin and death.

But it may be said, “We find in Scripture, that sometimes good men have fallen foully into sin.”—And what then? Does it thence follow that all good men are in the flesh, carnal, and sold under sin,—that they are brought into captivity to the law of sin and death?—Surely no. Good men have fallen into sin; but their falling does not denominate them good men, but their recovering themselves again to repentance. For had they remained under the power of sin,—carnal, and sold under it, they would forever have lost the character of good men. All that we can learn from the faults of good men in Scripture is, that they are obnoxious to temptation, and may be overcome, if they be negligent and secure: and farther, that through the mercy of God it is possible, that he who has sinned may see the error of his way, and return to the obedience of the just. But we cannot from the faults of good men infer, that there is no difference between them and wicked men, who live habitually in sin; or that David, when, in abhorrence of his crimes, he humbled himself before God, renounced and forsook them, was not a whit better as to the principle in his heart, but the same man as when he committed adultery and murder.

But the prophet says, *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?* Jer. xvii. 9. To which we may answer, that Christians, too generally neglecting the study of Scripture, content themselves with a few scraps, which, though wrongly understood, they make the test of truth, and the ground of their principles, in contradiction to the whole tenor of revelation. Thus this text of Jeremiah has been misapplied, to prove that every man's heart is so desperately wicked, that no man can know how wicked his heart is; whereas the Spirit of God is shewing the wretched error of trusting in man, ver. 5. 6.; and the blessedness of trust in God, ver. 7, 8. And then in ver. 9. he subjoins a reason which demonstrates the error of trusting in man; *The heart is deceitful, &c.* “We cannot look into the hearts of those we trust: under great pretences of kindness, they may cover the blackest

“designs. But God, the universal Judge, knows what is in every man, and can preserve those who trust in him from the latent mischievous counsels of the wicked and treacherous.” Ver. 10. *I the Lord search the heart, &c.* This text, therefore, does not relate to the difficulty which any man has to know his own heart, but the hearts of those in whom he may confide.

It may be farther urged, “Do we not experience that we have corrupt and wicked hearts? and that the Apostle's description above given but too well suits what we find in ourselves?”—We answer, every man can best judge what he finds in himself: but if any man really finds that his heart is corrupt and wicked, it is the duty of a minister of the Gospel to exhort him earnestly to use those means, which the grace of God has provided, for *cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and for perfecting holiness in the fear of God* (2 Cor. vii. 1.). Let such a corrupt person, as he values the salvation of his soul, hear and learn the truth as it is in Jesus, Ephes. iv. 22, 23. whereby he will be taught to *put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and to be renewed in the spirit of his mind.*

To hear some persons talk, one would imagine that they thought it their duty, and a mark of sincerity and goodness, to be always complaining of corrupt and desperately wicked hearts; and, consequently, that they ought to have, or in fact should always have, such hearts to complain of. But let no man deceive himself: a wicked heart is too dangerous a thing to be trifled with.—I would not here be thought to discourage the humble sentiments that every man should have of himself under our present infirmities: but we may greatly wrong ourselves by a *false humility*; and whoever carefully peruses the New Testament will find, that however we are obliged to repent of sin, a spirit of *complaining and bewailing* is not the spirit of the Gospel; neither is it a rule of true religion, nor any mark of sincerity, to have a corrupt heart, or to be always complaining of such a heart. On the contrary, the Gospel is intended to deliver us from all iniquity, and to purify us into a peculiar people zealous of good works, and to sanctify us throughout in body, soul, and spirit, that we may *now* be saints,—may *now* have peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and at length be presented without spot or blemish, before the presence of God. This is the invariable sense of revelation: nevertheless, it is manifestly true, that while we are in the body, we shall be exercised with the infirmities and passions thereof: but then this is not our corruption and wickedness, but the trial of our virtue and holiness; and it is the real character of every true Christian, that he *crucifieth the flesh with the affections and lusts*, and ardently labours to *perfect holiness in the fear of God*. Whatever is evil and corrupt in us we ought to condemn; not so as that it shall *still* remain in us, and that we may *always* be condemning it, but that we may *speedily* reform, and be effectually delivered from it.

To give, therefore, a direct and final answer to the objection

C H A P. VIII.

They that are in Christ, and live according to the Spirit, are free from condemnation. What harm cometh of the flesh, and what good of the Spirit, and what of being God's children.

[Anno Domini 58.]

THERE ^a is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,

who ^b walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 ^c For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the ^d law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, ^e in that it was weak through the flesh, ^f God, sending

^a Ch. 5. 1, 21. & 6. 22, 23. & 7. 4, 15—25. John, 6. 24. Heb. 6. 18. Gal. 2. 19, 20. & 3. 13, 14. & 4. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Chron. 1. 30. Eph. 3. 17. John, 15. 4. Phil. 3. 9. ^b Gal. 5. 16—26. Ch. 7. 6, 15—25. Luke, 1. 74, 75. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Phil. 3. 7—14. Titus, 2. 11—12. ^c Ch. 2. 27. It. 2. 3. & 5. 11. John, 6. 63. & 8. 52, 56. 2 Cor. 3. 6. Gal. 2. 19, 20. & 5. 1. Ch. 6. 18, 22. ^d Ch. 6. 15. & 7. 4, 6—8, 11. & 3. 19, 20. 2 Chron. 3. 7. Ch. 4. 15. ^e Ch. 3. 19, 20, 23. & 8. 7, 8. Gal. 2. 16. Heb. 10. 4. & 7. 18, 19. & 9. 9. ^f John, 1. 11. & 3. 13—17. Heb. 10. 8. Gal. 4. 4, 5. & 3. 13. 1 John, 2. 2, 4, 9, 10. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Peter, 2. 24. & 3. 18. Dan. 9. 24. Ch. 3. 24—26. & 5. 6—11, 19, 21. Acts, 13. 39.

jection taken from the chapter before us, we may thence gather, that we are very apt, in a world full of temptation, to be deceived and drawn into sin by bodily appetites:—that when once we are under the government of these appetites, it is impracticable to recover ourselves by the mere force of *reason*; consequently, that we stand in need of that *life-giving Spirit* whom the Apostle mentions, chap. viii. 2. That the case of those who are under a law threatening death to every sin, must be quite deplorable, if they have not relief from the mercy of the Lawgiver: which sad case the Jews, who adhered to the law, and rejected the Gospel, chose for themselves. Of course, we can by no means infer, that the Apostle is describing his own case at the time when he wrote, or the case of any genuine Christian believer; though it be true, that *he* had and that all upright Christians, while in the body, have passions to resist and mortify. But then, as they *are in Christ*, it is their real character, that they do resist and mortify, not that they are overcome and brought into captivity by them,—which is the sad case and character described in the above chapter, and which character, if it be finally our own, we shall undoubtedly perish.

We have been more copious in our Inferences from this passage of Scripture, in order to free Christians from a dangerous state into which, it is to be feared, many have fallen, who hence have concluded, that they might by their lusts be hindered from doing that good which they are convinced is their duty, and by the law in their members might be brought into servitude by the law of sin;—and yet, as to their spiritual state, be in as good a condition as St. Paul himself,—a persuasion which manifestly tends to give us too favourable an opinion of the workings of criminal affections, to make us remiss in mortifying them, to encourage us to venture too far in sensual indulgences, and to lull conscience asleep, when we are fallen under their dominion; or, if a better mind preserves a man from these worst consequences of this mistake, yet, so long as it remains, he must rob himself of due encouragement to pious industry, and a cheerful progress in the Christian course. For after all his upright endeavours in sole dependence on divine grace, he will imagine that he makes very small or no advances in a religious life:—still he is but where he was, *still carnal and sold under sin*;—still under the worst of habits, and in the most wretched condition.

To make this good, common infirmities are magnified

into the blackest crimes; and such untoward sentiments cannot fail to enfeeble hope, love, and joy. The Gospel is *glad tidings of great joy*, which introduce a blessed, glorious, lively hope, give us the most pleasing sentiments of the divine love, inspire a comfort and peace far superior to all temporal enjoyments, and expressly require us to *rejoice in the Lord*,—and to hold fast the confidence of hope.—But what room can there be in our breasts for spiritual joy and hope, if we still conceive ourselves to be in a state which the Scripture every where condemns?—If we are still *carnal and sold under sin*, how can we lift up a cheerful face towards heaven?—In short, we must be destitute of every comfort resulting from a heart purified by the faith of Jesus, and remain under gloomy doubts and fears, which no marks or evidences of grace and sanctification can dissipate or remove.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Apostle had asserted, that we are not under the law; and in what sense he here explains. He was addressing himself to them who knew the law, and would admit it as the most obvious truth, that the law can no longer be binding than the person lives under it. As for instance: *The woman which hath an husband, is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth: but if the husband be dead, the bond of wedlock is dissolved, and she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but the case is quite different if her husband be dead, for then she is free from that law: so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.*

Now such was our case.

1. Our first marriage was to the law; we were under it as a covenant of works, and the fruits of that marriage were dreadful. For when we, Jews as well as Gentiles, were in the flesh, in our natural, corrupt, and unregenerate state, the motions of sin, the passions and vile affections of our fallen hearts, which were by the law considered as a covenant of works, that demanded an immaculate perfection which we could not pay, and denounced a curse we could not endure; our corruptions, I say, were but the more irritated by the strictness of the prohibition, and the severity of the sanction, and did work in our members with such mighty and irresistible energy, as to bring forth fruit unto death, producing all those actual transgressions which spring from the original root of bitterness in our nature; and, unless we are delivered from the guilt and dominion of them,

his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and * for sin, condemned sin in the flesh :

be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

4 That the righteousness of the law might

5 ^e For they that are after the flesh do

* Or by a sacrifice for sin. ^e John, 3. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Phil. 3. 19.

them, must issue in eternal death: and, as long as any soul is under the law as a covenant, this must be his miserable case. But,

2. We are married to another, even to Christ Jesus. Our first husband, *the law, being dead, wherein we were held, we are delivered* from its obligations as a covenant, and from the curse that it denounced on the transgressors. We are no more in these respects under it, than a wife is subject to her departed husband. *We are become dead to the law, and the law unto us, by the body of Christ; for he hath satisfied all the demands of that perfect law of innocence: and we are thus discharged from all connection with and obligation to our former husband, that we might be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, the risen and exalted Saviour, to whom we now pledge our fidelity, and by ties of love are drawn to a willing subjection to his pleasing yoke, that we should bring forth fruit unto God, the fruits of grace and holiness produced through the quickening influences of his Spirit, which, till this union with Christ commences, never can be brought forth,—and tending to advance the divine glory, acceptable also to God through Jesus Christ; and that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter: though made free from the law as a covenant of life, yet under the law to Christ, receiving from him the new heart, walking before him under the influence of new principles, and enabled to shew forth a very different conversation, in righteousness and true holiness, from what we ever did or could practise, when under the power of the old man; and regarding the law as a covenant of life, which only provoked, instead of restraining, the corruption of our hearts.*

2dly, An objection might be raised from what the Apostle had said, as if he had most dishonourably reflected on the law. *What shall we say then? is the law sin?* With indignation he replies, *God forbid: the law is good, the evil is all in ourselves.*

1. The law is in itself most *holy, just, and good; it contains a transcript of God's purity, inculcates the most perfect obedience, demands nothing but what essentially flows from the very relation of Creator and creature, and in its nature is, like its Author, excellent.*

2. The advantages of the law are great, as it convinces the conscience, and humbles the soul under a sense of sin. *I had not known sin, but by the law; so far is the law from leading to sin, or approving it, that it discovers and condemns the most secret workings of evil. For I had not known lust, the sinfulness of the first motions of corrupt desire, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet; the law therefore is not sinful; but, as the bright mirror discovers that deformity which would otherwise have been overlooked, so does the law discover the deformity of sin. The evil is all in ourselves, where sin, taking occasion by the commandment, raged even the more violently because of the prohibition, and wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law, whilst in my Pharisaical state I knew*

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not its spirituality and extensive demands, *sin was dead, did not terrify my conscience, and to my apprehension was entirely subdued; so that I counted myself, as touching the righteousness which is by the law, blameless. For I was alive without the law once; in those days of my vanity, when Pharisaical pride swelled my bosom, I counted my title to life clear on the footing of my own obedience, being a perfect stranger to the spiritual nature and extent of the law: but when the commandment came, laid open to my conscience by the Spirit in its purity and spirituality, conviction flashed on my mind; sin revived, and brought unnumbered charges against me, which I had overlooked; and I felt its living power in my heart, when I thought it had been utterly destroyed, and, in consequence thereof, I died; I saw myself a condemned criminal, most justly obnoxious to the divine displeasure, and in the eye of the law under the fearful sentence of eternal death. And the commandment which, if perfectly obeyed, was ordained to be a covenant of life to man in innocence, I found to be unto death; and through the corruption of my nature rendering me incapable of keeping it, I perceived that the only thing it could do for me was, to consign me over to the wrath of God as a transgressor. For sin, that native principle of corruption in my heart, taking occasion by the commandment to rebel against the law, as if it was unreasonably severe, deceived me with hopes of pleasure and impunity, and by it slew me, like an assassin that, having missed the traveller, plunges his dagger into his heart. Wherefore all these dire consequences are to be ascribed wholly to our desperate corruption, while the law is holy, and no blame to be laid against it, and the commandment is holy, just, and good.*

3dly, A new objection is started from the title he gives to the law as good. *Was then that which is good made death unto me? might one suggest; can that which is so good in its nature be in its effects so deadly? and is the law of God the cause of all human miseries? God forbid. It is not the law, but the crime committed against it, which causes the death of the malefactor. Thus sin, the concupiscence of my corrupted nature, that it might appear sin, and be discovered to my conscience in its true malignity, working death in me by that which is good, and taking occasion to rebel from the very purity and perfection of the holy law of God, brought the sentence of death upon me; that sin by the commandment, so clearly forbidden, yet rising in wilful opposition thereto, might appear exceeding sinful; and that this corruption of my nature, the source of all my actual transgressions, might be seen in the blackest colours that words can express, or thought conceive (κατ' ὑπερβολὴν ἀμαρτωλός).*

The Apostle farther proceeds to describe the state of an awakened sinner, drawn from his own experience during the interval between his miraculous conviction, and his conversion at Damascus, or from his general and perfect acquaintance with the experience of mourners in that

M

awakened

mind the things of the flesh; ^h but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

6 For ^{*1} to be carnally-minded is death; but [†] to be spiritually-minded is life and peace.

^h Ver. 9. 14. 1 Cor. 2. 15. Gal. 5. 22—25. Eph. 5. 9. Col. 3. 1, 2. 6. 2. Ver. 13. James, 1. 15. [†] Gr. the mind.ing of the spirit.

^{*} Gr. the mind.ing of the flesh. ¹ Ch. 6. 21, 23. & 7. 10, 11. Gal. Ver. 13. Gal. 5. 16, 22—25. Pl. 29. 11. 1f. 3. 10. Ch. 14. 17. 2 Cor.

awakened state. For we know that the law is spiritual, reaching to the thoughts and intents of the heart, and requiring inward as well as outward obedience; but I am carnal, feel myself a poor fallen creature, sold under sin; by the first man's transgression delivered into the tyrant's hands, and born the slave of corruption, the dire effects of which I daily feel, and groan under. For that which I do, I allow not; when in thought, word, or deed, my wretched heart yields to the tempter's wiles, my judgment disapproves the evil that I commit; and, far from a deliberate choice, my soul rises against it, and I loath both the sin and myself. For what I would, and in my better part approve and desire, that do I not; I desire always with the most intense application, that my soul should be fixed on God, and engaged in his blessed work and service: yet how short do I come of that spirituality of temper and conduct which I wish to exercise! But what I hate, that do I; insensibly, through infirmity, surprise, or temptation, betrayed into things that habitually I abhor. If then I do that which I would not, whilst I feel a settled aversion to this hateful service, I consent unto the law (*σύννομιαι*), give my full approbation to it, that it is good, most excellent in itself, most becoming God to enjoin, and me to obey; and even if its fearful penalty were levied upon me, I must own the sentence righteous, just, and good. Now then it is no more I that do it; but sin, my native corruption, that dwelleth in me, which overpowers me, and is most burthenfome to me. For I know, by sad experience, that in me, (that is in my flesh), in my carnal self, there dwelleth no good thing, but evil only: for to will is present with me, and my judgment approves the things that are excellent, and my choice determines me to walk with and please God; but how to perform that which is good I find not; the storms of temptation and the power and current of corruption carry me out of the course I mean to steer; so that I cannot keep in the straight way of holiness, nor proceed with that steadiness and speed I wish for and purpose. For the good that I would, even to be found in the will of God, I do not, cannot attain unto; but the evil which I would not, but condemn, disapprove, and disallow, that I do, feeling myself weak as an infant, and unable to make resistance. Now if I do that I would not, as I said before, it is no more I that do it; sin is in my eyes an abominable thing, and I feel an aversion to it, and a hearty approbation of the holy law of God; but all the evil proceeds from sin, that corrupted principle, which dwelleth in me, and overcomes me. I find then a law, my fallen nature acting in me with such mighty influence, that when I would do good, evil is present with me; some discouragement is suggested to deter me, some snare to allure me, or some evil desire rises up, quenches the gracious purposes that I had formed, and turns me aside from the path of righteousness. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

my inmost soul does not only approve the law in all its spirituality as good, but feels a most earnest desire to obtain that revelation of Jesus Christ in my heart, and that principle of divine love implanted in my soul, which may give me constant dominion over sin. But (which is the bitterest burthen under which I groan) I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members; while overpowered, reluctantly I am drawn aside, not a willing slave, but an unhappy captive. O wretched man that I am! thus tied and bound with the chain of my sins, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? from this fallen nature, which, like a body consisting of various members, works so powerfully, and must, for any thing I can do to help myself, bring me under the sentence of eternal death. But, though I feel my helplessness, and lie down under self-despair, I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. By his grace I am delivered from condemnation; and by his Spirit I am saved from the power of evil. So then the sum of my whole argumentation above, in the character of a penitent sinner, is shortly this: with the mind, in my settled judgment and choice, I myself serve the law of God with the full consent of my judgment; but with the flesh the law of sin, feeling its workings in me, though disallowed and condemned, and reluctantly brought under its hateful power.

CHAP. VIII.

IN farther answer to the objection mentioned chap. iii. 31. the Apostle, in this chapter, with great feeling and energy, displays the many powerful motives which the doctrines of the Gospel, explained in the preceding chapters, suggest for engaging both the understanding and the affections of believers, to a continued pursuit of holiness.

The first motive which he mentions is, That under the new covenant, there is no condemnation to believers, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit, ver. 1.—This greatest of all considerations the Apostle begins with, after having pathetically described the terror of the awakened sinner, arising from his consciousness of guilt, because, if mercy were not with God, he could never be loved nor obeyed by men.

The second motive is, That under the new covenant, sufficient assistance being given to all, to free them from the law of sin and death, they cannot excuse their evil actions by pleading the strength of their sinful passions, ver. 2.—This deliverance from the law of sin and death, God has accomplished by sending his Son in the flesh, to die as a sin-offering, to procure pardon for sinners, and to destroy the power of sin in their flesh by his word and Spirit, that they may attain the righteousness which the law of faith, the new covenant, requires, ver. 4.—And, to

7¹ Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

9^m But ye are not in the flesh, but in the

¹ Gen. 6. 3. & 8. 21. Job, 14. 4. Ps. 51. 5. & 53. 1—5. If. 1. 4, 6. Jer. 17. 9. James, 4. 4. 1 Cor. 2. 14. 1 John, 2. 16. Eph. 2. 1—3. Titus, 3. 3. Ch. 1. 28—31. John, 15. 5. ^m John, 3. 6. Eph. 1. 17, 18. Ezek. 36. 27. 2 Tim. 1. 14. 1 John, 2. 20, 29. 1 Cor. 3. 16. & 6. 19. Gal. 4. 6. 1 Peter, 2. 11. Phil. 1. 19.

shew the nature and extent of that righteousness, the Apostle explains what it is to *walk after the flesh*, and what to *walk after the Spirit*, ver. 5.

The *third* motive to holiness is, That, according to the new covenant, all who live a wicked sensual life, shall die eternally; but every one who lives in a holy spiritual manner shall be rewarded with life eternal, ver. 6—8.

The *fourth* motive is, That the Spirit of God dwells with believers, whereby the lusts of their body are mortified, and their rational powers are habitually strengthened, ver. 10. —And even the animal part of their nature, after being subdued, is made subservient to righteousness, by the indwelling of the same Spirit, ver. 11.—Such being the effects of the gracious assistances promised in the Gospel, no person under the new covenant is irresistibly forced, either by the corruptions of his nature, or by outward temptations, to live according to the flesh, ver. 12.;—and therefore God has justly decreed, that all who live according to the flesh, shall die eternally, ver. 13.—This declaration concerning future retributions under the new covenant, the Apostle had made before, ver. 6.; but he repeats it here, to shew that, although the curse of the law, in so far as it allows no mercy to the penitent sinner, does not take place under the new covenant, men's obligations to holiness are not weakened. The sanctions of law are still continued under the Gospel, but in a different form, and with a more happy efficacy.—Farther to correct the error of the Jews, who contended that no Gentile could obtain eternal life, who did not obey the law of Moses, and to comfort the believing Gentiles, whom the Jews thus excluded from the favour of God, the Apostle declared, that, according to the tenor of the new covenant, all who are led by the Spirit of God to mortify the deeds of the body, are the sons of God, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. And, to shew the excellent disposition of the sons of God, he observes that, notwithstanding under the new covenant the severest punishment is threatened against sinners, the sons of God do not obey him from that slavish fear of punishment which was bred in the minds of the Jews by the curse of the law, but from the filial dispositions of gratitude and love to their Father, ver. 15.—This excellent temper the Apostle terms *the witness of our spirit* that we are children of God, and observes, that the Spirit of God also confirms that witness.

Having thus shewn, that all who obey God sincerely from a principle of faith, are his sons, the Apostle, as the *fifth* motive to holiness furnished by the Gospel, gives a particular account of the *honours, privileges, and possessions* of the sons of God. They are *heirs of God*. And to shew what an heir of God is, he adds, and *joint-heirs with Christ*; so that the whole felicity of that immortal life, which Christ now enjoys in the human nature, really belongs to the other sons of God in their measure, whether they be

Jews or Gentiles; and they shall be put in possession thereof, if, when called to it, they suffer, as Christ did, for righteousness' sake, ver. 17. This remark, concerning suffering, the Apostle introduced, to teach the Romans, that their being the sons of God would not secure them against, but rather expose them to sufferings. And to prevent the Jews, who considered prosperity as a token of God's favour, from being scandalized at the Gospel, on account of the sufferings which accompanied it, and even to encourage them to suffer, he observed that that glorious resurrection, by which the sons of God are to be distinguished, is a blessing so great, that the pious Gentiles supported the miseries of life, by earnestly looking for it, ver. 18, 19.—Nor was their expectation without foundation, inasmuch as not for their own sin, but for the sin of the first man, the human race was subjected to death by God, ver. 20.—in the firm resolution that he would deliver all mankind from the grave, through the obedience of Christ, ver. 21.—By insinuating that the expectation which the Gentiles entertained of a future life in the body, was derived from God's resolution to raise all mankind from the dead, the Apostle, I suppose, meant God's resolution made known at the fall, that the Seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. For that promise, being in some effective sense preserved among the Gentiles by tradition, was the foundation of the hope which many of them, in different parts of the world, entertained of the resurrection of the body, and of a future state.—Then, by a beautiful rhetorical figure, the Apostle introduces the whole Gentile world as suffering extreme pain under the miseries of life, and earnestly wishing for deliverance, ver. 22.—Believers also groan within themselves, while they wait for the redemption of their body from the bondage of corruption, ver. 23.—But they wait patiently, and thereby shew the strength of their faith, ver. 24, 25.—And to this exercise of patience they are helped by the Spirit of God, who produces in them such a disposition of the mind, as is an effectual complaint to God, ver. 26.—and, being wrought in them by the Spirit, is justly termed *the Spirit's complaining for the saints*, ver. 27.

The *sixth* motive to holiness, furnished by the discoveries made in the Gospel, is this: God having determined to save persevering believers, they know that every providence, whether prosperous or adverse, shall work together for that end. The reason is, God has *called* or *denominated* believers the seed of Abraham, and the sons of God, 1 John, iii. 1. and heirs of immortality, ver. 28.—And whom he foreknew that they would be his sons,—that they would yield to be saved by grace, them he also predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son Christ, both in their body and mind, ver. 29.—Moreover, whom he predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ, them he also called or denominated the seed of Abraham, and gave them a right to all the blessings promised to Abraham;

Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

10 And if Christ be ⁿ in you, ^o the body is dead because of sin; ^p but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

^a John, 17. 23. Eph. 3. 17.

^b Ch. 5. 12. & 6. 23.

^c Ch. 5. 21. 1 Cor. 15. 45. & 1. 30. Gal. 4. 19. Rev. 22. 14. If. 3. 10.

seed; and whom he so called, them he also justified, ver. 30. —And having thus described the salvation of the faithful saints of God, in its origin, its intermediate steps, and its issue, the Apostle, strongly impressed with his subject, asks, What shall we say to these things? Since God is for us believing Jews and Gentiles, no person can hinder our being accounted the seed of Abraham, and the sons of God, ver. 31. —For he who delivered his own Son to death for us all, for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews, will with him also freely give us all the blessings promised to the seed of Abraham, that is, to all the faithful sons of God, ver. 32. —Then, as enraptured with the view which he had taken of those grand subjects, and to shew that there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, he cries out, Who shall dare to bring any accusation against God's elect, —against his faithful people, —since God has declared that he will justify such by faith? ver. 33. —Who is he that will pretend to condemn them, since Christ hath died to procure their pardon, and now governs the world for their benefit, and makes intercession with the Father in their behalf? ver. 34. —Then personating the whole body of the faithful, strongly affected with the goodness of God shewn in their salvation, and highly elated with the view of their privileges so unanswerably established, he, in their name, professes their firm resolution of adhering to the Gospel, that they may continue the objects of Christ's love, however many or strong the temptations may be with which they are assailed, ver. 35. to the end of the chapter.

The latter part of this chapter, beginning at ver. 31. if compared with the most shining passages of the so much admired writings of the Greeks and Romans, will be found not inferior to any of them in sublimity of thought, variety of figures, and beauty of language. It contains a description, in most forcible and glowing expressions, of the privileges, the hopes, and the temper of a true Christian; and shews what magnanimity and what greatness of sentiment the Gospel is able to infuse into them who understand and believe its doctrines. It is therefore a most proper conclusion of a discourse, in which, by the strongest reasoning, practices are recommended, which ennoble the human mind, yield the greatest and the most permanent joys, and prepare men for becoming the companions of angels, and for living with God himself through all eternity.

On reviewing the encouragements to holiness proposed by the Apostle in this and the three foregoing chapters, the reader must be sensible that the scheme of salvation revealed in the Gospel suggests motives to persuade men to forsake sin and follow holiness, and even to suffer for well-doing, more in number and of infinitely greater efficacy than any preacher either of the law of nature (which can do nothing but condemn) or of Moses ever proposed, or indeed had it in his power to propose. And therefore the calumny of the Jewish scribes and heathen philosophers,

mentioned chap. iii. 31. that by teaching the justification of sinners, through faith without works of law, the Apostles of Christ made void the obligations of morality, and encouraged men to sin, was altogether without foundation. That doctrine, instead of weakening the obligation of law, strengthens it in the highest degree. —Farther, because in the chapters above mentioned, the Apostle has shewn that God's counting men's faith to them for righteousness, on account of the death of his Son, furnishes such a variety of powerful motives for persuading sinners to repent and return to God, these chapters do in effect demonstrate the natural efficacy of the death of Christ, in delivering believers from the power of sin. Whence it follows, that the Gospel method of pardoning sinners through the death of Christ, is an exercise of mercy, which, instead of weakening, has greatly strengthened the authority of the law of God; consequently, it is perfectly suitable to his character, and subservient to the ends of his moral government. The efficacy, therefore, of Christ's death, in delivering us from the power of sin, being thus evident, we cannot doubt of its efficacy, as an atonement in delivering us from the punishment of sin, notwithstanding we are in some measure ignorant of the manner in which it operates for that end.

Ver. 1. *There is therefore now*] *Ἄρα νῦν.* The word *Ἄρα* here, is not *illative*, but strongly *affirmative*; —*nampe utique, certainly, verily*; (see Matt. xii. 28. Luke, xi. 48. xviii. 8. in the original). *Now*, is “under the Gospel.” This carries our thoughts back to ver. 6. of the foregoing chapter; which verse the Apostle comments upon in the eleven first verses of this chapter; and these verses shew the *Christian Jew* how he is obliged under the Gospel to sanctify of life, and correspond to the first eleven verses of the sixth chapter, where he shews the same thing to the *Gentile Christian*. *Πνεῦμα, Spirit*, certainly is not used in the same sense throughout this chapter. In ver. 10, 16. it signifies the *spirit of our mind* (as Acts, vii. 59. xvii. 16. xviii. 5, 25. Rom. i. 9. xii. 11. Gal. v. 17.); the supreme part of our constitution, or the principle of reason, by which we discern, approve, and choose the truth; and thus it answers to *vous, mind*, in the foregoing chapter, ver. 25. But in ver. 9, 11, 16, 26, 27. it signifies that heavenly Person, whom we call the *Holy Ghost*, given to the Apostles and others in his miraculous power, and sent to enlighten and sanctify all those who submit to the righteousness of God which is by faith, and desire to live soberly, righteously, and godly. The verse before us may be paraphrased thus: “Under the weak and lifeless dispensation of the law, the sinner remains, as we have shewn above, “in a deplorable state, without help or hope, enslaved to “sin, and sentenced to death. But now, under the Gospel, “the most encouraging hopes smile upon us, and we have “the highest assurance that all genuine believers, notwithstanding former transgressions, are quite discharged from “the penalty of the law, and disengaged from the servitude “of

11 'But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also

'quicken your mortal bodies * by his Spirit that 'dwelleth in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, 'we are debtors,

* Acts, 2. 21. 1 Peter, 1. 21. Heb. 13. 20. Eph. 2. 5. Col. 2. 13. 1 Cor. 15. 16. 2 Cor. 4. 14. * Or because of his Spirit. * Ven. 9. Lekt. 16. 27. John, 7. 39, 39. 1 Cor. 3. 16. 2 Tim. 1. 14. John, 14. 17. 1 John, 2. 27. Ch. 6. 2, 7, 11, 14, 18. 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.

"of sin; and will so continue, if so be they make that faith a principle of obedience, and do not choose to live in wickedness, according to the instigation of fleshly appetite; but in truth and holiness, according to the dictates of the inward man," &c. See Locke, and Bengelius.

Ver. 2. For the law of the Spirit of life] That it is the Spirit of life and grace,—the Spirit of Christ,—who delivers from the law in the members, that law of death, is evident from chap. vii. 23—25. Why it is called a law, may be found in the antithesis to the law of sin and death; grace being as certain a law to give life to Christians, who live not after the flesh, as the influence of sinful appetites is to bring death on those who are not under grace. The reason why it is called the law of the Spirit of life is, that the Gospel which contains this doctrine of grace is dictated by the same Spirit that raised up Christ from the dead; that quickens us to newness of life, and has for its end the conferring of eternal life. By the law of sin and death is meant, that which he calls the law in his members, chap. vii. 23, where it is termed the law of sin; and ver. 24. the body of death, from which grace delivers. This is certain, that no one who considers what St. Paul has said, ver. 7 and 13. of the foregoing chapter, can think that he can call the law of Moses the law of sin, or the law of death. See Locke.

Ver. 3. For what the law could not do, &c.] For this the law not being able to effect, &c. The weakness, and as he there also calls it, the unprofitableness of the law, is again taken notice of by the Apostle, Heb. vii. 18, 19. There were two defects in the law, whereby it became in this limited sense unprofitable, so as to make nothing perfect; (for it is profitable to drive us to Christ;) the one was its inflexible rigour, against which it provided no alloy, or mitigation. It left no place for atonement; the least slip was mortal; death was the inevitable punishment of transgression, by the sentence of the law. St. Paul's Epistles are full of this; and he shews, Heb. x. 5, 10. how we are delivered from it by the body of Christ. The other weakness or defect of the law was, that it could not enable those who were under it to get the mastery over their flesh, or carnal propensities: the law exacted complete obedience, but afforded men no help against their vicious inclinations. St. Paul shews here how believers are delivered from this dominion of sin in their mortal bodies, by the Spirit of Christ enabling them, upon their sincere endeavours after righteousness, to keep sin under in their mortal bodies; in conformity to Christ, in whose flesh it was condemned, executed, and perfectly extinct, having never indeed had there any life or being,—as we shall observe more fully by-and-by. The provision made in the new covenant against both these defects of the law, is in the Epistle to the Hebrews expressed thus: First, he will write his law in their hearts; because, secondly, he will be merciful to their iniquities; Heb.

viii. 7—12. And for sin, *ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτίας*, signifies an offering for sin. See 2 Cor. v. 21. Heb. x. 5—10. So that the plain import is, "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,—[like unto our frail sinful flesh in all things except sin, Heb. iv. 15.]—and sending him to be an offering for sin, hath condemned sin," &c. Thus the manner and end of his sending are joined. The prosopopœia, whereby sin was considered as a person through the foregoing chapter being continued here, the condemning of sin in the flesh, cannot mean, as some would have it, that Christ was condemned for sin, or in the place of sin; for that would be to save sin, and leave that alive which Christ came to destroy. But the plain meaning is, that sin itself was condemned, or put to death, in his flesh; that is, was suffered to have no life or being in the flesh of our Saviour: he was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. This farther appears to be the sense by the following words. The antithesis between condemnation, ver. 1. and condemned here, will also shew why that word is used to express the death or non-existence of sin in our Saviour; 1 Pet. ii. 22. That St. Paul sometimes uses condemnation for putting to death, see chap. v. 16—18. To what has been advanced in this note, it may be urged, "Had not the Jews, before Christ came, the assistances of the Spirit, and sufficient means and motives to deliver them from the power of sin?" To which we reply, certainly they had, as appears particularly from the Psalms and prophetic writings; yea all mankind, since the promise, Gen. iii. 15. in all ages and parts of the world, have been, and still are, under grace; grace founded upon the redemption which is in Christ; and therefore always had, and still have, the benefit of divine assistance, however they might have neglected or abused it. But the Apostle is here considering the assistances enjoyed, under the then newly-erected dispensation of the Gospel, (which in means and motives far exceeds all others,) and with particular regard to the Jew; and upon a comparison with the law, in which he rested for every thing, to shew the infinite preference of the Gospel to mere law;—as appears from the foregoing chapter: where he at large shews the Jew the insufficiency of mere law, or a rule of duty, to deliver a man from sin and corruption; though the instructions here given to the Jew concerning the superior advantages of the Gospel for sanctification, would be of use to the Gentile convert; as his discourse to the Gentile, chap. vi. concerning our obligation to holiness, would be of service to the Jew, so far as either should need instruction upon those heads. See Locke and Whitby.

Ver. 4. That the righteousness of the law, &c.] *δικαιοσύνη*, righteousness, here seems to be used in the most extensive sense, and may signify both moral righteousness, and the consequence of it, salvation, (see chap. v. 16. in the original). The Gospel frees those from sin who choose to be free, which was more than the law could do. Law neither

not to the flesh, ~~to~~ live after the flesh.

13 For ^u if ye live after the flesh, ye shall

die: ^x but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

^u Col. 3. 5, 6. Eph. 5. 3—5. Ch. 6. 21. Gal. 6. 8. & 5. 19—21.

^x Col. 3. 1—5. Eph. 4. 22. & 5. 3. 1 Peter, 2. 11.

neither grants pardon, nor supplies help: but yet the Gospel does not free those from sin, who wickedly choose to remain under the dominion of it; for a willing slave, determined to continue in servitude, who can free? The Apostle demonstrates, in the four next verses, that under any dispensation, such as continue impenitently in a sensual life, must perish; and he insists so particularly upon this, probably either to prevent a mistake,—for some might be so weak as to imagine, that a mere profession of Christianity would secure them from the power of sin;—or to obviate an objection which the Jew might be ready to make. He might allege; “But there are wicked men under the Gospel, as well as under the law.” The Apostle answers, “Men who choose to continue under the power of sin and lust, according to the true nature of things, must perish under every dispensation. God provides proper means under the Gospel to deliver them from a wicked life, and to bring them to true holiness; but he cannot, consistently with his perfections, either force them to be holy, or love them if they are wicked.” As Christ in the flesh was wholly exempt from all taint of sin, so we, by that Spirit who was in him, shall be exempt from the dominion of our carnal lusts, if we make it our choice and endeavour to live after the Spirit, ver. 9—11. For one thing which we are to perform by that Spirit, is the mortification of the body. See ver. 13. Gal. v. 16—26. Locke, and Peters on Job, p. 281.

Ver. 6. *For to be carnally-minded is death*] For joins what follows to ver. 1. as the reason of what is here laid down; namely, that deliverance from condemnation is experienced only by such Christian converts, as walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit:—for, &c. See Locke.

Ver. 7. *The carnal mind*] *Φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς* should have been translated here *to be carnally-minded*, as it is in the foregoing verse; which is justified by *ἔρπονται τὰ τῆς σαρκὸς*, *do mind the things of the flesh*, ver. 5. which signifies the employing the bent of their minds, or subjecting their mind entirely to the fulfilling the lusts of the flesh: see 1 Cor. ii. 14. The Apostle, in the next clause, gives the reason why even those who have received the Gospel,—for to such he is here speaking,—are not saved unless they cease to walk after the flesh; because that runs directly counter to the law of God, and can never be brought into conformity and subjection to his commands. Such a settled contradiction to his precepts cannot be suffered by the supreme Lord and Governor of the world in any of his creatures, without foregoing his sovereignty, and giving up the eternal immutable rule of right, to the subverting the very foundations of all order and moral rectitude in the intellectual world. This, even in the judgment of men themselves, will be always thought a necessary piece of justice for the keeping out of anarchy, disorder, and confusion; that those refractory subjects, who set up their own inclinations for their rule against the law, which was made to restrain those very inclinations, should feel the

severity of the law, without which the authority of the law and the law-maker cannot be preserved. See Locke.

Ver. 8. *So then they that are in the flesh, &c.*] This is the conclusion drawn from what went before; and *in the flesh* here, must mean the same as *to be carnally-minded, &c.* above;—to be under the government of sensual appetites. See Gal. iv. 3—6.

Ver. 9. *But ye are not in the flesh, &c.*] The word *ἔσπετε*, rendered *if so be*, may here stand for the word *ἐπεδύνατε*, as it does 2 Thess. i. 6. *Have*, in the last clause, is emphatical, and signifies to retain, to fix in the mind as a principle,—duly to improve. Compare 1 John, v. 12. 2 John, 9.

Ver. 10, 11. *And if Christ be in you*] *And if Christ, &c.*—with respect to sin,—with respect to righteousness. In these verses the Apostle describes the happy advantages of those who embrace the faith of the Gospel, and live according to it. The phrase *δι' ἀμαρτιῶν* may be properly rendered *in respect of*, or *with reference to sin*. This determines what sort of death he is speaking of, namely, a moral death; as if he had said, “The body, or the members thereof, are mortified, as the power of lust is destroyed.” *Shall quicken your mortal bodies*, ver. 11. means, “shall raise them to eternal life.” The glorified saints are the *sons of the resurrection*, Luke, xx. 36. as it introduces them into eternal life. It seems to me clear that this refers to the resurrection of the faithful saints of God at the last day, for these reasons: *First*, Because the resurrection of Christ is twice mentioned in this verse, as a pledge of their being made to live. *Secondly*, Because their being made to live is assigned to God as his act, on account of their being faithfully under the government of his Holy Spirit. *If the Spirit of God dwell, or govern, in you, God will quicken your mortal bodies, on account, or by the agency, of his Spirit, that dwelleth in you.* And therefore, the quickening of our mortal bodies, or making them to live, cannot mean (as Mr. Locke supposes in his long note upon this verse) our being quickened to newness of life, or to a spiritual life of righteousness; which life it pre-supposes, and which the Apostle has spoken of in the foregoing verse. The revival or resurrection of the body is frequently put for our advancement to eternal life. See Doddridge. Mr. Locke would read, *Shall quicken even your mortal bodies*; and though the foregoing interpretation of this verse is in my judgment the true one, yet it seems but justice to the reader, and to that learned commentator, to subjoin what he has advanced in defence of a different exposition: “To lead us,” says he, “into the true sense of this 11th verse, we need only observe, that St. Paul having in the four first chapters of this Epistle shewn that neither Jew nor Gentile could be justified by the law; and in the 5th chapter, how sin entered into the world by Adam, and reigned by death, from which it was grace, and not the law, that delivered men; in the 6th chapter he sheweth the convert Gentiles, that though they were not under the law, but under grace, yet they could not be saved, unless they

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received

Gal. 3. 16, 18, 25. & 4. 6. Ver. 9. Luke, 20. 36. John, 1. 12.
4. 5. 6. Mark, 14. 30. II. 56. 5.

Heb. 2. 15. 1 John, 4. 18. 2 Tim. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 2. 12. Gal. 3. 26. &

cast off the dominion of sin, and became the devoted servants of righteousness, which was what their very baptism taught and required of them. And in chap. vii. he declares to the Jews the weakness of the law, which they so much stood upon; and shews that the law could not deliver them from the dominion of sin; that deliverance was only by the grace of God, through Jesus Christ: from whence he draws the consequence which begins this 8th chapter, and so goes on with it here in two branches, relating to his discourse in the foregoing chapter, which complete it in this. The one is to shew, that the law of the spirit of life, that is to say, the new covenant in the Gospel, required that those that are in Christ Jesus should live not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The other is to shew how, and by whom,—since the law was weak, and could not enable those under the law to do it,—they are enabled to keep sin from reigning in their mortal bodies. And here he shews, that Christians are delivered from the dominion of their carnal sinful lusts by the Spirit of God that is given to them, and dwells in them, as a new quickening principle and power, by which they are put into the state of a spiritual life, wherein their members are made capable of being the instruments of righteousness; if they please, as living men alive now to righteousness, so to employ them. If this be not the sense of this chapter to ver. 14. I desire to know how ἀγα εἶν, in the first place, comes in, and what coherence there is in what is here said. Besides the connection of this to the former chapter, contained in the illative *therefore*, the very antithesis of the expressions in one and the other, shews that St. Paul, in writing this very verse, had an eye to the foregoing chapter. There it was *sin that dwelleth in me*, which was the active and over-ruling principle: here it is *the Spirit of God that dwelleth in you*, which is the principle of spiritual life. There it was, *Who shall deliver me from this body of death?* Here it is, *God by his Spirit shall quicken your mortal bodies*; that is to say, bodies which, as the seat and harbour of sinful lusts that possess them, are indisposed or dead to the actions of a spiritual life, and have a natural tendency to death. In the same sense, and upon the same account, he calls the bodies of the Gentiles their *mortal bodies*, chap. vi. 12. where his subject is, as here, freedom from the reign of sin; upon which account they are there styled, ver. 13. *alive from the dead*. To make it yet clearer that it is deliverance from the reign of sin in our bodies, that St. Paul speaks of here, I desire any one to read what he says, chap. vi. 1—14. to the Gentiles on the same subject, and compare it with the thirteen first verses of this chapter; and then tell me, whether they have not a mutual correspondence, and do not give a great light to one another? If this be too much pains, let him at least read the two next verses, and see how they could possibly be, as they are, an inference from this 11th verse, if the *quicken* of your

mortal bodies in it mean any thing, but a quickening to newness of life, or to a spiritual life of righteousness. One thing more the text suggests concerning this matter, and that is, if by *quicken* your mortal bodies, &c. be meant here, the raising them into life after death, how can this be mentioned as a peculiar favour to those who have the Spirit of God? For God will also raise the bodies of the wicked, and as certainly as those of believers. But that which is promised here is promised to those only who have the Spirit of God: and therefore it must be something peculiar to them, viz. that God shall so enliven their mortal bodies by his Spirit, which is the principle and pledge of immortal life, that they may be able to yield up themselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead, and their members servants to righteousness unto holiness; as he expresses himself, chap. vi. 13. and 19. The full explication of this verse may be seen, Ephes. i. 19. and ii. 4—6, 10. Compare also Col. ii. 12, 13. to the same purpose, and Rom. vii. 4. *Ζωοποιήσου ἡμᾶς, shall quicken even your mortal bodies*, seems more agreeable to the original, than *shall also quicken your mortal bodies*."

Ver. 12. *Therefore, brethren, &c.*] After the Apostle has separately and distinctly shewn how the affair of sanctification or obligation to piety and holiness stands under the Gospel, both with regard to Jews and Gentiles, he seems here to address himself to both conjointly. And, I. He draws the general *conclusion* from all his arguments upon this subject, ver. 12. where the phrase ἀγα εἶν, appears to be the grand inference from all that he has been arguing, in relation to sanctity of life. II. He shews the ground on which they may hope for eternal life, ver. 14—17. III. And whereas the affair of *suffering persecution* was a great stumbling-block to the Jew, and might very much discourage the Gentile, he introduces it to the best advantage, ver. 17. and advances several arguments to fortify their minds under all trials; as, *First*, that they suffered *with Christ*: *Secondly*, in order to be *crucified with him*, in a manner which will infinitely compensate any present sufferings, ver. 17, 18. *Thirdly*, All mankind are under various pressures, longing for a better state, ver. 19—22. *Fourthly*, The most eminent Christians, distinguished by the choicest gifts of heaven, were in the same distressed condition, ver. 23. *Fifthly*, According to the plan of the Gospel, we are to be saved after a course of patience, exercised in a variety of trials, ver. 24, 25. *Sixthly*, The Spirit of God will supply patience to every upright soul under persecution and suffering: which will put them into a state highly pleasing to God, ver. 26, 27. *Seventhly*, All things, even the severest trials, shall operate together to accomplish the salvation of those who love God, ver. 28. This he proves by giving us a view of the several steps which the wisdom and goodness of God have settled, in order to perfect the salvation of the faithful, ver. 29, 30. Hence, IV. He concludes from the whole of his preceding arguments,

the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, * Abba, Father.

16 * The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God :

* Mark, 14. 36. * 2 Cor. 1. 12, 22. & 5. 5. Eph. 1. 13. & 4. 30. 1 Cor. 2. 12. 1 John, 4. 13.

arguments, that, as we are brought into a state of pardon by the free grace of God, founded upon the death of Christ, who is now our glorious Agent and Intercessor in heaven, no possible cause,—supposing we perseveringly love God, (for to such only the Apostle's observations are applicable,)—will be able to pervert our minds; ver. 31. to the end.

Ver. 13. *Ye shall die*] *Μελλετε ἀποθνῆσκειν, ye shall die hereafter*; namely, the second death at the last day. The wicked Christian professor is *nigh unto the curse*; whose end is, to be burned. See Heb. vi. 8.

Ver. 14. *They are the sons of God*] Isaac, by his supernatural birth, being in a peculiar manner *the son of God*, the Israelites his children were called by God himself *his son*, Exod. iv. 22. But they were God's son only in an inferior sense: for by that relation they were entitled to nothing but the earthly inheritance. Whereas believers are in a higher sense the sons of God. Being spiritually begotten of God, they partake of his nature, are heirs of the heavenly country, and, if faithful unto death, by the redemption of their body may become immortal like God—they are capable of enjoying the everlasting inheritance. Perhaps also the high title of *the sons of God* is given to believers, to convey an affecting idea of their dignity and felicity; because, of all the things in which worldly men glory, noble birth is the chief.

Ver. 15. *The spirit of bondage*] What this is, the Apostle has plainly declared, Heb. ii. 15. *Again*, means, "Now again, under Christ; as the Jews did from Moses under the law." The word *abba* signifies *father* in the Jewish language, and the insertion of it beautifully represents the union of Jewish and Christian believers, in those devotions which were dictated by a filial spirit, as well as the genuine experience of a child of God. See Locke, Doddridge, and Evans's Christian Temper, vol. i. ferm. 17, 18.

Ver. 16. *The Spirit itself beareth witness, &c.*] It may be proper to inquire, on this much controverted verse, 1st, How many and who are the witnesses here spoken of? and 2dly, What is the kind of evidence given by them? I. *Συνμαρτυρεῖ*, rendered *bearing witness with*, signifies to be a fellow-witness, or to witness the same thing that another doth. This is the constant meaning of the word in Scripture, nor is it ever used but where there is a concurrent evidence of two witnesses (see chap. ii. 15. ix. 1. Rev. xxii. 16.). There can be no reason given therefore why it should not be taken in the same sense here, and rendered *the Spirit beareth witness with, or together with, our spirit*. Here then are two witnesses, and who they are we must next inquire. Who the first Spirit is, must be learnt from what goes before. In ver. 2. we read of *the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which hath made us free from the law of sin and of death*. In ver. 9. he is called, *the Spirit of God and of Christ*. In ver. 11. *the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead*. In ver. 15. *the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, Abba, Father*.—In the present verse, reference is had to this Spirit:—"The Spirit itself; that is, the Spirit

which has made us free in Christ Jesus,—the Spirit by whom we have received adoption, does himself bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." But then the question is, whether *spirit* in all these places be the name of a person, or whether it denotes only a quality or temper belonging to Christians; so that the *Spirit of Christ* shall signify no more than the *mind of Christ* does, Philip. ii. 5.; that is, the same temper and disposition. This sense Crellius maintains, and others after him, explaining the passage thus: "Our evangelical spirit (that is, as he explains himself in another place,—our evangelical temper) is a sufficient argument to our own minds, that we are the children of God." To dispute this point with Crellius, and his brethren the Socinians, would be to run into a great controversy. But since the *Spirit of Christ* may and does signify both senses, it may be proper to point out, to such as have no private prejudices to be maintained, which sense is here to be followed. *First*, then, this Spirit is the *Spirit of life*, by which we are made free; that is, by which we are regenerated in Christ Jesus, and set at liberty from the heavy yoke of sin, which the Apostle had been describing in the foregoing chapter. Now an *evangelical temper* is not the cause, but the consequent of this freedom: the *Spirit of God* is the efficient cause, of whom we are said for that reason to be born. *Secondly*, It is the *Spirit of him who raised up Christ*; that is to say, the Spirit by which he wrought that great wonder and miracle, as is evident by taking the whole 11th verse together:—the *Spirit of him who raised Christ from the dead*, is the Spirit by which he so raised him, that is, the Holy Spirit, mighty in works and wonders. *Lastly*, It is the *Spirit of adoption*, by which we are made sons. The Spirit of adoption is the Spirit of which we are born in Christ; of which birth an *evangelical temper* is not the cause, but the effect. So that by the whole tenor of the Apostle's arguing it must appear most evidently to every candid mind, that the Spirit which beareth witness with our spirit is the Holy Spirit of God, who works together with our spirit, to enable us to perform the will of God.—As to the *second witness*,—our own spirit,—it needs not much time to shew what it is, since most are agreed that is our own mind. *Who knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him?* that is, save his mind and conscience? Thus then the faithful Christian has two witnesses of his being the son of God;—the Holy Spirit of God, and his own mind and conscience.

II. Let us therefore see, in the next place, what evidence each of them gives in this case. In order to this, we must look back to the latter part of the former chapter, to which the present verse relates. Our crying, *Abba, Father*, ver. 15. is very improperly pitched upon by some as the evidence proceeding from our own mind, since it is said expressly, that we so cry, *by the spirit of adoption*; so that our crying, *Abba, Father*, is an evidence coming not from our minds but from the Holy Spirit.—The evidence of our own spirit is, that it loves and delights in the law of God,

17 ^b And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; ^c if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

18 For I reckon that ^d the sufferings of this present time *are not worthy to be com-*

pared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

19 For the ^e earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 ^f For the creature was made subject to

^b Gal. 4. 7. Phil. 3. 10, 14. Luke, 22. 29. Rev. 3. 21. & 21. 7. 1 Cor. 2. 9. & 3. 22. ^c Acts, 14. 22. 1 Pet. 4. 13. 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. Luke, 24. 26. ^d 2 Cor. 4. 17. Mat. 5. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 13. & 4. 13. Col. 3. 4. Phil. 3. 10, 21. 1 John, 3. 2. 2 Thess. 1. 10. Rev. 3. 21. ^e 16. 65. 17. Acts, 3. 21. 2 Pet. 3. 13. Rev. 21. 1, 5. ^f Gen. 3. 17. If. xxiv.

God, and is restless to obey the law it loves. The Apostle's words, chap. vii. 25. are strong to this purpose; *With the mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin*—words which we should bear in memory while we are considering the evidence of the Spirit of God. In the present chapter St. Paul tells us, that the redemption by Christ Jesus has put an end to the wretched captivity under which we lived. *The law of the Spirit, &c.* see ver. 2. *Law* here signifies power, for power is a law to those who live under it: now then, the power of the Spirit has destroyed the power of *sin*. The power of *sin* was opposite to the mind and reason of man, so that man, while he lived under that power, was a slave; but the power of the Spirit is on reason's side, and works together with it; so that to be under this power is a state of liberty and freedom, and therefore it is justly said, that *the law of the Spirit of life has made free*. The consequence of our being under the power of the Spirit is, that we *walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*, ver. 4.; that we *mind the things of the Spirit*, ver. 5.; that we *mortify the deeds of the body*, ver. 13.; that we *are the sons of God*, ver. 14.; that we *cry, Abba, Father!* ver. 15. These are the fruits of the Spirit. Now, to *walk after the Spirit*, and to *do the deeds of the Spirit*, is to walk according to our own mind and reason; for reason approves the things of God, and the things of the Spirit are the things of God. To cry, *Abba, Father*, proceeds from a settled and undisturbed mind,—from filial duty and reverence. This therefore we owe to the Spirit; for before, however our minds consented to his laws, yet still we were *faints*, and conscience stood between us and our Father; so that we could not approach without fear and trembling, our minds still representing him to us rather as an *injured Lord*, than as a *tender Father*. But since the power of the Spirit has stilled the horrid contest that was within us between reason and sin, and that we both love and obey him,—we now no longer fear his presence; but like children longing for the return of a kind Father, we run out to embrace him, with words of friendship and affection in our mouths, crying, *Abba, Father*.—*With the mind*, he had said before, *I serve the law of God*, chap. vii. 25. “And now,” says he, “by the same Spirit you obey the same law; and the Spirit of God, and your spirit, agree to give you the utmost assurance of being the children of God. You are no longer in the sad condition before described; the mind leaning one way, and the flesh another; so that you desired to do one thing, yet did the contrary, and was always restless and uneasy; rebuked within, and constrained without: for the Spirit by which you are now ruled, consents to your mind, and is bent to perform
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“the same things which the mind approves; whence you may have the greatest confidence towards God: for what plainer signs can you have of a good son and servant, than to know that he loves the law of his Father, and obeys it? Love the law, indeed, you did before in your awakened state; but obey it you could not: but now by the Spirit you obey it, and have the greatest satisfaction, both from within and without, that you are the children of God.” This may suffice to shew the Apostle's meaning, and to explain “the nature of the evidence which each Spirit gives.” See Bishop Sherlocke, Archbishop Sharpe, the *Inferences*, and the RELECTIONS.

Ver. 17. *If so be that we suffer, &c.*] Observe how prudently the Apostle advances to the harsh affair of suffering; he does not mention it, till he had raised their thoughts to the highest object of joy and pleasure;—the happiness and glory of a joint-inheritance with the ever-blessed Son of God:—we are *heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if we suffer with him, &c.* This, with the additional consideration that we *suffer with Christ*, or as he himself suffered, and that our suffering patiently is the way to be glorified with him, would greatly qualify the transitory afflictions of this world, and dispose them to attend to the other arguments that he had to offer. See 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12. and Locke.

Ver. 18. *Revealed*] St. Paul speaks of this *glory* here as what needs to be *revealed*, to give us a right conception of it. It is impossible to have a clear and full comprehension of it, till we taste it.

Ver. 19—23.] I must think, that it was quite to the Apostle's purpose in this place to point at the common calamities of mankind. Christians ought not to be uneasy if they are exposed to sufferings on account of religion; for this world is a state of suffering and distress, and all mankind are groaning under various pressures. That the Apostle in these verses does not mean only the Christian world or creation, seems evident; because *first*, that even *the creature itself*, or even *the very creature shall be delivered*, ver. 21. plainly points at something different from the body of Christians. *Secondly*, the *children of God* are distinguished from the *creature*, or the *creation*, ver. 21. but the children of God are real Christians, ver. 16. therefore the *creature* cannot mean real Christians. *Thirdly*, he says ver. 20. that the creature was *made subject to vanity, not wilfully, but through him who hath subjected the same in hope*. Now we know of no other *subjecting the creature to vanity*, than that Gen. iii. 19. which includes all mankind. *Fourthly*, Παῖσα ἡ κτίσις, (ver. 22.) *the whole creation*, must surely
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vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope;

21 Because the creature itself also ^h shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

^f 2 Pet. 3. 10, 13. If. 65. 17. Acts, 3. 21. Rev. 21. 1, 4. 5. & 22. 3. 4. 3. Job, i. ii. Job, 31. 38. Heb. 2. 11. ^{*} Or every creature. 5. 9. Phil. 3. 3. ^k 2 Cor. 5. 2, 4. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Heb. 9. 28. 2 Pet. 3. 12. Phil. 3. 20, 21. Eph. 4. 30. Luke, 21. 28. 1 John, 3. 2. Titus, 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 7, 13.

22 For we know that ^h* the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have ⁱ the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves ^k groan within ourselves, waiting

^h John, 16. 21. If. 24. 5, 6. Jer. 12. 4, 11. & 14. 4—5. H. sea, 1 Ver. 15, 16. Eph. 1. 13, 14. 2 Cor. 1. 21, 22. Gal. 5. 22, 23. Eph. 5. 9. Phil. 3. 3. ^k 2 Cor. 5. 2, 4. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Heb. 9. 28. 2 Pet. 3. 12. Phil. 3. 20, 21. Eph. 4. 30. Luke, 21. 28. 1 John, 3. 2.

surely comprehend all mankind, as it does Mark, xvi. 15. Col. i. 23. and that we have no sufficient ground to extend it farther than mankind,—namely, to the brute creation,—will appear, if we consider, *first*, that the same phrase is used to signify all mankind in the two places just referred to; *secondly*, no creature in this world, but man, could be subject to vanity, wilfully or not wilfully; *thirdly*, whether we understand the 23d verse of Christians in general, or of the Apostles only, we cannot well suppose that St. Paul would bring either into a comparison with brutes;—and not only *they*, but *we also*, &c. We may properly render *κίσις* throughout this passage by *creation*, as it is ver. 22. Ἀποκαρπύξια, rendered *earnest expectation*, signifies a *solicitous, anxious waiting* for a thing, and so includes a *vehement desire*. But it may be asked, How can all mankind desire and wait for the *revelation of the sons of God*, or the *glory that shall be revealed in them*, when but a small part of mankind know any thing of it? To this it may be answered, We know, as the Apostle observes, ver. 22. that all mankind do groan under the afflictions and pressures of this present world, sensible of its imperfection and vanity, and consequently must *desire* something better; and although they may not know what that better thing is, yet the Apostle knew it. And he speaks according to his own knowledge, and not theirs. He affirms of his own knowledge, what their expectation would issue in: their *earnest waiting* was in fact, however they might be ignorant of it, *waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God*: and he proves this, ver. 20, 21. as supposing the Christians to whom he wrote might be ignorant of it. Which shews that when he affirms that the earnest desires of mankind, after a release from the sufferings of this life, are a *waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God*, he speaks, not of what *heathens*, or *even Christians*, understood or believed, but of what he himself knew and believed to be true. Dr. Whitby upon this place justly observes, that in the sacred dialect, *desire* and *expectation* are ascribed to creatures, in reference to things that they want, and which tend to their advantage, though they explicitly knew nothing of them. Thus the *Messiah*, before he came, is called, *The desire of all nations*, Hag. ii. 7. Mr. Locke remarks, that Ἀποκαλύψιν τῶν υἱῶν, is *revelation of the sons*, that is, *to the sons*: the genitive case in the New Testament often denotes the object. The word Ἀποκαλύψις, should certainly be rendered *revelation*, as the word ἀποκαλυφθῆναι is rendered *revealed* in the foregoing verse. See Locke, Whitby, Doddridge, and Grove.

Ver. 20. *Not willingly*] That is, “Not by any wilful act of their own.” The word ἑκείνα seems here to

have the same signification as ἐκείνως, *wilfully*, Heb. x. 26. or as the word θελοντας, 2 Pet. iii. 5.—*This they are wilfully ignorant of*. What we render *lie not in wait*, Exod. xxi. 13. the LXX render *κα ἐκείν, not wilfully*, in opposition to *presumptuously* in the next verse. Thus the word ἐκείνα denotes a criminal choice, and in a high sense too; namely a transgression subjecting to wrath: “The creature was made subject to vanity, not by its own criminal choice,—not by sinning after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, ch. v. 14.—but by reason of, or through him who subjected the same in hope.”

Ver. 21. *Because the creature itself, &c.*] The *creature, or creation itself*, is all mankind, whether Christians or not. But this must be understood of mankind as well as of Christians, only so far as by answering the ends of their creation by the secret influences of the Spirit of God, they are prepared for immortality. The *creature* means mankind, considered as what they ought to be, according to the laws of their creation or rather according to the covenant of grace. See Gal. vi. 8.

Ver. 22. *The whole creation groaneth*] How David *groaned* under the vanity of this life, may be seen Pf. lxxxix. 47, 48. which complaint may be met with in some sense and in some degree in every man’s mouth: so that even those who have not *the first fruits of the Spirit*, have uneasy longings after immortality, or of something to make them happy, which this world cannot afford them. It is true, that *to be in pangs like a woman in travail*, the metaphor here used, sometimes only signifies being in great distress, where there is no reference to any expected birth; but it seems very probable, that the Apostle, in these metaphors, here alludes to what he had been before saying, ver. 14, 17, 19, 21. In all which places he describes real believers as the *children of God*; beautifully representing at the same time the sad condition of those, who, while they had faculties capable through divine grace for standing in such a relation to God as his *children*, were lost in darkness and vanity, while ignorant of God, and the way of salvation; during which time they were even pained by the capability of their nature, it having no suitable object to act upon. The reader may observe a well-adjusted gradation from ver. 19. The world seems to *wait* and *call*, and *groan* for the spreading of the Gospel; and those among whom it prevails, are still *in travail*, as it were, with the hope and desire of a yet more exalted state after the resurrection, ver. 23. See Locke and Doddridge.

Ver. 23. *And not only they, but ourselves also*] That this is meant of the Apostles, appears plain from the following reasons: *First, But ourselves also,—even we ourselves,—are* very

for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for it.

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should

pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to

¹ Gal. 5. ² Cor. 5. 7. Heb. 11. 1. & 6. 11, 18, 19. ¹ Pet. 3. 11. ¹ Thess. 5. 8. ² Thess. 2. 16. Ch. 5. 2. & 15. 13. Titus, 1. 2. Col. 1. 27. ¹ Tim. 1. 13. James, 5. 7. ² Cor. 4. 18. ^m Mat. 20. 22. James, 4. 3. ⁿ Zech. 12. 10. ² Cor. 12. 8. ² Cor. 3. 5. Mal. 10. 20. Gal. 4. 6. ¹ Eph. 6. 18. Ch. 7. 24. Pf. 6. 3. ^o ¹ Chron. 28. 9. Pf. 7. 9. Jer. 11. 20. & 17. 10. Rev. 2. 23. Mat. 6. 6. Pf. 5. 1. & 38. 9. ^{*} Or *that*. ^p Ver. 16. Zech. 12. 10. Jude, 20. Eph. 5. 18. ^q ¹ John, 5. 14. Mat. 7. 7, 8. & 21. 22. Jer. 29. 12. Luke, 11. 9. If. 45. 11. John, 14. 13. & 15. 7. & 16. 24. James, 1. 5. Mar. 7. 7. ^r Gen. 50. 20. Prov. 12. 21. Ch. 5. 3; 4. ¹ Pet. 1. 7. Jer. 24. 5. Pf. 119. 67, 71. Heb. 12. 6. ⁻¹¹ Deut. 8. 2, 3, 16. ² Cor. 4. 17. Rev. 3. 19.

very emphatical expressions, and direct our thoughts to some persons of distinction and eminence. *Secondly*, there will be little or no argument in this verse, if it be understood of the whole body of Christians: it will be only telling them what is supposed to be already known,—that they were in a state of affliction, waiting for the future glory. But it is a good argument, if understood of the Apostles, and properly enough advanced after a general survey of the sufferings of mankind: “Look at the world in common, —you see all labouring under sorrows, and in afflictions: look at us Apostles, who are most signally distinguished by the pledges of God’s love, the miraculous gifts of the Spirit; even we are not exempted from sufferings; but it is the will of God that we too should remain under the pressures of life, and in a state of expectation.” See 2 Cor. iv. 17. v. 2. There is an allusion, in the latter part of this verse, to the two kinds of adoption among the Romans; the first of which was private; the second public, in the forum, when the adopted person was solemnly declared and avowed to be the son of the adopter. Compare Luke xx. 36. The redemption of our bodies means, their final deliverance from the power of the grave at the general resurrection. See Luke xxi. 28. Ephes. i. 14. Heb. xi. 35. Doddridge; and Howe’s Works, vol. i. p. 680.

Ver. 24. Hope that is seen, &c.] That is enjoyed. To see is frequently in Scripture phrase to enjoy. Job, vii. 7. ix. 23; Pf. l. 23. Matth. v. 8. John, iii. 36. Heb. xii. 14. ¹ John, iii. 2.

Ver. 25. But if we hope for that we see not, &c.] What the Apostle says here of hope, is to shew them, that the groaning of the children of God, before spoken of, was not the groaning of impatience, but such as that wherewith the Spirit of God maketh intercession for us.

Ver. 26. Likewise the Spirit, &c.] Ὁσαύτως, likewise, always in the New Testament signifies in like manner, or agreeably to what is mentioned just before. Here it may be rendered, agreeably to this, namely, to our being saved by hope [or in a course of patient expectation, mentioned in the former verse]. Dr. Doddridge renders συναντιλαμβάνειν, lendeth his helping hand. It literally signifies “the action of one who helps another to raise or bear a burden, by taking hold of it on one side, and lifting it or bearing it with him:” and so it seems to intimate the

obligation on us, to exert our little strength, feeble as it is, in concurrence with this Almighty aid.

Ver. 27. Knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit] That is, “has a particular regard to, approves, favours, and is pleased with.” The phrase here, Φρονιμα τοσ πνευματος, the mind of the Spirit, is the very same that is used ver. 6. and expresses not merely the meaning, but the temper and disposition of the mind, as under the influence of the divine Spirit, pursuing and breathing after such blessings as suit its rational and immortal nature. The word εντυγχάνω is also used ver. 34. Christ maketh intercession for us; and again ch. xi. 2. Heb. vii. 25. and in Acts, xxv. 24. where it is rendered have dealt with me. These are all the places where we find it in the New Testament. The proper import of the word seems to be, to meet and treat with a person, either for or against another; and so it may signify in general to negotiate, manage, or transact an affair on the behalf of others, not only by intercession, entreaty, or supplication in their favour, but in any other way as the case may require. So our Lord εντυγχάνει υπέρ ημών, maketh intercession for us, by negotiating and managing, as the friend and agent of his faithful people, all the affairs pertaining to their salvation; and he is able to save us to the uttermost, because he ever liveth, and has all power given him in heaven and earth, as our great Agent, to secure to his faithful saints all the glorious things promised in the Gospel. And the Spirit of God makes intercession for the saints, not by offering supplications to God in their behalf, but by directing and qualifying their supplications in a proper manner by his agony and influences upon their hearts; which is the peculiar work and office of the Holy Spirit. How the Spirit qualifies the secret groanings of true Christians, under the pressures of life, may be seen 2 Cor. v. 2—5. The Spirit directs and qualifies the secret desires of the saints after immortality, κατά Θεόν, according or agreeably to the will of God; therefore God approves the mind of the Spirit, or the dispositions which we gain through the influence and inspiration of the Spirit; and thus the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, and assured to our hearts by the Holy Spirit; 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. See Doddridge and Bengelius.

Ver. 28. And we know, &c.] In the summary which we have given on ver. 12. we observed that this is the

them who are the ' called according to *his* purpose.

29 ' For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* " conformed to the image of his ' Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.

30 Moreover ' whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called,

them he also ' justified: and whom he justified, them he also ' glorified.

31 What shall we then say to these things? ' If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

32 ' 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?

33 ' Who shall lay any thing to the charge

¹ Ver. 30. Ch. 2. 28. & 3. 29. & 4. 11, 16. & 9. 6, 23, 24. & 11. 2, 5. Eph. 1. 4—11. 2 Tim. 1. 9. & 2. 19. ² Exod. 33. 12. Jer. 1. 5. & 31. 3. 2 Tim. 2. 9, 19. Ch. 11. 12. Eph. 1. 5, 11. 1 Pet. 1. 2. ³ John. 17. 16, 17, 22, 23, 25, 26. 2 Cor. 3. 18. Phil. 3. 21. 1 John. 3. 2. Rev. 3. 21. 1 Thess. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 2. ⁴ Pf. 89. 27. Heb. 1. 6. Col. 1. 15, 18. Rev. 1. 5. John. 20. 17. Heb. 2. 11—13. ⁵ If. 43. 1. & 51. 2. Ver. 28. Acts, 13. 48. Ch. 1. 6. & 9. 24. 1 Cor. 1. 9. & 1. 24. & 6. 11. 2 Tim. 1. 9. ⁶ Acts, 13. 38, 39. Ch. 3. 22, 24, 26. & 5. 1. Rev. 1. 5. ⁷ Ch. 5. 9, 10. & 9. 23, 24. Titus, 3. 7. Heb. 9. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 9. & 3. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Ver. 17. ⁸ Numb. 14. 9. 2 Kings, 6. 16. Pf. 56. 12. & 118. 6. ⁹ Gen. 22. 12. If. 53. 4—6, 10. Dan. 9. 24. Zech. 13. 7. John, 3. 16. 1 John, 4. 9, 10. Ch. 3. 25, 26. & 4. 25. & 5. 6—10. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. ¹⁰ Pf. 34. 10. & 84. 11. Mat. 6. 33. 1 Tim. 4. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 2, 3. 2 Pet. 1. 3, 4. ¹¹ If. 50. 8, 9. Rev. 12. 10. with ch. 3. 24, 26, 30. If. 43. 25. & 44. 22.

seventh argument advanced by the Apostle to reconcile Christians to sufferings: "Whatever befalls us, supposing we love God, certainly concurs and tends to complete our salvation." The Apostle never once uses the word *καλεῖσθαι*, called or invited, in his arguments, ch. ii. iii. iv. v. It is a metaphor taken from inviting guests, or making them welcome to a feast; and the word and sentiment would be well understood, if we rendered it *invite*, rather than *call*: for to *call* is never, in English, applied peculiarly to the affair of acquainting a person that his company is desired at an entertainment; but either to *bid* or *invite*. The verb *καλεῖσθαι* is translated by *bid*, Matth. xxii. 3, 4. Luke, xiv. 7, 8, 10. *Bid*, however, seems to be almost antiquated, and *invite* is the common mode of expression; though as the word *call* has been so long in use, one cannot well lay it aside. They are here said to be called or invited of God, according to his purpose, which the Apostle gives as a proof that all things in our present situation are either appointed, or shall be overruled for the happiness of them that love God: thus the clause is to be understood, and thus it is an argument to prove, that all things, how afflictive soever, shall work together for our welfare; but then it must be taken in connection with our *loving of God* and obedience to him. The Apostle does not pretend to prove that all things shall concur to the everlasting happiness of all that are called or invited; (for many are called, who at last shall not be among the *chosen*, Matth. xx. 16.) but only those of the called who perseveringly love God. Our calling or invitation, thus qualified, is the ground of his argument, which he prosecutes and completes in the two next verses; and this calling he takes for granted, as a thing evident and unquestionable among all professed Christians. But it may be asked, "How is it thus evident that we are called?"—The answer is,—“From our being in the visible church, and professing the faith of the Gospel:” for always, in the apostolic writings, all that are in this visible church and profession, are numbered among the called or invited. As for *effectual calling*, it is a distinction which divines have invented, without any warrant from Scripture. Our calling therefore is considered by the Apostle in the nature of a self-evident proposition, which nobody doubts or denies, and which indeed no Christian ought to doubt, or call in question. See Ephes. iii. 1—11.

Ver. 29. For whom he did foreknow] The particle *ὅτι* is connective; and, this verse giving the reason or confirmation of what was spoken in the former, it seems necessary to interpret it thus: *Whom he foreknew to be persons called according to his purpose, and therefore qualified for this adoption.* It therefore is to be observed, that the words *know* and *foreknow*, in the Scripture language, import an affectionate knowledge joined with approbation and affection. So Matt. vii. 23. John, x. 14. 1 Cor. viii. 3. *If any man love God, the same is known of him.* Gal. iv. 8. *But now after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God.* 2 Tim. ii. 19. *The Lord knoweth them that are his.*

He also did predestinate] Or, rather, *He before appointed*, to be conformed to the image of his Son, that, as they had borne the image of the earthly Adam, they might also bear the image of the heavenly, 1 Cor. xv. 49. having glorious bodies like to his, says Theodoret: and this agrees well with the scope and subject-matter of this chapter, and with the following words, *That he might be the first-born*, or chief, among many brethren; for as here these brethren are said to be co-heirs with him, the Elder-brother, ver. 17. so elsewhere he is styled, *The First-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence*, or that they might be changed into his image by the participation of the same Spirit.

Ver. 30. Them he also glorified] These words should be rendered, *Them he hath also glorified*, by giving them that Spirit who is the earnest of the glory of the faithful, *they being blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ*, Ephes. i. 3. *they being quickened together with Christ, and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*, Eph. ii. 5, 6. And by reason of this Holy Spirit given, with the preaching of the Gospel, the ministration of justification is said to be *in glory*, as being the ministration of the Spirit of God, 2 Cor. iii. 8—11. and we, by participation of this Spirit of the Lord, are said, not only to *behold the glory of the Lord*, but also to be *changed into the same image from glory to glory*, ver. 18. of the same chapter. In favour of this interpretation let it be noted, that when the Apostle speaks of our final glorification, he still speaks of it as of a *thing future*, ver. 17, 18, 21. whereas he here speaks of glorification as of a thing past, saying *whom he hath justified, them he hath also glorified*. So when a miracle was wrought in Christ's name,

of God's elect? *It is God that justifieth.*

34 *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

35 *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distrests, or per-*

secution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, ^b For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things ⁱ we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

^c Job 31: 20. Numb. 23: 8. with ch. 4: 25. & 5: 6—11, 19, 21. Mat. 20: 28. Titus, 2: 14. Gal. 3: 13. 1 Pet. 1: 18—21. Heb. 1: 3. & 4: 14. & 7: 26. & 9: 24. 1 John, 2: 1, 2. Jer. 10: 20. ^d John, 10: 28. & 13: 1. Jer. 31: 3. Heb. 12: 6—11. Rev. 3: 19. 2 Cor. 11: 2, 27. ^e Phil. 4: 25. 1 Cor. 4: 9. 2 Cor. 4: 11. Ver. 35. ^f 1 Cor. 15: 57. 2 Cor. 2: 14. & 48: 16. & 12: 9, 10. 1 John, 4: 4. & 5: 4, 5. Rev. 11: 11. Phil. 4: 13. 2 Tim. 2: 1. Eph. 6: 10.

name, *God glorified him*, Acts, iii. 13. See Luke, iv. 15. John, viii. 54. and xi. 4. and xiii. 31, 32. and xiv. 14. 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

Ver. 33, 34. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge, &c.]* Here it is well observed by Mr. Lowth, that these words being read by way of interrogation, as is ver. 35. carry a full and clear sense thus: Who shall plead against God's elect? Shall the God who justifies them do it? Who is he that condemns them? Can it be that Christ who died for them?

Ver. 35—38. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? &c.]* To answer the argument hence urged, to shew that man cannot fall from grace, because if once they truly loved God, they cannot cease to do so in principle, let it be noted: *First*, That this inquiry is not, who shall separate us from the love with which we love God; but, who shall separate us who truly love God, and testify that love by our obedience to his commands, John, xv. 10. and by our patient sufferings for his sake, ver. 36, 37. from his affections towards us.

The Apostle therefore only intimates, that such persons continuing in the love of God, shall be preserved by him from, or be enabled to overcome, the temptations here mentioned; and be so supported by his grace and Holy Spirit as to be able to triumph over them. But he does not say, that the love of no believer shall wax cold, Matt. xxiv. 12. Were there no fear of this, why does Christ exhort his disciples to *continue in his love*, John, xv. 9. and his Apostles exhort others to *keep themselves in the love of God*, Jude, 21. to *continue in the grace of God*, Acts, iii. 43. to *look diligently to it, that they fail not of, or that they fall not from* (for so it may be rendered) *the grace of God*, Heb. xii. 15. Note.

Secondly, That the Apostle does not say, that nothing shall separate true believers from the love of God or Christ; but only says *πειρασμοι*, *I am persuaded* that nothing will do it; nor have I any cause to fear, that any of these temporal sufferings, or enjoyments, will shake their steadfastness, in expectation of those eternal and inestimable blessings, which God has promised, and Christ has purchased for his church; *these light afflictions being not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed*, ver. 18. and *all co-operating for the good of them that love God*, ver. 28. —that as to the weakness of the flesh, which rendered these temptations so dreadful, and gave strength to them, they lived in hopes of a *glorious redemption of the body* from them, ver. 23; and while they groan under them, they have the assistance of the Spirit of God, to strengthen them, and to

help them to bear their infirmities; a powerful and loving Father to be with them, a Saviour exalted to the right hand of God *to intercede for them*, ver. 33, 34. Upon all which accounts he might well say, *I am persuaded* that none of these things shall separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. The Apostle does not by these words intend to teach believers, that they could not be shaken by these things; for this would have contradicted the drift of his Epistles, in which he offers so many arguments and motives to prevent the effect of those temptations, and does so often express his fears, lest they should be shaken with them; and be so far tempted by them, as to be *moved away from the hope of the Gospel*, Col. i. 23. and *render his labour vain*, 1 Thess. iii. 5. He only intends to say, that upon these considerations, they had such great inducements to persevere, and continue in the love of God, as made him strongly persuaded that they would do so.

Ver. 37. *We are more than conquerors]* For we not only bear, but *glory in tribulations*, Rom. v. 3. We are in deaths often, but still *delivered from death*, 2 Cor. i. 10. And *as the sufferings of Christ abound toward us, so doth our consolation, under them, abound through Christ*.

Inferences.—The matter set before us in this chapter calls for and deserves very serious examination. Inquiry should determine us, whether we do on the whole *walk after the flesh or the spirit*, ver. 1. If we are sincere in this inquiry, it will make us guard at the same time more and more against that *carnal mind, which is enmity against God*; and cannot be subject to his law, nor leave room for us to *please God*, while it presides and governs in us, ver. 7. We shall often reflect upon *that death*, which would be the consequence of our *living after the flesh*, ver. 13.; and never conceive of ourselves upon any occasion as persons who, in consequence of something that has already passed, have found out a way to break the connection here established, and in the nature of things essentially established, between a *carnal mind and death*. May our spirits be more and more enlivened by that vital union with a Redeemer, which may give us a part in his merits, and in the *life* it has secured for all faithful souls! and may the efficacy of his Spirit to raise our souls from a death of sin to a life of holiness, be in us a blessed earnest, that he will complete the work, and at length *quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us!*

Well may we rejoice in privileges like these before us, (ver. 14—17.) and stand astonished to think that they should be bestowed on any of the children of men!—That any

38 For ^{*}I am persuaded, that neither death, powers, nor things present, nor things to nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor come,

^{*} 2 Cor. 4. 13. Acts, 27. 25. Ch. 4. 17—20. 2 Chron. 20. 20. 2 Tim. 1. 12. If. 7. 9.

any of them should be *heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ*;—the adopted children of a heavenly Father, and prepared by the communications of his Spirit for an inheritance so glorious and so dearly purchased!—That any should be fitted and enabled to approach him with that endearing appellation, *Abba, Father*, in their mouths! O, that every one of us may know by experience, which alone can teach us, how sweet it is to the soul! If we would secure this *witness*, let us see to it, that we be obediently led by the Spirit of God; for that Spirit is not, where he does not effectually govern; and if *any man have not that Spirit of Christ, he is none of Christ's disciples*. All the children of God are in a state of grace; and the evidence of the Spirit of God, and *our own spirit*, may make us certain, where they concur as they ought to do, that we are the children of God. *If our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God*, is St. John's rule; and it comprehends both the evidences before explained: (see on ver. 16.)

For ever adored be the divine goodness in sending down his Spirit on such sinful creatures, to help *our infirmities* in the prosecution of this great salvation, to implant and excite graces in our hearts, to be a source of present delights, and of eternal happiness! May we continually feel him helping those infirmities, and so improving our joy in the Lord, that all our devotions may be animated sacrifices!

When we consider the state of those parts of the world, in which Christianity is unknown, or of those among whom it is in general a mere empty form; when we consider the *vanity* to which that share of God's creation is subject, let it move our compassion, and excite our prayers, that the state of glorious *liberty*, into which God has already brought such as by faith in Christ are his children, may become more universally prevalent;—that *the knowledge of the Lord may cover the earth, as the waters cover the channel of the seas*! May his divine grace give a birth to that grand event, in the expectation whereof nature seems in pangs; such a birth, that *nations might be born in a day*: and where it has taken effect, may it produce a more abundant growth, and more happy increase!

REFLECTIONS.—1st, This chapter opens with a most reviving view of the privileges and experience of every Christian believer, as a contrast to the state of the merely awakened soul, described in the former chapter. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*; being united to him by faith, as their surety and head, the sentence of the law is reversed. They have fled for refuge to the blood of a Redeemer, and enjoy the inestimable blessing of his pardoning love. And they are to be known by their daily conversation, as those *who walk not after the flesh*, under the dominion of their fallen nature and corrupt affections; *but after the Spirit*, directed by God's word as their rule, and under the teachings, guidance, and influence of the Holy Ghost, who has implanted a new and divine nature in them. *For the law of the Spirit*

of life in Christ Jesus, even that Gospel which, where truly embraced, operates most powerfully in constraining the conscience by love unto obedience through the quickening influence of the divine Spirit; *both made me free from the law of sin and death*, delivering me from the condemning sentence of that law which discovered sin to my conscience, and denounced wrath as the wages due to it; and from the power of corruption, through the grace purchased by the Redeemer's blood. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh*; because of the corruption of our nature it was impossible that, as a covenant of works, any fallen creature could obtain life and salvation by the law, and it neither provided nor admitted any atonement or expiation for guilt; *God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh*; rescuing the faithful in his infinite grace from the ruin which a broken law, never to be repaired, threatened; and this in a way so transcendantly glorious, even by the incarnation of his coequal Son, who took the human nature, with all its sinless infirmities, and stood in the sinner's stead; and laying upon him the iniquities of us all, God testified, in the sufferings of his own Son for the sin we had committed, the abhorrence that he had of sin, and exacted the punishment due to it from the incarnate Saviour; *that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who, in virtue of our union with Jesus as our head, walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*: for the Christian believers are not only brought into a new state, but are made partakers of a new and divine nature, which now influences and actuates them in all their conversation. *For they that are after the flesh*, under the dominion of their native corruption, *do mind the things of the flesh*; relish, delight in, and pursue the things that are pleasing only to the carnal mind and sensual appetite: *but they that are after the Spirit*, partakers of his grace, through union with Jesus the living head of vital influence to true believers; they *oppose*, understand, are attached to, delight in, and follow *the things of the Spirit*; both the doctrines that he reveals, the blessings that he bestows, and the services which he enjoins, and for which he enables them. *For to be carnally minded*, to live under the dominion of the fallen spirit, governed by lawless passions and sensual appetites, *is death*; is a present state of spiritual death, and must end in death eternal; *but to be spiritually minded*, renewed by the Holy Ghost, under the habitual influence of his grace, and supremely and abidingly attached to and engaged in the pursuit of spiritual objects; *this is life and peace*; it is the proof of the divine life begun in the soul; peace of conscience is the present happy fruit which it produces, and in the faithful soul will issue in eternal peace and blessedness. *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God*, and stands in direct opposition to his perfections and authority, abhorring the government of his providence, and hating the restraints and sanctions of his law: *for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*. There is an absolute impossibility of such a nature's being brought into conformity to the holy will

39¹ Nor height, nor depth, nor any other love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our creature, shall be able to separate us from the Lord.

¹ Rev. 14. 13. 1 Thess. 4. 16. Eph. 1. 21. & 6. 12. Col. 2. 15. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Rev. 1. 17, 18.

John, 10. 28, 29. Col. 3. 3. 2 Cor.

5. 19. Eph. 1. 6. & 2. 4.—9. Col. 1. 20.

of God; and till a new heart and right spirit be given from above, the enmity must remain inveterate and un-subdued. *So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God; while they continue in this state, every thing that they do is defiled. So desperate is our condition by nature, till the almighty grace of God works the blessed change in the praying and believing soul, enabling such to walk with and please God.*

2dly, With comfort the Apostle addresses the believers at Rome, confident of their interest in the blessed Spirit of all grace. *But ye are not in the flesh, under the dominion and influence of the carnal mind; but in the Spirit, being regenerate and born again; if so be, or seeing that, the Spirit of God dwelleth in you, as in his peculiar temple, taking up his abode in your hearts, manifesting there his presence and love, and shewing his powerful agency. But now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, who is the very God from whom, as from the Father, that one Spirit proceeds, and not be renewed by his grace, and under his guidance and influence, he is none of his: whatever his professions may be, he does not belong to Christ as a member of his body mystical; he is not a child of his family, nor a subject of his kingdom, and must be eternally disowned by him and separated from him, if he die in this unregenerate state. And, on the other hand, if Christ be in you, by his Spirit dwelling in your hearts, the body indeed is dead because of sin, and must lie down in the dust; but the Spirit, the immortal part, is life, because of righteousness, raised from spiritual death in virtue of the Redeemer's infinite merit. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, being one in essence and co-operation with the Father and the Son, (compare 1 Cor. vi. 14. John, v. 28, 29.) and concurring in the work of raising the body of Jesus, dwell in you as his temple, he that raised up Christ from the dead, as the pledge of our resurrection, and the first-fruits of them that slept, shall quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you: the bodies of the saints shall, by the same indwelling almighty power which raised him, be ransomed from the grave, and become immortal and glorious, fashioned like to their exalted Head. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh; we have neither obligation nor inducement to follow the cravings of corrupt nature; but, on the contrary, are under every bond of love and duty to live for God, in the daily and habitual mortification of every vile affection: for if ye live after the flesh, the slaves of corruption, ye shall die eternally; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, denying your corrupt affections and sensual appetites, and through the power of the Spirit be conformed to your crucified Lord, ye shall live with him in glory everlasting. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, under his conduct, enlightened, directed, and supported by him, they are the sons of God, made his children by adoption and grace, and bearing in their renewed minds his image and likeness.*

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, are not under that legal dispensation which brought the conscience into distress and darkness, exacting an obedience that could not be paid; nor under those horrors which on the first discoveries of your danger in a state of unregeneracy, seized on your souls: but ye have received the Spirit of adoption: being admitted by God's grace into that high relation of children, he has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, producing every childlike disposition of filial love, confidence, and delight in him, whereby we are emboldened to approach him with faith and joy, and to cry, Abba, Father, before him. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, shining upon his own work in our souls, and satisfying our consciences that we are the children of God and may take the comfort of that blessed and honourable relation: and, if children by adoption and grace, then are we heirs, interested in all the blessings of the new covenant; and heirs of God, made so by his Spirit, and receiving from him constant divine influences; and joint-heirs with Christ, who is the first-born of many brethren; if so be, that we suffer with him, as we must expect to do in his service, this being more or less the inseparable attendant of it, that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution; but the issue will be highly to our advantage, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together at the great day of his appearing, when he shall bestow the promised crown upon his faithful saints, and before men and angels acknowledge them as his brethren. And such a prospect makes all our trials light and easy. For I reckon, λογίζομαι, on summing up the account of our loss and gain, that the sufferings of this present time, however acute or continued, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us; but, when placed against the glories of eternity, they appear trivial and momentary, and sink unnoticed as the drop into the boundless ocean. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God; which some understand of the Gentile world, and particularly the righteous among them, who, in a comparative point of view, had been made subject to vanity; but now being ourselves rescued from the bondage of corruption, they earnestly expected, as a woman in travail, the happy time, when, by the more abundant outpouring of the Spirit, a more general conversion should be wrought in the earth, and far greater multitudes of lost souls be rescued from the dominion of the wicked one, and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Others suppose that the creature, even the whole creation, πάντα τὰ κτίσις, in general, animate or inanimate, is here by a noble προσποροεια introduced, as waiting with eager impatience for that blessed alteration which the Gospel will make, when the creatures of God shall be no more abused as they have been, but shall be recovered from their present disordered state, and employed by the sons of God, according to their original design, to exalt their Maker's glory. For the creature was made

C H A P. IX.

Paul's sorrow for the Jews. All Abraham's seed were not the children of the promise. The calling of the Gentiles, and rejection of the Jews. The cause why so few Jews embraced the righteousness of faith.

[Anno Domini 58.]

I SAY the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the

Holy Ghost,

2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh :

4 Who are Israelites ; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the † co-

* Ch. 1. 9. 2 Cor. 1. 23. & 11. 31. & 12. 19. Gal. 1. 20. Eph. 4. 17. Phil. 1. 8. 1 Thess. 2. 5. 1 Tim. 2. 7. & 5. 21. Ch. 2. 15. & 8. 16; 2 Cor. 1. 12. Acts, 23. 1. & 24. 16. Ch. 10. 1. Phil. 3. 18. Jer. 4. 19—22. & 9. 1—5. Lam. i—v. 1 Sam. 15. 35. Luke, 19. 42—43. & 23. 28—30. Exod. 32. 32. 1 Cor. 16. 22. Gal. 1. 8. Or separated. Ch. 11. 1. Acts, 22. 3. & 26. 3, 4. 2 Cor. 11. 22. Phil. 3. 5, 6. Exod. 4. 22. Deut. 7. 6. & 10. 15. & 14. 1. Jer. 31. 9, 10. 1 Sam. 4. 21. Pl. 78. 61. 1 Kings, 8. 10. Ezek. 7. 20. Pl. 63. 4. & 76. 1, 2. Numb. 7. 89. Gen. 15. 8. & 17. 2, 7, 10. Exod. 34. 27. & 24. 7, 8. † Or testament.

made subject to vanity ; the very ground being cursed for man's sin, and all the creatures perverted, through the corruption which is in the human nature, from their original design and use ; not willingly, by any choice or tendency of their own, or any sin in them. But by reason of him who hath subjected the same, and by that sin to which Adam was infligated through the malice of the devil, they were involved in the miseries of his fall : not that they should always remain under the dreadful abuses which they suffer ; but they rest in hope that the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, under which they lie at present, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, restored by them to answer the great end for which they were created. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, under the grievous burden of abuses which the creatures suffer, and longing for deliverance. And not only they, but ourselves also which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, in his present sealing, sanctifying, and comforting operations, the earnest of the eternal felicity provided for the faithful in a better world ; even we ourselves, notwithstanding the riches of the grace of which we have been made partakers, yet, groan within ourselves, under the afflictions which still lie heavy upon us till death ; waiting for the adoption, when Christ will publicly own the relation that he bears to his saints before men and angels at the great day ; to wit, the redemption of our body, when, triumphant over the grave, the faithful shall reach the summit of heavenly felicity ; their souls perfected in holiness, their bodies fashioned like to Christ's glorious body, and their whole man shall together be blest with the fruition of God himself as their everlasting portion. For we are saved by hope ; though we are not yet in possession of the purchased glory, we hold our title by a strong and divine hope : but hope that is seen is not hope ; when the object is possessed, hope ceases : for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for ? But if we hope for that we see not, expecting shortly perfect deliverance from all our afflictions ; then do we with patience wait for it, persuaded that the Lord, in his own good time, will fulfil his promises to all his faithful people, and bring them at last, through all their trials, to the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, which fadeth not away, reserved for them in the heavens. And blessed and happy are all they who thus wait for him.

3dly, We have not only a glorious hope before us, but have likewise the most reviving supports by the way ; for

the Spirit of our God, quickening, comforting, strengthening us, helpeth our infirmities, that we may not sink under our burdens, or be discouraged by our trials : having implanted in us the graces of hope and patience, he still supports us in the exercise of them, and particularly in our approaches to God in prayer, if we continue to wait upon him ; for we know not what to pray for as we ought ; ignorant, and knowing not what is best for us ; weak, and unable to express our wants aright ; but the Spirit itself, by his gracious suggestions, maketh intercession for us, pouring out a spirit of prayer and supplication upon our hearts, giving us such a sense of our wants, and exciting desires after God so intense and affecting, as words cannot express, which can only be breathed forth with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts, the all-seeing God, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit ; though at times our tongue may not form an articulate sound in prayer, God regards and will answer these gracious workings of his Spirit in our hearts, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God, inclining us always to ask according to the mind and will of God, and engaging us humbly to resign ourselves, for an answer to our prayers, in time, manner, and measure, to his good pleasure. And we know, by the assured promises of his word, by the experience of all his saints, and by our own, when thus unreservedly casting our care upon him, that all things work together for good to them that love God ; and however dark, and for the time grievous to flesh and blood, the dispensations of Providence may appear, we are now assured, and the faithful saints of God shall hereafter prove, that the circumstances which seemed most afflictive they could not have done without ; and that they especially conducted to promote their spiritual and eternal welfare.

4thly, In the view of what God has done, and he himself experienced, the Apostle defies all accusers. What shall we then say to these things ? shall we start back from sufferings when the issue to the faithful soul is so glorious ? what can we wish or desire more transcendently glorious than these great and precious promises. If God be for us, with infinite wisdom to guide, almighty power to protect, and boundless love to comfort us, who can be against us ? what have we to fear from men or devils ? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, of his own good pleasure freely gave him to become incarnate, and laid upon him our iniquities ; how shall he not with him

venants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;

5 *Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is*

¹ Ch. 3. 2. Pl. 147. 19. Exod. xii. to Deut. xxvii. Heb. vii.—x. Exod. 23. 2. 27—33. Acts, 3. 25. & 13. 32, &c. with Eph. 2. 12. Micah, 5. 2. Mat. i. Luke, iii. Ch. I. 3, 4. 2 Tim. 2. 8. 2. 6—11. Heb. 1. 8.

² Jer. 31. 22, 31—34. Lev. 26. 1—13, 40—46. Deut. 28. 1—14. & xxx. ¹ Acts, 3. 25. Ch. 11. 28. ^m If. 7. 14. & 9. 6. & 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5. 6. ⁿ John, 1. 1. & 3. 31. & 10. 30. Col. 1. 16. & 2. 9, 10. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Phil.

also *fresh give us all things?* what can he now withhold from faithful souls, when, compared with the gift of his Son, every thing beside must appear but little? since he has given him, we may surely conclude that he is willing to add all the rest, and freely enrich his faithful saints with all spiritual and eternal blessings in Christ Jesus. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* be their transgressions never so many, great, and aggravated; *it is God that justifieth them;* and, since he hath accepted them through the great Atonement, they can plead that perfect atonement which even justice itself must approve: *who is he that condemneth?* let the law of innocence accuse; yet, since he who hath redeemed us from the curse of the law is our Advocate, there is no condemnation for the faithful soul; for *it is Christ that died,* he hath paid the ransom; *yea, rather that is risen again;* God hath testified his full approbation therein of his undertaking, and that his justice is completely satisfied in behalf of the genuine believer; so that we may safely trust upon him, *who is even at the right hand of God,* exalted to the highest dignity and glory, as a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins; *who also maketh intercession for us;* our friend in every time of need, and, in the all-prevailing merit of his atonement, pleading effectually the cause of his faithful saints. *Nay;* The views of a dying, risen, ascended, glorified Redeemer, should silence all our fears and doubts, and engage us comfortably and confidently to trust him under all our trials.

2. The Apostle, in the language of faith and fervent love, professes his confidence that, with such a Saviour at the right hand of God, no sufferings should ever separate the souls of the faithful from Christ and his love. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* what shall be able to quench the fervour of his affection towards us his faithful saints, or extinguish the sacred flame which he hath kindled in their bosoms? *shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword,* shall all the various ills that flesh is heir to, from sickness, pain, poverty, a malignant world, a tempting devil, shall these separate us from the Redeemer's arms? No: nothing can but wilful sin. That we must suffer, he has foretold us, *as it is written, For the sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter,* butchered without remorse by our cruel persecutors, and, for the sake of Jesus, in jeopardy every hour. But do these things move us? *Nay:* so far from it, that *in all these things we are more than conquerors,* rising superior to every foe, *through him that loved us;* whose inward supports and consolations overbalance all our sufferings; and whose power and grace, continually exerted on our behalf, carry his faithful saints triumphantly through their conflicts. *For I am persuaded, that neither death, with all its terrors; nor life, with all its allurements; nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers; neither the fiends of darkness, nor the persecuting rulers of the earth; nor*

things present, the afflictions and temptations now felt; nor things to come, the greater evils which we fear; nor height of prosperity, nor depth of adversity, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord: no, not the whole universe; nothing but sin can separate us from him.

CHAP. IX.

THE Apostle having insinuated, chap. iii. 3. that God would cast off the Jews, because they refused to believe on Jesus, a Jew was there introduced replying, that their rejection would *destroy the faithfulness of God.* To this the Apostle answered, that the faithfulness of God would be established, rather than destroyed, by the rejection of the Jews for their unbelief; because God had expressly declared, Gen. xviii. 19. that Abraham's children were to *keep the way of the Lord,* in order to their obtaining the promised blessings; and thereby insinuated, that if they did not keep the way of the Lord, they would lose these blessings, of which their being made the visible church of God was one. This was all the answer the Apostle thought proper to make, in that part of his letter. But the objection being specious, and much insisted on by the unbelieving Jews, he introduced it a second time in this place, that he might reply to it more fully.

His answer the Apostle introduced with a solemn asseveration, that he felt the bitterest grief when he considered the induration and rejection of the Jewish nation, and the many miseries that were coming on them; ver. 1, 2.—*Insomuch that he could have wished to be cut off from the visible church of Christ on earth, by excommunication and even by death, if it could have prevented these evils,* ver. 3.—*For he loved the Jews as his kinsmen, respected them as the ancient people of God, and thought highly of their privileges, which he enumerated on this occasion as just matter of glorying to them,* ver. 4, 5.—*Having therefore such a love and respect for his brethren, they could not suspect that, in speaking of their rejection, he was moved either by ill-will or envy.*

Having thus endeavoured to gain the good opinion of the Jews, the Apostle proceeded to give a full answer to the objection above mentioned. He told them, that the promises in the covenant would not fall to the ground, though the whole natural seed of Abraham should be cast off. For, said he, all who are descended of Israel according to the flesh, meaning the twelve tribes, these are not the whole Israel of God. There is a spiritual Israel, to whom likewise the promises belong, ver. 6.—*To show this, he observed, that because persons are the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, it does not follow that they are the children of Abraham, to whom the promises in their first and literal meaning were made. His children according to the flesh, who are heirs of the promises in their first meaning, were limited to Isaac, by the declaration, In*

Isaac

over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

6 ° Not as though the word of God hath

taken none effect. For ° they are not all Israel, which are of Israel :

° If. 55. 17. Acts, 13. 32, 33. Ch. 3. 3. 2 Tim. 2. 13. Numb. 23. 19. Heb. 6. 17, 18. with Gen. 17. 7. & 22. 18. ° Ch. 2. 28, 29. & 21. 25. Gal. 6. 16. John, 8. 39.

Isaac shall thy seed be called, ver. 7.—That is, Abraham's children according to the flesh are not all of them heirs of Canaan; but only those who were given to him by promise, are counted to him for seed, ver. 8.—Now the promise by which they were given to Abraham for seed, was this, *Lo, Sarah shall have a son*, ver. 9.

The limitation of the natural seed to the children of promise the Apostle has mentioned, without applying it to the spiritual seed, as his argument seemed to require. The reason was, that his readers could easily make the application in the following manner: Since, in the covenant with Abraham, those only of his natural progeny are counted to him for seed, and made heirs of Canaan, who were given to him by promise, namely, Isaac and his descendants by Jacob, and since by this limitation all his other children according to the flesh were excluded from being the children of God, and heirs of the promises in their first and literal meaning, it follows by parity of reason that none of the children of Abraham, not even his descendants by Isaac, are the children of God, and heirs of the promises, in their secondary, spiritual, and highest meaning, but those who were given to Abraham by the promise, *A father of many nations I have constituted thee*. These are believers of all nations and ages; as is plain from what the Apostle told the Galatians, chap. iv. 28. *We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise*. And because believers are counted to Abraham for seed, in respect of their faith, they are called *his seed by faith*, Rom. iv. 16. For by partaking of his dispositions, they are more really his children, than those whose only relation to him is by natural descent.—Thus it appears, that Abraham's natural descendants by Isaac are not the whole of his seed, who are the heirs of the promises. He has a seed also by faith, who are far more numerous than his natural seed by Isaac. And, they being the seed principally spoken of in the covenant, if the promises are fulfilled to them, the faithfulness of God will not be destroyed, though the whole of the natural seed should be rejected for their unbelief.

These things the Jews might easily have understood. Nevertheless, privileges conferred on them by a covenant with their progenitor, and which were solemnly confirmed to them at Sinai, they persuaded themselves could not be taken from them, and given to the Gentiles, without destroying God's veracity. But, to shew them their error, the Apostle put them in mind, that as Isaac was chosen to be the root of the people of God, in preference to Ishmael, by mere favour; so afterwards Jacob had that honour conferred on him, in preference to Esau, by a gratuitous election before Jacob and Esau were born. As therefore the Jews, Jacob's posterity, were the church of God by mere favour, God might, without any injustice to them, or violation of his covenant with Abraham, admit the Gentiles into his church at any time he pleased, ver. 10—13.

To enforce this argument, the Apostle observed, that in

preferring Jacob the younger brother, to Esau the elder, God neither acted unjustly towards Esau, nor violated his promise to Abraham, because he might bestow his favours on whom he pleased, ver. 14.;—as appears from what he said to Moses, when he forgave the Israelites their sin respecting the golden calf: *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*, &c.: for this implies, that, as in pardoning national sins, so also in conferring national favours, God acts according to his own good pleasure, ver. 15.—So then, it did not depend on Isaac, who willed, to make Esau the heir of the promises, by giving him the blessing; nor on Esau, who ran to bring venison, that his father might eat and bless him; but on the good pleasure of God, who willed to confer that honour on Jacob, preferably to Esau, ver. 16.—He might therefore, without any injustice, admit the believing Gentiles to share with the Jews, in those privileges which he had gratuitously bestowed on the descendants of Jacob, in preference to those of Esau.

But the Apostle, in his discourses to the Jews, had on different occasions carried this matter farther, and had declared to them that they were to be deprived of their privileges, and driven out of Canaan, for their sin in crucifying Jesus of Nazareth. To this it seems they replied, that the unbelief, and even the rebellion of their fathers, had not been so punished; and inferred that, although the present generation, in crucifying Jesus, had really disobeyed God, it was not to be thought that he would now cast off and destroy his people on that account. In answer, the Apostle told them that, in punishing nations, God exercises the same sovereignty as in conferring favours. Of the wicked nations which deserve to be punished, he chooses such as it pleases him to make examples of; and he defers punishing them, until the measure of their iniquity is full, that their punishment may be the more conspicuous. This appears from God's words to Pharaoh: *I have upheld thee and thy people hitherto, that, the measure of your iniquity, as a nation, becoming full, I might shew my power and justice in punishing you the more severely*, ver. 18.—If so, God's upholding the Jews so long was no proof that he would not at length cast them away, and drive them out of Canaan, for their sin in crucifying the Christ.—But thou wilt reply, since God hath determined to destroy the Jewish nation for its wickedness, why has he not done it ere now, and thereby put an end to his still finding fault with them, on account of their repeated rebellions, to which his sparing them so long has given occasion: for who hath resisted his will? ver. 19.—To this the Apostle answers, *Who art thou that presumest to find fault with God's government of the world? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? ver. 20.—Hath not the potter power over the clay? &c. ver. 21.—But, said he, not to rest my answer wholly on the sovereignty of God, what can be said against God's forbearing for so long a time to destroy the Jewish nation, if it was done to shew more fully his displeasure against*

7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, ¹ In Isaac shall thy seed be called. 8 That is, ' They which are the children of

¹ Gen. 21. 12. Gal. 4. 23. Heb. 11. 18. Ver. 6, 7. Ch. 4. 11, 16. John, 8. 37, 39. Galo. 4. 28. & 3. 26—29. & 6. 15, 16. Jam. 1. 18: John, 1. 13.

the greatest national abuse of religious privileges long continued in it, and the more signally to punish the nation guilty of such an abuse, ver. 22.—Also, that he might take in their place believers of all nations, whom by his dispensations towards the Jews he had been preparing for that great honour? ver. 23, 24.—Which calling of the believing Jews and Gentiles was long ago foretold by Hosea, ver. 25, 26.—Besides, the destruction of the greatest part of the Jewish nation for crucifying the Christ is not more contrary to the covenant with Abraham, than their almost total subjection by the Assyrians and Babylonians for their repeated idolatries, ver. 27—29.—Thus it appears, that the believing Gentiles were called into the visible church of God, and received the great blessing of faith counted for righteousness, promised to Abraham's spiritual seed, agreeably to God's covenant with him, and to the predictions of the prophets, ver. 30.—But the unbelieving Jews who sought to become righteous by obeying the law of Moses, have not attained righteousness, ver. 31.—because they sought it not by *faith*, according to the tenor of the covenant with Abraham, but by *works of law*, and stumbled at the promised Seed as at a stumbling-stone, ver. 32.;—agreeably to what Isaiah had foretold concerning them, ver. 33.: so that they are now justly cast off.

I shall finish this illustration with two remarks. The first is, that in discoursing of the election of the Jews to be the people of God, and of their degradation from that high honour, the Apostle has established such general principles, as afford a complete answer to all the objections which deists have raised against revelation, on account of its want of universality. They affirm, that if the ancient revelations, of which the Jews are said to have been the keepers, had been from God, the knowledge of them would not have been confined to an inconsiderable nation, pent up in a corner of the earth, but would have been universally spread. In like manner they assert, that if the Christian religion were from God, it would long ago have been bellowed on all mankind. To these, and every objection of the like nature, the Apostle has taught us to reply, that God has an indisputable right to bestow his favours on whom he pleases. And therefore, without unrighteousness, he may withhold the benefit of revelation from whom he will, since he was under no obligation to bestow it on any; just as, in the distribution of his temporal favours, he bestows on some a more happy country and climate, or a better bodily constitution, or greater natural talents, or a better education, than on others. And if deists ask, Why God, in the distribution of his spiritual favours, has preferred one nation or person before another, the Apostle bids us answer, *Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour?* The very same right which entitled God to make some of his creatures angels, and some of them men, entitled him to place men in the endlessly

various situations in which we see them. Nor can those who seem to be most unkindly treated, complain of the want of revelation or of any other advantage, which God has thought fit to withhold from them; since at the last day none shall be condemned for the want of these things: and in judging men, due regard will be had to the circumstances of each; so that the sentences passed, will all be according to truth, as the Apostle has taught in the second chapter. Wherefore since men may be saved, who have not enjoyed revelation, the giving or the withholding of that benefit is to be considered, not as an appointing of men either to salvation or damnation, but merely as a placing them in more or less advantageous circumstances of trial.—To conclude, God has been pleased, in many instances, to make the reasons of his conduct incomprehensible to us, on purpose to teach us humility. At the same time, from what we know, we may believe, that however unfearful God's judgments are, and his ways past finding out, they are full of wisdom and goodness. We ought therefore to change our doubts into adoration, and should join the Apostle in crying out, *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God!* chap. xi. 33.

Ver. 1. *I say the truth in Christ, &c.*] The Apostle has proved by three special arguments, that the grace or favour of God in the Gospel extends to the Gentiles, as well as the Jews: this he has done in the first five chapters; in the three next, he has shewn the obligations which the Gospel lays upon Christians, both Gentile and Jewish, to a life of virtue and holiness; and lastly, the certainty of their salvation, in case they love God, and live *not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*. Now let it be well observed, that hitherto the Apostle has considered our being taken into the kingdom of God, and interested in the blessings of the covenant of grace, *absolutely, or in itself*, as it is the effect of grace, free to all who believe, whether Jews or Gentiles, in opposition to the merit of any works, or of conformity to any law whatever; and therefore hitherto he has pleaded and proved, that the Gentiles, by faith, have a good title to the blessings of God's covenant; and that the Jews themselves can have an interest in those blessings no other way than by faith. He has not yet considered the Jews as set aside, or rejected from the Messiah's kingdom, (except in a glance, and only by-the-bye,) but as having the same way opened to *them* to the Christian church under the kingdom of the Messiah, as the *believing Gentiles*, and as under a possibility of continuing still in the visible church; and therefore he has only argued, that they ought not to exclude the Gentiles, but allow them to be sharers in the mercies of God under the reign of the Messiah. Hitherto his language has been, "Why may not they be admitted as well as you?" And therefore he has hitherto treated the subject (the reception of the Gentiles into the church) without mentioning their admission under the name and notion of *CALLING* or *inviting*; which, in the sense of all

the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

9 For this is the word of promise, 'At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.

• Gen. 18. 10, 14. Heb. 11. 11, 12.

mankind, is understood to be a relative term; for whenever we hear of inviting to a feast, wedding, &c. it immediately gives us this idea,—that only some are admitted to it, while others are passed by, or left. Nor has he hitherto made any mention of *elect* or *election*, *chosen* or *choice*, which also supposes that some are taken, while others are left or rejected, in respect to the new dispensation.

But now in this chapter, and the two following, the Apostle writes in a different style, and considers our reception into the kingdom of the Messiah, under the relative notion of *calling* or invitation, and of *election* or choice; which shews, that he now views the two parties, Jews and Gentiles, in a light different from that in which he had hitherto placed them. Now he regards the Gentiles as *invited* into the peculiar kingdom of the Messiah, as *chosen* to be his peculiar people, and the Jews as left out, and rejected from this glorious privilege: for though the Jews were free to embrace the Gospel, as well as the Gentiles, yet he knew, by the Spirit of prophecy, that as the main body of them in fact rejected Christ and the Gospel, so they would in fact be quite unchurched and cast out of the visible kingdom of God,—not only by their own unbelief, but also by the just judgment of God; in the total overthrow of their polity, the destruction of their temple, their expulsion out of the land of Canaan, and dispersion over the face of the whole earth. Thus he knew they would be *accursed*, or *anathematized* from Christ in this national sense, and reduced to a level with the common or heathen nations of the world; and the event has proved him to be a true prophet. It is observable, that agreeably to his delicate manner of writing, and to his nice and tender treatment of his countrymen, he never mentions their rejection,—a subject extremely painful to his thoughts,—otherwise than in a wish that he himself were *accursed from Christ for them*, or to prevent their being *accursed from Christ*;—till he comes to the eleventh chapter, where he has much to say in their favour, even considered as at present rejected. But it is very evident that his arguments in this chapter stand upon a supposition, that the main body of the Jewish nation would be cast out of the visible kingdom of God. For which reason, in this and the two following chapters he considers the reception of any people into the kingdom of the Messiah, under the relative notion of *inviting* and *choosing*.

From the latter part of the foregoing chapter we may observe, that St. Paul thought our calling or being invited into the kingdom of the Messiah a matter of great importance. For the unbelieving Jews levelled all their artillery against our being called or invited into the peculiar church or family of God, and laboured every argument to unbinge the believing Gentiles, and to persuade them that they were not duly taken into the church: alleging particularly that the Jews are, and for ever were to be, the only true church and people of God; that they could

not be cut off, so long as God was true to his word and promise to Abraham: consequently, the Gentiles were miserably deceived, by supposing that they had a place and interest in God's kingdom by faith in Christ Jesus; when in fact, and as sure as God was true, there was no other way of entering into the kingdom of God, or of gaining a right to its privileges, than by submitting to the law of Moses. To prove therefore that the Jews, by rejecting Christ and the Gospel, were themselves cast out of the visible church, consistently with the truth of God's promise to Abraham, was a matter of great moment for the establishment of the Gentile believers. The Apostle had touched upon this point at the beginning of chap. iii.; but an enlargement upon it there would have broken in too much upon the argument he was then pursuing; for which reason he suspended the particular consideration of it to this place: and accordingly, he *first* solemnly declares his tenderest affection for his countrymen, and his real grief of heart for their infidelity and rejection, ver. 1—5.; and this, most probably, to wipe off an aspersions which had been cast upon him, that he was so zealous for the Gospel out of a natural hatred and rancour against his own nation; or, however, it might be intended at least to guard against such an invidious construction. *Secondly*, he answers objections against the rejection of the Jews, ver. 6—23. *Thirdly*, proves from Scripture the calling of the Gentiles, ver. 24—30. *Fourthly*, gives the true state and reasons of the rejection of the unbelieving Jews and calling of the Gentiles, ver. 30.—chap. x. 14. *Fifthly*, vindicates the mission of the Apostles, as expedient and necessary to the calling or invitation of the Jews, chap. x. 14. to the end: and all this was intended at once to vindicate the divine dispensations; to convince the infidel Jew; to satisfy the believing Gentile, that his invitation into the church was well grounded, just, and valid; to arm him against the cavils and objections of the unbelieving Jews, and to dispose the Christian Jew to receive and own him as a member of the family and kingdom of God by a divine right, in all respects as good as he himself could pretend to. See Locke.

Ver. 3. *That myself were accursed, &c.*] *That I myself were to be devoted to death [or made a sacrifice] after the example of Christ.* Père Simon has it, *For the sake of Christ:—Propter Christum.* But the first is preferable. See also Dr. Waterland's Sermons, vol. i. p. 77. The word rendered *accursed* is *ἀνάθεμα*, by which the LXX translate the Hebrew word *חרם* *cherem*, which signifies "persons or things devoted to destruction and extermination." The Jewish nation were now an *anathema*, destined to destruction. St. Paul, to express his affection to them, says, he could wish, to save them from it, to become an *anathema*, and be destroyed himself. If not, with Dr. Clarke, joins *ἵνα τοὺς Χριστοὺς* with *ἠθέλω*, *I could wish, or desire from, or of Christ, that, &c.* And he shews well, as

10 And not only *this*; but 'when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac;

11 (For "the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election

Gen. 25. 21. Acts, 7. 8. Ch. 4. 17. & 8. 28—30. Eph. 1. 4. & 2. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Titus, 3. 5. Ch. 11. 5—7, 22. II. 46. 10. Ver. 16, 18.

has been frequently done, how very absurd it would be to suppose that the Apostle meant, that he could be content to be delivered over to *everlasting misery* for the good of others. "I am so far from taking pleasure," says the Apostle, "in the rejection of the Jewish nation, that on the contrary it gives me continual pain to think of it; inasmuch, that [as Moses formerly when God proposed to cut them off, and in their stead to make of him a great nation, begged that he himself might rather die, than the children of Israel be destroyed, so] I could even wish that the exclusion from the visible church, which will happen to the Jewish nation, might fall to my own share, if thereby they might be kept in it." See Locke, and Grotius, and the note on Exod. xxxii. 32, &c.

Ver. 4. *Who are Israelites*] The Apostle with great address enumerates these privileges of the Jews, both that he might shew how honourably he thought of them, and that he might awaken their solicitude not to sacrifice that divine favour by which they had been so eminently and so long distinguished. In the word *adoption* he alludes to the Horeb covenant, whereby the Israelites became the peculiar people of God, and he their supreme ruler and protector. See Exod. iv. 22. Deut. xiv. 1. Jer. xxxi. 9. Holca, xi. 1. The *glory* means the *Schechinah*, which resided visibly among them on the mercy-seat. Hence the ark was called *the glory*. Compare Psal. lxxviii. 61. 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22. Ezek. x. 4. xliii. 2, &c. For the *covenants*, see Gen. xvii. 14. Exod. xxxiv. 27, &c. Whether the *giving of the law*, *νομοθεσία*, signifies the extraordinary giving of the law by God himself, or the exact constitution of their government, in the *moral and judicial* part of it, (for the next word *λατρεία*, the *service*, seems to comprehend the *religious worship*;) this is certain, that in either of these senses it was the peculiar privilege of the Jews, and what no other nation could pretend to. See Locke, and Doddridge.

Ver. 5. *Whose are the fathers, &c.*] See Exod. iii. 6—16. Acts, vii. 32. How ingenious soever the conjecture of Dr. Taylor may be thought, by which he would read *ὡς ἡ θεὸς ἰσχυρὸς πάντων*, to answer to *ὡς ἡ πατὴρ*, *whose are the Fathers, and whose is the God over all*, it would doubtless be extremely dangerous to follow this, or any other reading of the like kind, unsupported by any critical authority of manuscripts or ancient quotations; nor does there appear any authority whatever for rendering the last clause, *God be blessed for ever*. We must therefore consider this text as a proof of Christ's proper divinity, which the opposers of that doctrine have never been able to answer. Proclus (*de Fide*, p. 53.) esteemed the verse before us so clear a proof of the divinity of Christ, that he says, "It shuts and walls up every avenue of calumny or reproach;" and Theophylact considers it as a passage which must put Arius to shame, as St. Paul expressly declares Christ to be *God over all*. This will appear still more plainly, if we recollect that it was a Jewish custom, whenever the priest

mentioned the name of God in the sanctuary, for the people to say, "Blessed be the name and glory of his kingdom for ever and ever." The words used chap. i. 25. are an abridgment of this form. Similar to it is the doxology at the end of the Lord's prayer, and chap. xi. 36. of this Epistle. In all these and in other places, the giving glory being an acknowledgment of the eternal God, and in several of them being applied peculiarly to Christ, is a convincing proof of his Godhead. See Hammond, Doddridge, and Locke.

Ver. 6. *The word of God*] The word of promise. See ver. 9. and chap. iii. 3. St. Paul urges, that *they are not all Israel which are of Israel*, as a reason to prove that the promise of God failed not to have its effect, though the body of the Jewish nation had rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore were naturally rejected by God from being any longer his people. The reasoning stands thus: "The posterity of Jacob, or Israel, were not those alone who were to make that *Israel*, or that chosen people of God, who were intended in the promise made to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 7, 8. Others, besides the descendants of Jacob, were to be taken into this Israel, to constitute the people of God under the Gospel; and therefore the calling and coming-in of the Gentiles was a completion of that promise;" and then he adds in the next verse, "Neither were all the posterity of Abraham comprehended in that promise; nor were those who were taken-in in the time of the Messiah to make the *Israel* of God, taken-in because they were the natural descendants from Abraham; nor did the Jews claim it for all his race;" and this he proves by the limitation of the promise to Abraham's seed by Isaac only. He does all this to shew the right of the Gentiles to that promise, if they believed; since that promise did not concern only the natural descendants either of Abraham or Jacob, but those only *who were of the faith of their father Abraham*, of whomsoever descended. See chap. iv. 11—17. and Locke. We may read the last clause of this verse, *For not all they that are of Israel, are Israel*.

Ver. 7. *But, In Isaac shall thy seed be called*] It should be considered, and well noted, that the Apostle, in this and the following quotations, does not give us the whole of the text which he intends should be taken into his argument, but only a hint or reference to the passages to which they belong; directing us to recollect or peruse the whole passage, and there view and judge of the force of his argument. That he is so to be understood, appears from the conclusion he draws, ver. 16. So then it is not of *him that willeth*, nor of *him that runneth*, but of *God that beareth mercy*. In his arguments, ver. 7, 8, &c. he says not one word of Abraham's *willing* Ishmael to be the *seed* in whom the promise might be fulfilled, nor of Isaac's *willing* Esau, nor of Moses's *willing* and interceding that the Israelites might be spared, nor of Esau's *running* for venison; but by introducing these particulars into his conclusion,

might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

12 It was said unto her, The * elder shall serve the † younger.

* Gen. 25. 23. with 2 Sam. 8. 14.

* Or greater. † Or lesser.

elusion, he gives us to understand, that his quotations are to be taken in connection with the whole history of which they are a part. The same thing may be said concerning his conclusion, ver. 18. *Whom he will, he hardeneth.*—*Hardeneth* is not in his argument, but it is in the conclusion; *therefore, &c.* The generality of the Jews were well versed in the Scriptures, and a hint was sufficient to revive the memory of a whole passage.

Ver. 11. *Neither having done any good or evil*] These words may possibly have been added by St. Paul, the more expressly to obviate an objection of the Jews, who might be ready to say, that Esau was rejected because he was wicked; as they did of Ishmael, that he was rejected, because he was the son of a bond-woman.

The principal thing which requires to be settled in this chapter is, what kind of *election and reprobation* the Apostle is here discoursing about? whether *election*, by the absolute decree and purpose of God to eternal life, and *reprobation*, by a like absolute decree, to eternal misery; or only *election* to the present privileges and external advantages of the kingdom of God in this world; and *reprobation*, or rejection, as it signifies the not being favoured with those privileges and advantages? And it appears demonstrably, that the Apostle is discoursing of the latter election and rejection, and not the former: for, I. The subject of his argument is manifestly the privileges enumerated ver. 4, 5. from which he supposes the Jews were fallen or would fall; or that for a long time they would be deprived of the benefit of them: for it is with regard to the loss of those privileges that he is so much concerned for his *brethren, and kinsmen according to the flesh*, ver. 2, 3; and it is with reference to their being stripped of those privileges, that he vindicates the word and righteousness of God, ver. 6—24. *Not as though the word of God had taken no effect, or failed, &c.* proving that God, according to his purpose of *election*, was free to confer them upon any branch of Abraham's seed. Consequently those privileges were the singular blessings which, by the *purpose of God, according to election, not of works, but of him that calleth*, were conferred upon Jacob's posterity. But those privileges were only such as the whole body of the Israelites enjoyed in this world while they were the church and people of God, and such privileges as they might afterwards lose, or be deprived of; therefore the election of Jacob's posterity to those privileges was not absolute election to eternal life.

II. Agreeably to the *purpose of God* according to election, it was said to Rebecca, *The elder shall serve the younger*; meaning, the posterity of the elder and the younger. For, Gen. xxv. 23. *the Lord said unto her, two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger.* These are the words which signify the *purpose of God according to election*. Therefore the election refers to Jacob's posterity, or the whole nation of Israel; but the whole nation of Israel were not absolutely elected to eternal life: therefore, &c.—

III. Agreeably to the purpose of God according to election, it was said to Rebecca, *the elder shall serve the younger*; but to *serve*, in Scripture, never signifies to be *eternally damned* in the world to come; consequently the opposite blessing, bestowed upon the posterity of the *younger*, could not be *eternal salvation*, but some privileges in this life. Therefore the *purpose according to election* refers to such privileges.

IV. The *election* here spoken of took place first in Abraham and his seed, before his seed were born; and then (excluding Ishmael and all his posterity) in Isaac and his seed, before they were born; and then (excluding Esau and his posterity) in Jacob and his seed, before they were born. But the Scripture never represents *eternal life*, as bestowed upon any family or race of men in this manner. Therefore, &c.—

V. *Vessels of mercy* (ver. 23.) are manifestly opposed to *vessels of wrath*, ver. 22. The *vessels of mercy* are the whole body of the Jews and Gentiles, who were *called or invited* into the kingdom of God under the Gospel, ver. 24.; consequently the *vessels of wrath* are the whole body of the unbelieving Jews. So ver. 30, 31. the whole body of unbelieving *Gentiles*, who, according to God's purpose of election, had attained justification, are opposed to the whole body of the Israelites who came short of it:—but men shall not be received to eternal life, or subjected to eternal condemnation at the last day in collective bodies; but according as particular persons in those bodies have acted well or ill. Therefore, &c.—VI. Whoever carefully peruses chap. ix. x. xi. will find, that those who *have not believed*, chap. xi. 31. are the present rejected Jews, or *that Israel to whom blindness hath happened in part*, chap. xi. 25.;—the same who fell, and on whom God hath shewn *severity*, chap. xi. 22.; the same with the *natural branches*, whom *God spared not*, chap. xi. 21.; who were *broken off* from the olive-tree, chap. xi. 19, 17.; who were *cast away*, chap. xi. 15.; who were *diminished and fallen*, chap. xi. 12.; who had *stumbled*, chap. xi. 11.; who were *a disobedient and gainsaying people*, chap. x. 21.; who *being ignorant of God's righteousness went about to establish their own*, chap. x. 3.—*Because they sought righteousness, not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law*, chap. ix. 32.; and they had *not attained to the law of righteousness*, chap. ix. 31. These same people, spoken of in all these places, are the *vessels of wrath fitted for destruction*, ver. 22.; and the same for whom St. Paul had *great heaviness and continual sorrow in his heart*, ver. 2, 3. In short, they are the unbelieving nation, or people of *Israel*; and it is with regard to the reprobation or rejection of this people, from the peculiar kingdom of the Messiah, that he is arguing, and vindicating the truth, justice, and wisdom of God, in the present chapter. Now if we turn back and review those three chapters, we shall find that the Apostle, chap. x. 1. heartily desires and prays, that those same reprobated and rejected people of *Israel* might be saved; he affirms that they had not so *stumbled as to fall finally and irrecoverably*, chap. xi. 11.; that they should again have a *fulness*, ver. 12.; that they should be *received* again into the church, ver. 15.; that a

13 As it is written, ' Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

14 'What shall we say then? ' *Is there unrighteousness with God?* God forbid.

15 For he saith to Moses, ' I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

¹ Mal. i. 2, 3. ² Gen. 29. 10. Deut. 24. 15. Prov. 17. 24. Mar. 10. 37. Luke, 14. 26. John, 12. 25. ³ Ch. 3. 5 & 4. 1. & 6. 7.
⁴ Gen. 18. 25. Deut. 32. 4. Job, 8. 3. & 34. 10. 2 Chron. 19. 4. Pf. 92. 15. & 11. 6, 7. ⁵ Ex. d. 33. 19. Ver. 16, 18.

believers still belonged to them, ver. 16.; that if they did not still abide in unbelief, they should be grafted into their own olive-tree again, ver. 23, 24.; and that blindness was happened to them only for a time, till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, ver. 25.; and then he proves from Scripture, that all Israel, all this nation, at present under blindness, shall be saved, ver. 26, 27. That as touching the [original] election, they were still beloved for the sake of the fathers, the patriarchs, ver. 28.; that in their case, the gifts of callings of God are without repentance, ver. 29.; and that through our, the believing Gentiles', mercy, they shall at length obtain mercy, ver. 31. All these things are spoken of that Israel or body of people, concerning whose rejection the Apostle argues in the 9th chapter; and therefore the rejection about which he here argues cannot be absolute reprobation to eternal damnation, but their being, as a nation, stripped of those honours and privileges of God's peculiar church and kingdom in this world, to which, at a certain period, they should again be restored. But once more, VII. Whoever carefully peruses those three chapters will find, that the people, who in times past believed not God, but have now obtained mercy, through the unbelief of the Jews, (chap. xi. 30.) are the whole body of the believing Gentiles; the same who were cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted, contrary to nature, into the good olive-tree, chap. xi. 24, 17.; the same to whom God had shewn goodness, chap. xi. 22.; the world that was reconciled, chap. xi. 15.; the Gentiles, who were enriched by the diminishing of the Jews, chap. xi. 12.; to whom salvation came through their fall, chap. xi. 11.; who had attained to righteousness, or justification, chap. ix. 30.; who had not been God's people, nor beloved; but now are his people, and the children of the living God; ver. 25, 26. See ver. 24, 23, 21. He speaks of the same body of men in all those places, namely, of the believing Gentiles principally, but not excluding a small remnant of the believing Jews, who were incorporated with them. And it is this body of men, whose calling and election he is proving; in whose case the purpose of God according to election stands good; and who are the children of the promise counted for seed, ver. 8.—They are the election, or the elect. Now concerning this called, or elect body of the people, or any particular person belonging to this body, the Apostle writes thus, in chap. xi. 20—22.: "Well, because of unbelief, they, the Jews, were broken off, reprobated, rejected, and thou standest, in the church, among God's called or elect, by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed, lest be also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God, on them, the Jews, which fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness; if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off, rejected and reprobated." This proves, that the calling and election, which the Apostle is here urging, is not ab-

solute election to eternal life, but to the present privileges of the church;—the honours and advantages of God's peculiar people: which election, through unbelief and misimprovement, may be rendered void, and come to nothing.

Ver. 12, 13. *The elder shall serve the younger*] These words, *the elder shall serve the younger*, in Gen. xxv. 23. are used only in a national sense, and not personally; for in this sense the proposition is not true: which makes it plain that the words, *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*, ver. 13. are to be taken also in a national sense, for the preference which God gave to the posterity of one of them to be his people, and possess the promised land. See Deut. vii. 6—8. The word *hated* is often used in sacred Scripture comparatively, signifying only "to postpone in our esteem or kindness." *I have loved Jacob, and hated Esau*, therefore, can only mean, "I have greatly preferred the former to the latter." See Gen. xxix. 31. Luke, xiv. 26. John, xii. 25. From the 7th to the 13th verse the Apostle proves to the Jews, that though the promise was made to Abraham and his seed, yet it was not to all Abraham's posterity, but God's first choice, Isaac and his posterity. And then again when Rebecca had conceived twins by Isaac, who was but one of the sons of Abraham, God, of his blessed pleasure, chose Jacob the younger, and his posterity, to be his peculiar people. See Locke and the preceding note. Dr. Doddridge upon the 13th verse observes, that the words there, in connection with the preceding and following, do indeed prove, that God acts with a sovereign freedom, accountable to none in the dispensation of his favours; and consequentially prove that it was not upon the foresight of the obedience and piety of Jacob on the one hand, or the profaneness of Esau on the other, that this preference was given; for then the argument taken from the having actually done neither good nor evil, would be very weak. The Doctor afterwards adds, Nevertheless it is certain, that the Apostle does not here speak of the eternal state of Jacob and Esau, (whatever some may suppose deducible from what he says,) nor does he indeed so much speak of the persons, as of their posterity, since it is plainly to that posterity that both the prophecies which he quotes in support of his argument refer; Gen. xxv. 23. Mal. i. 2, 3. *His laying waste the heritage of the Edomites for the dragons of the wilderness*, is so different a thing from his appointing the person of Esau to eternal misery by a mere act of sovereignty,—without regard to any thing done, or to be done, by him to deserve it,—that I will rather submit (says the Doctor) to any censure from my fellow-servants, than deal so freely with my Maker, as to conclude the one from the other.

Ver. 14, 15. *What shall we say then?*] So far the Apostle, in this chapter, has considered God's choosing or refusing any body of men in general, without supposing them

16^d So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

17 For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh,

‘ Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

^d Ver. 11. 1. 18. 20, 21. Ps. 110. 3. 116. 1. Mat. 11. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 4. 7. & 1. 26—31. Ps. 110. 3. Phil. 2. 13. 2 Thess. 2. 13, 14. Titus, 3. 5. ^e Gen. 3. 8, 22. ^f Exod. 9. 16. & 10. 1. & 14. 4, 17. Prov. 16. 4. Ps. 58. 10, 11. & 9. 16. & 83. 17, 18.

to be corrupt, or to have forfeited the divine favour; but it is evident from the Scripture quotations, that from ver. 15. to 23. he considers them in another light; namely, as corrupt, and deserving of destruction, which brings his argument to the case of the rejected Jews: and it is observable, that the Apostle arguing here with the Jews, to vindicate the justice of God in rejecting them, uses three sorts of arguments. The *first* is, the *testimony of Moses*, concerning God's asserting this to himself by the right of his sovereignty, which was enough to stop the mouths of the Jews; the *second*, from *reason*, ver. 19—24.; and the *third*, from his *predictions* of it to the Jews, and the warning that he gave them of it beforehand, ver. 25—29. See Locke, and Exod. xxxiii. 19.

Ver. 16. *God that sheweth mercy*] *Shewing mercy*, and *obtaining mercy*, are applied to the donation of extraordinary favours and privileges upon a people, chap. xi. 30. 1 Pet. ii. 10.; and that it is to be so understood here, appears from the context. One would imagine that this verse should have come in immediately after the 13th; but the reason why the Apostle inserted it here, most probably was, that he might take the affair of Moses's intercession for the Israelites into his conclusion, as well as the two foregoing instances relating to the sons of Abraham and Isaac; for, the instance of Moses's intercession, *first*, with respect to his will and earnest desire, has relation to the preceding cases of Abraham and Isaac; and so it comes into the conclusion in this verse; and *secondly*, with respect to the sovereign will and pleasure of God, in continuing to the Israelites the favour of being his peculiar people, it has also relation by way of contrast to the subsequent case of Pharaoh, ver. 17.; and so comes also into the conclusion, ver. 18. This is an example of the Apostle's consulting brevity in arranging and wording his arguments. The passage from ver. 14. may be paraphrased thus: “ And now, what shall we say to these things? Shall we suggest that God's bestowing religious privileges in this unequal manner, upon those who otherwise are in equal circumstances, is inconsistent with equity and justice?—By no means; ver. 15. I gave a general answer to this objection, chap. iii. 6. which I now confirm by the words of God himself to Moses, Exod. xxxiii. 19. after he had declared that he would spare the Jews of old, and continue them in the relation of his peculiar people, when they had deserved to be cut off for their idolatry. *I will*, says he, *make all my goodness pass before thee*, &c. as if he had said, “ I will make such a display of my perfections as shall convince you I am of a kind and beneficent nature: but know, that I am a debtor to none of my creatures; my benefits and blessings are merely from my own good-will; nor can any people; much less a rebellious people, challenge them as their due in justice

“ or equity; and therefore I now spare the Jews, not because either *you* who intercede for them, or *they* themselves have any claim upon my favour; but of my own free and sovereign grace I choose to shew them mercy and compassion:” ver. 16. I conclude therefore, from these three several instances foregoing, that the making or continuing any body of men the peculiar people of God, in respect to spiritual or national privileges, is righteously determined, not by the judgment, hopes, or wishes of men, but by the will and wisdom of God alone. For Abraham judged that the blessing ought, and desired it might be given to his eldest son Ishmael; and Isaac also designed it for first-born Esau: and Esau, wishing and hoping it would be his, readily went a hunting for venison, that he might receive it. But they were all frustrated; Abraham and Isaac who *scolded*, and Esau who *ran*; for the blessing of being a *great nation*, and his peculiar people, God, of his mere good pleasure, originally intended first for Isaac, and then for Jacob and his posterity; and to them it was given. And when by their apostacy they had forfeited this privilege, it was not Moses's *willing*, nor any prior obligation that God was under, but his own sovereign mercy, which continued the enjoyment of it.” See Locke, and Whitby.

Ver. 17. *For the Scripture saith*, &c.] *Moreover*, &c. Doddridge. It is plain that this is no proof of what immediately goes before; and therefore *ἄρα* is properly rendered by *moreover*, which is consistent with making it introductory to what proves something asserted at a distance, if it come in as a co-ordinate proof. The reader will observe, that the Apostle does not produce an instance of an innocent *person* being made and treated as an object of divine displeasure out of mere sovereignty; but one of the most hardened and notorious sinners the world ever knew. Instead of *I have raised thee up*, some would render the original, *I have made thee stand*, or *held thee up*: that is, “ I have supported thee during the former plagues, that I might make thee a more remarkable example of vengeance.” But though that may agree with the original Hebrew and with the version of the LXX, yet it does not seem to answer to the Greek word used by St. Paul. If, as some writers suppose, the Pharaoh here spoken of was an Egyptian king, who made his way to the throne by treason, incest, and murder, the words have a singular weight considered as referring thereto: “ *I have raised thee up* to that height of eminence in which thou proudly gloriest, *that I may more conspicuously shew forth my power in thee*; and that my name, in consequence of distinguished judgments to be righteously inflicted upon thee, *may be celebrated through all the earth*, in the most distant nations and remotest ages.” See Locke, Doddridge, and Whitby.

Ver:

18 'Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, 'Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

20 Nay but, O man, ^k who art thou that

* repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?

21 Hath not the 'potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

22 ^m What if God, willing to shew his

^l Luke, 10. 21. & 12. 32. Ch. 5. 20, 21. & 11. 5—7. See ver. 11, 15, 16, 20—24. Titus, 3. 5. ⁿ Exod. 4. 21. & 8. 15, 33. 1 Chron. 21. 1. ⁱ Kings, 22. 21, 22. Ch. 1. 24, 26, 28. Pl. 81. 12. 2 Thess. 2. 11. ⁱ Gen. 50. 20. 2 Chron. 20. 6. Job, 9. 19. & 41. 10. If. 46. 10. Jer. 49. 19. & 50. 44. ^k Job, 9. 12, 14, 15. & 23. 13. & 33. 13. & 34. 31. & 40. 2, 4, 5. If. 29. 16. & 45. 9. Dan. 4. 35. Mat. 20. 15. Ver. 21. ^o Or *resisteth against, or disputeth with God?* Jer. 18. 6. If. 64. 8. Prov. 16. 4. 2 Tim. 2. 20. Ver. 11, 15, 16, 18. ^m Prov. 16. 4. Ch. 2. 4, 5. & 11. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 2. 8. Jude, 4. 1 Thess. 5. 9.

Ver. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy, &c.*] "Therefore, that his name and power may be made known, and taken notice of in all the earth, he is kind and bountiful to one nation, and suffers another to go on obstinately in their opposition to him; that his taking them off by some signal calamity, and the ruin brought on them by the visible hand of his providence, may be seen and acknowledged to be an effect of their standing out against him; as in the case of Pharaoh. For this end, he is bountiful to whom he will be bountiful, and whom he will he permits to make such an use of his forbearance towards them, as to persist obdurately in their provocation of him, and draw on themselves exemplary destruction." See Locke, Whitby, and particularly the note on Exod. iii. 34, 35.

Ver. 19. *Why doth he yet find fault?*] This objection is put a little differently, ch. iii. 7. There it is, "If God's faithfulness is glorified by my wickedness, why am I condemned as a sinner?" Here it is, "If God for his own glory determines to suffer us to go on in hardness and infidelity, why does he find fault with us?" See the reply in the next verse.

Ver. 20. *Nay but, O man, &c.*] St. Paul shews here, that the nations of the world, who are by a better right in the hands and disposal of God, than the clay in the power of the potter, may, without calling his justice in question, be made great and glorious, or be pulled down or brought into contempt, as he pleases. That he here speaks of men nationally, and not personally, in reference to their eternal state, is evident not only from the beginning of this chapter, where he expresses his concern for the rejection of the Jews, and from the instances that he brings of Isaac, Jacob, Esau, and Pharaoh: but it appears also very clearly from the verses immediately following; where, by the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, (keeping up the metaphor of the potter,) he manifestly means the nation of the Jews; who were now grown ripe for the destruction which God would bring upon them; and by vessels of mercy, the christian church, consisting of a small number of converted Jews, and the rest made up of Gentiles; who, together, were thenceforwards to be the people of God in this general sense, instead of the Jewish nation, ver. 24. The sense therefore of this and the following verses is this: "How darest thou, O man, to call God to account, and question his justice, in casting off his ancient people the Jews? What if God, willing to punish that sinful

"people, and to do it so as to make his power known and taken notice of, (and why might not he raise them up for that purpose, as well as Pharaoh and the Egyptians?)—What, I say, if God bore with them a long time, even after they had deserved his wrath, as he did with Pharaoh, that his hand might be the more eminently visible in their destruction; and that also, at the same time, he might with the more glory make known his goodness and mercy to the Gentiles; whom, according to his purpose, he was ready to receive into the glorious state of being his people under the Gospel?" See Locke.

Ver. 21. *Hath not the potter power, &c.*] See Jer. xviii. and Eccl'us, xxxiii. 13. It is observable, that Plutarch uses the very same similitude with this before us; and Aristophanes, among other contemptuous expressions, by which he describes the frailty of human creatures, calls them *πλασματα πηλες, vessels of clay.* A vessel unto honour, or to dishonour, signifies a thing designed by the maker to an honourable or dishonourable use: nor can any reason be given why it may not design nations, as well as persons; and honour and prosperity in this world, as well as eternal happiness and glory, or misery and punishment, in the world to come. In common reason this figurative expression ought to follow the sense of the context. But Jeremiah, xviii. 6, 7. whence this instance of a potter is taken, shews the word vessel to have a temporal sense, and to relate to the nation of the Jews. See the preceding note, Locke, and Bos.

Ver. 22. *What if God, willing, &c.*] See on ch. i. 18. Immediately after the instance of Pharaoh, whom God declared that he raised up to shew his power in him, ver. 17. it is subjoined, ver. 18., *And whom he will he hardeneth;* plainly with reference to the history of Pharaoh, who is said to harden himself, and whom God is said to harden, as may be seen in the parallel places of Exodus. What God's part in hardening is, we find in the words, *Endured with much long-suffering.* God sends Moses to Pharaoh with signs; Pharaoh's magicians do the like; and so he is not prevailed with. God sends a plague: while the plague is upon him, Pharaoh is mollified, and promises to let the people go: but as soon as God takes off the plague, he returns to his obstinacy, and refuses; and this repeatedly. God's being intreated by him to withdraw the severity of his hand, and his gracious compliance with Pharaoh's desire, was what God did in the case.

wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath ⁿ fitted to destruction :

23 ^o And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

24 ^p Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

25 As he saith also in 'Osee, ^q I will call them my people, which were not my people ;

and her beloved, which was not beloved.

26 ^r And it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, *Ye are not my people* ; there shall they be called the children of the living God.

27 Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, ' Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved :

28 ^t For he will finish * the work, and cut

ⁿ Or *made up*. Gen. 15. 16. Mat. 23. 12, 33. Ch. 2. 5. James, 5. 3. 1. 27. 2 Tim. 1. 9. & 2. 21. 2 Cor. 5. 5. 1 Pet. 1. 3. 4. 2 Pet. 1. Ch. 3. 22, 29, 30. & 4. 11, 12, 16. & 10. 12, 13. & 11. 11—32. Gal. 3. 28. Eph. 2. 12—20. Col. 1. 6, 23. & 3. 11. ^q Hosea, 2. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 10. with Gen. 49. 10. Deut. 32. 43. Pf. 22. 27—31. & xlv. xlvii. lxxvii. lxxviii. lxxii. xcvi—c. cxvii. If. 9. 7. & 24. 16. & xl—lxvi. Jer. iii. xxx. xxxi, &c. ^r Hosea. 1. 1. with If. 11. 10. & 43. 6. & 49. 12. & liv. & 36. 8. & 27. 12, 13. & lx—lxii. &c. ^s If. 19. 22, 23. Ezek. 6. 8. Ch. 11. 5. Jer. 5. 10. & 46. 28. ^t If. 28. 22. Jer. 16. 16. & 14. 22. If. 30. 13, 14.

^o Ch. 5. 20, 21. & 8. 28. & 2. 4. Eph. 2. 7, 8. & 1. 3—7, 13. Col. ^p Heb. 3. 1. Ch. 8. 28, 30. 1 Pet. 2. 6. 1 Cor. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9. ^q Hosea, 2. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 10. with Gen. 49. 10. Deut. 32. 43. Pf. 22. 27—31. & xlv. xlvii. lxxvii. lxxviii. lxxii. xcvi—c. cxvii. If. 9. 7. & 24. 16. & xl—lxvi. Jer. iii. xxx. xxxi, &c. ^r Hosea. 1. 1. with If. 11. 10. & 43. 6. & 49. 12. & liv. & 36. 8. & 27. 12, 13. & lx—lxii. &c. ^s If. 19. 22, 23. Ezek. 6. 8. Ch. 11. 5. Jer. 5. 10. & 46. 28. ^t If. 28. 22. Jer. 16. 16. & 14. 22. If. 30. 13, 14. ^{*} Or *the account*.

case; and this was all goodness and bounty. But Pharaoh and his people made such ill use of his forbearance and long-suffering, as still to harden themselves the more for God's goodness and gentleness to them;—till they brought on themselves exemplary destruction, from the visible power and hand of God employed in it. This behaviour of theirs God foresaw, and so made use of their obstinate temper for his own glory, as he himself declares, Exod. vii. 3—5. viii. 18, &c. The Apostle, by the instance of a potter's power over his clay, having demonstrated that God, by his dominion and sovereignty, had a right to set up or pull down what nation he pleased, and might, without any injustice, take one race into his favour to be his peculiar people, or reject them, as he thought fit, in this general sense of privileges.—In this verse he applies it to the subject in hand; namely, the rejection of the Jewish nation; whereof he speaks here in terms, which plainly make a parallel between this and his dealing with the Egyptians, mentioned ver. 17.: and therefore that history will best explain this verse, which will thence receive its full light. For it seems, at first sight, a somewhat strange sort of reasoning to say that God, to shew his wrath, endured with much long-suffering those who deserved his wrath, and were fit for destruction. But he who will read in Exodus God's dealings with Pharaoh and the Egyptians,—and how he passed over provocation upon provocation, and patiently endured those who by their first refusal, nay, by their former cruelty and oppression of the Israelites, deserved his wrath, and were fitted for destruction, that by a more signal vengeance on the Egyptians, and glorious deliverance of the Israelites, he might make his power and his goodness known,—will easily see the strong and natural sense of this and the following verse. See Locke and Dodridge.

Ver. 23. *And that he might make known*] Mr. Locke thinks the sense of the place requires, that the *and* should be left out, as it is in some manuscripts: but the *and* seems essential to the text, and to the Apostle's meaning; as it connects the second reason, why God delayed the destruction of the Jewish nation, with the first reason given, ver. 22. thus;—*God endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, first, to shew his wrath, and to make his*

power known; and also, 2dly, that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy. It is added, *which he had before prepared unto glory*. See Col. i. and particularly ver. 27. The Jews were fitted for destruction long before; but the fittest time to destroy them was, after he had prepared many of the faithful among the Gentiles unto glory. For the rod of the Messiah's strength was to be sent out of Zion, Pf. cx. 2. The Jewish nation was to supply the first preachers of the Gospel; and from Jerusalem their sound was to go forth into all the earth. Therefore the Jewish state, under all its corruptions, was to be preserved till the Messiah came, and, even till the Gospel, propagated by the Apostles, had taken deep root in the Gentile world. Another thing which rendered the time when the Jewish polity was overthrown the most proper, was this; because then the immediate occasion of it was the extensiveness of the divine grace. The extensiveness of God's grace occasioned that infidelity of the Jews, which filled up the measure of their iniquity; ver. 33. ch. xi. 11, 12, 15, 28, 30. Thus they were diminished by that abundance which has enriched us; and so the grace of God was illustrated; or so God made known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy. See Locke.

Ver. 25, 26. *As he saith also in Osee*] Here are two quotations out of the prophet Hosea,—*first*, ch. i. 10. where, immediately after God had rejected the ten tribes, ver. 9. (*Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God*;) it is added, *Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered: And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God*. As if he had said, "The decrease of numbers in the visible church, by God's utterly taking away the ten tribes, ver. 6. shall be well supplied by what shall afterwards come to pass by calling the Gentiles into it. They who had been the people of God should become *Lo-ammi*,—*not my people*: on the contrary, they who had been *Lo-ammi*,—*not my people*, should become the children of the living God." Again, Hosea, ii. 23. *I will sow her [the Jewish church] unto me in the earth*; alluding, probably, to the dispersion of the Jews over all the Roman empire; which proved a fruitful

is short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.

29 And as Esaias said before, "Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha.

30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which ^a followed not after righteousness, ^b have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.

31 But Israel, which ^c followed after the law

of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

32 Wherefore? ^d Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they ^e stumbled at that stumbling-stone;

33 As it is written, ^f Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone and rock of offence: and ^g whosoever believeth on him shall not be ^h ashamed.

^a If. 1. 9. with 6. 13. Ezek. 22. 30. Gen. 19. 24. If. 13. 19. Jer. 49. 18. & 50. 40. Lam. 3. 22. & 4. 6. Ezek. 16. 46-52. Amos, 4. 11. Zeph. 2. 9. ¹ Pet. 2. 6. Jude, 7. ² Ch. 1. 18-32. ¹ Cor. 6. 9, 10. Eph. 2. 12. Titus, 3. 3. Eph. 4. 17-19. ¹ Pet. 4. 3. If. 65. 1. ³ Ch. 1. 22, 30. & 4. 11. & 10. 20. & 11. 11, 12. & 15. 8-19. ² Ver. 32. Ch. 10. 2, 3. & 11. 7. Gal. 3. 21. & 5. 2, 4. Mat. 9. 13. ⁴ Mat. 19. 16. John. 6. 28. Ch. 10. 3. ^b Luke, 2. 34. Mat. 13. 57. ¹ Cor. 1. 25. John, 15. 22, 24. ^c If. 8. 14. & 28. 16. ¹ Pet. 2. 6. Pf. 118. 22. ^d Ch. 11. 11. Pf. 2. 12. If. 45. 22. & 55. 1, 4, 7. Joel, 2. 32. Mark, 16. 15, 16. John, 6. 37, 40. & 3. 16, 36. ^e Or *confused*.

fruitful cause of preparing the Gentiles for the reception of the Gospel; And, or moreover, I will have mercy on her [the body of believing Gentiles] that had not obtained mercy. See Jeffery's "True Grounds," p. 149.; and the notes on Hoitea.

Ver. 27, 28. *A remnant shall be saved*] That is, *Only a remnant*. So ch. xiv. 2. *Eats only herbs*, John, xviii. 8. *If ye seek me, (that is, only me,) let these go their way*. Mr. Locke would translate the next verse, *For the Lord, finishing and contracting the account, in righteousness, shall make a short or small remainder in the earth*.—A metaphor taken from an account, wherein the matter is so ordered, that the overplus or remainder, standing still upon the account, is very little. Compare If. xxviii. 22. and Dan. ix. 27.

Ver. 29. *Except the Lord of Sabaoth, &c.*] *Lord of Hosts, &c.* Instead of a seed, the words in Isaiah are, a very small remnant.

Ver. 30, 31. *The Gentiles, which followed not, &c.*] *Righteousness or justification*, is to be understood here, as ch. iv. 3, 5. Gen. xv. 6. It is the justification by faith, to which the Apostle from the beginning of the Epistle has been arguing and proving that the believing *Gentiles* have attained, and which *they* have attained; but which the unbelieving Jews have not attained, because they sought it not by faith, but by the works of the law, ver. 32. Therefore what is meant by *attaining to this justification*, will be clearly understood, if we consider that the Apostle is here giving the reason why the Jews were cast off from being God's people, and the Gentiles admitted to that privilege. See Locke and Whitby.

Ver. 33. *A stumbling-stone*] What the unbelieving Jews stumbled at, St. Peter informs us, ¹ Epist. ii. 8. *They stumbled at the word*: they were disgusted at the Gospel: the word which Christ and his Apostles preached, did not please them. It contradicted all their preconceived opinions; and, instead of continuing them to be the only visible church of God in all the world, and their law and religious ceremonies the only rule of a place and interest in the peculiar kingdom of God upon earth, it entirely abolished the law in this respect; and freely took men of any nation into the peculiar kingdom of God, without

any regard to the law of Moses, only upon faith in Christ. This was *the word*,—the word of universal grace, at which the Jews stumbled. See Ifai. viii. 14. ch. xxviii. 16. ¹ Cor. i. 23. and Whitby.

Inferences.—Let the affection which the Apostle expresses for the Jews, *his countrymen and brethren according to the flesh*, and the tender and pathetic representation that he makes of the privileges which they once enjoyed, awaken in our hearts an earnest solicitude, that they may by divine grace be brought back; that they may again be adopted into the family from which they have been cut off, again clothed with the *glory* which is departed from them; that, through him who was given for a covenant to the people, they may receive the law of life and grace, be formed to that *spiritual service* which it introduces, instead of their pompous *ritual*, and embrace the *promises* on which the faith and hope of their illustrious fathers were fixed.

Let it likewise teach us spiritual compassion for *our kindred*, who are strangers to Christ, and let us be willing to submit to the greatest difficulties, and think nothing too much to be done or borne for their recovery.

Let our souls pay a humble homage to him who is, in such an incommunicable and sublime sense, the Son of God, as to be himself *over all, God blessed for evermore*. With prostrate reverence let us adore him, as *our Lord, and our God*, and repose that unbounded confidence in him which such an assemblage of divine perfections will warrant, putting our most hearty *amen* to every ascription of glory, to every anthem of praise, addressed to him.

And since we see that many of the children of *Abraham*, and of *Isaac*, failed of any share in the special promises of God, let us learn to depend on no privilege of birth, on no relation to the greatest and best of men. May we seek to be inserted into the family of God, by his adopting love in Christ Jesus, and to maintain the lively exercise of faith; *without which* no child of *Abraham* was ever acceptable to God, and *with which* none of the children of strangers have ever failed of a share in his mercy and favour.

Let us also learn humbly to adore the *righteousness* and

CHAP. X.

The scripture sheweth the difference betwixt the righteousness of the law, and that of faith: that none, whether Jew or Gentile, who believe, shall be confounded; and that the Gentiles shall receive the word, and believe. Israel was not ignorant of these things.

[Anno Domini 58.]

BRETHREN, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

^a Ch. 9. 1—3. Pf. 51. 18. & 10. 2, 13. & 122. 6—9. & 137. 5, 6. Ch. 9. 31. ^b 11. 27. 11. Holo^c, 4. 6. with John, 17. 3. & 6. 41. & 1. 11. ^d Pf. 11. 7. Deut. 32. 4. or ch. 1. 17. & 3. 22, 26. & 5. 19. ^e 2 Cor. 5. 21. Phil. 3. 9. ^f 2 Pet. 1. 1. ^g Ch. 9. 31, 32. Luke, 18. 11. ^h Mat. 19. 16. John, 6. 28. ⁱ Ch. 9. 32. Heb. 10. 29. ^k Ch. 3. 25; 6. 31. & 8. 3, 4. Gal. 3. 13. & 4. 4, 5. Mat. 3. 15. & 5. 17, 18. 27. 26. ^l Dan. 9. 24. Phil. 3. 9. Gal. 3. 24. Acts, 13. 38, 39. Gal. 2. 16. Deut.

2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

^m John, 16. 2. Acts, 21. 20. & 22. 3. Gal. 1. 14. & 4. 18. Phil. 3. 6. ⁿ 1. 11. ^o Pf. 11. 7. Deut. 32. 4. or ch. 1. 17. & 3. 22, 26. & 5. 19. ^p Ch. 9. 32. Heb. 10. 29. ^q Ch. 3. 25; 6. 31. & 8. 3, 4. Gal. 3. 13. & 4. 4, 5. Mat. 3. 15. & 5. 17, 18. 27. 26. ^r Dan. 9. 24. Phil. 3. 9. Gal. 3. 24. Acts, 13. 38, 39. Gal. 2. 16. Deut.

holiness of God, in all the most amazing displays of his sovereignty, which we are sure are always consistent with it. Let us own his right to confer on whom he pleases, those favours which none of us can pretend to have deserved. He has of his mere goodness given us those privileges, as *Christians*, and as *Protestants*, which he has withheld from most nations under heaven. Let us adore his distinguishing favour to us, and arrogate nothing to ourselves.

Long did his patience wait on us; and let that patience be for ever adored! It shall be glorified even in those that perish: for he is so far from destroying innocent creatures by a mere arbitrary act of power and terror, that he endureth with much long-suffering, those who by their own incorrigible wickedness prove vessels of wrath, and whom the whole assembled world shall confess fitted for the destruction to which they shall finally be consigned. That after long abuse of mercy they are hardened, and perhaps after long hardness are at length destroyed: yea, that some of the vilest of men are exalted by Providence to a station that makes their crimes conspicuous, as those of *Pharaoh*, till at length he shows forth his power the more awfully, and makes his name the more illustrious by their ruin, is certainly consistent with that justice which the Judge of the whole earth will never violate.

But if, in tracing subjects of this kind, difficulties arise beyond the stretch of our feeble thought, let us remember that we are men, and let us not dare to reply against God. Retiring into our own ignorance and weakness, as those that are less than nothing, and vanity, before him, let us dread by any arrogant censure to offend him who has so uncontrollable a power over us. As clay in the hand of the potter, so are we in the hand of the Lord our God. Let us acquiesce in the form that he has given us, in the rank that he has assigned us; and, instead of perplexing ourselves about those secrets of his counsels which it is impossible for us to penetrate, let us endeavour to purify ourselves from whatever would displease him; that so we may, in our respective stations, be vessels of honour, fit for the use of our Master now, and entitled to the promise of being acknowledged as his, in that glorious day when he shall make up his jewels.

How can we sinners of the Gentiles ever sufficiently acknowledge the goodness of God to us, in calling us to that

full participation of Gospel-blessings which we enjoy! That in our native lands, where the name of the true God was so long unknown, we should have the honour of being called his children! Oh, that we may indeed be so, not only by an external profession, but by regenerating grace!

Blessed be God that there is a seed remaining! It is the preservation of the people among which it is found; and had it not been found among us, we had probably long since been made a seat of desolation. May it increase in the rising age, that the pledges of our continued peace and prosperity may be more assured, till our peace be like a river, and our salvation like the waves of the sea.

It will be so, if we be awakened seriously to inquire how we may be justified before God, and seek that invaluable blessing in the way here pointed out; if we seek it, not as by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ. He has, in this respect, been to many a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. May divine grace teach us the necessity of building upon him, of resting upon him the whole stress of our eternal hopes! Then shall they not sink into disappointment and ruin; then shall we not flee away ashamed in that awful day, when the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters of that final deluge of divine wrath shall overflow every hiding-place, but that which God has prepared for us in his own Son.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Jewish bigots looked upon St. Paul as a signal apostate, and persecuted him with peculiar virulence and enmity. He wished therefore to soften their exasperated spirits, while he makes profession of his own tender concern for their welfare and salvation. And there is a peculiar propriety in his introduction, when we consider the offensive truths which he was about to advance.

1. He makes a solemn protestation of the very fervent regard that he bore towards them. I say the truth in Christ, solemnly appealing to him who is the Searcher of hearts, and knoweth that I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost to the simplicity and sincerity of what I am going to say, that, far from entertaining the least prejudice or ill-will against my countrymen, I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, feeling the acutest pangs of grief, when I think of their fearful condition, and what must be the inevitable consequences of their unbelief.

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, ^h That the man which

doeth those things shall live by them.

6 But the ⁱ righteousness which is of faith

^h Lev. 18. 5. Ezek. 20. 14. Neh. 9. 29. Gal. 3. 10, 12. James, 2. 10. with Gal. 3. 8, 22. Ch. 4. 3. Gen. 15. 6.

ⁱ Ch. 3. 22, 27, 31. & 4. 13. & 9. 30, 31. Phil. 3. 9. Heb. 11. 7.

For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, (ἀνάθεμα,) content to be cut off from all my privileges as an Apostle, and to be separated from the society of the faithful with shame and disgrace, yea, to undergo the most ignominious and tormenting death, for my brethren, my kindness, according to the flesh.

2. He mentions the distinguished privileges with which they had been favoured of God, which could not but make their rejection peculiarly grievous to him: *who are Israelites, bearing the name of their eminent progenitor Jacob; to whom pertaineth the adoption, taken into that covenant of peculiarity in which God regarded the whole nation as his visible church, Exod. iv. 22. and the glory, the ark, the Shechinah, the mercy-seat, the tokens and emblems of the divine presence in the midst of them; and the covenants, the covenant of circumcision made with Abraham, and renewed with Isaac and Jacob, and that of Sinai with the whole body of Israel; and the giving of the law, containing God's ordinances, moral, judicial, and ceremonial; and the service of God, in what manner his worship should be performed; and the promises, of temporal prosperity, and of the Messiah and his great salvation; whose are the fathers, the descendants of the famed patriarchs; and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, the promised seed of Abraham, in his human nature; but who, in his divine, is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen! Note; The divinity of our incarnate Saviour is a chief article of our creed. Thereon depends the perfection of his Atonement on our behalf.*

2dly, Grief for his unhappy countrymen filled the Apostle's heart: but, though the generality of them perished, the promise made to Abraham would not be frustrated. He would not therefore have them suppose as though the word of God had taken none effect, and failed of its accomplishment, because they believed not. *For they are not all Israel, true Israelites, and savingly interested in the spiritual blessings of the covenant, which are of Israel, the offspring of Jacob; neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children of God, as they flattered themselves. But I have enlarged so fully on these points in my Critical Notes, that I shall refer my readers to them, rather than run the hazard of being tedious. I will only just observe,*

3dly, That the Apostle, having proved the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, suggests also the reason. *What shall we say then, farther in vindication of God's justice and free grace in these dispensations? It is evident, that the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have notwithstanding attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith, being accepted of God through faith in Christ Jesus: but Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, and sought justification before God by their own obedience, hath not attained to the law of righteousness, not being capable of performing that immaculate righteousness which the law demands, and therefore being left under the curse as transgressors. Wherefore have they not attained? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it*

were by the works of the law, placing their dependence upon their own doings and duties, either in part, or in the whole, for their acceptance with God: for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone, the crucified Galilean, whose lowly appearance offended them, and they could not think of embracing him as their Messiah: As it is written in Isaiah, Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling-stone, and rock of offence, that Messiah who should be the tried stone and sure foundation to those who believed, and would to those who rejected him be as the rock which dashes those to pieces who fall thereon: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed; though the generality perish in their impotence and unbelief, yet those who dare perseveringly trust him for pardon, life, and salvation, shall never be disappointed of their hopes, but find him a Saviour to the uttermost. Note; Nothing is so fatal to the soul as dependence upon our own righteousness, either in the whole or in part, for acceptance with God; while those who, self-despairing, fly to the righteousness of faith revealed in the Gospel, are sure to be justified from all things, and, if they continue in this faith, which always works by love, shall be saved with an everlasting salvation.

CHAP. X.

IN what follows, the Apostle lays open the causes of the unbelief of the Jews, and answers the two chief objections whereby they justified their opposition to the Gospel. The first objection was, that by teaching the justification of the Jews by faith without the works of law, the expiations of the law of Moses were rendered of no use in their justification. The second was, that by admitting the Gentiles into the church and covenant of God without circumcision, the covenant with Abraham was made void.

His answer to the first of these objections, the Apostle began with telling the Jews, that his desire and prayer to God was, that they might be saved, ver. 1.—Because he knew they had a great zeal in matters of religion, though it was not directed by knowledge, ver. 2.—Wherefore being ignorant of the kind of righteousness which God requires from sinners for their justification, even the righteousness of faith, and mistaking the nature of the law of Moses, they sought to become righteous by observing its precepts, and, where they failed, by having recourse to its expiations. So that vainly endeavouring to establish a righteousness of their own for their justification, they had not submitted to the righteousness of God's appointment, now fully revealed in the Gospel, ver. 3.—But in all this they counteracted the true end of the law of Moses, which, though a political law, being given by God, and requiring a perfect obedience to all its precepts under the penalty of death, was in fact a republication of the original law of works, made, not for the purpose of justifying the Jews, but to shew them the impossibility of their being justified by law, that they might be obliged to go to Christ for that blessing, who was exhibited in the types of the law, ver. 4.

—That

speaketh on this wife, ^k Say not in thine heart, ^lbring Christ down *from above* :)
 Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to
 - 7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep?

^k Deut. 30. 11—13.

^l John, 1. 8. Eph. 4. 8—10. Pf. 110. 1. Heb. 1. 3. & 8. 1.

—That the law required perfect obedience to all its precepts, the Apostle proved from Moses's description of the righteousness which it enjoined, and the reward which it promised. The former consisted in doing all the statutes and judgments of God, delivered in the law: the latter in a long and happy life in Canaan. But an immaculate obedience of this kind is impossible, and its reward of no great value, ver. 5.—Whereas the righteousness enjoined by the Gospel, and the reward which it promises, are very different. It enjoins a righteousness of faith, which through grace is easy to be attained; and promises eternal life, a reward no where promised in the law, as a law of works. For, says the Apostle, the Gospel which requires the righteousness of faith, to shew that that righteousness may easily be attained, thus speaketh to all mankind to whom it is now preached:—Do not object to the method of justification revealed in the Gospel, that Christ the object of thy faith is removed far from thee, and there is no person to bring him down from heaven since his resurrection and ascension, that thou mayest see and believe on him, ver. 6.—Neither object to his being the promised Seed, in whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed, that he was put to death, and there is no person to bring him up from the grave, that thou mayest see him crowned with glory and honour by the miracle of his resurrection, ver. 7.—For the Gospel tells thee, the object as well as the duty of faith is brought nigh thee; it is explained and proved to thee in the clearest manner, and is easy to be performed, as it has its seat in the mouth and in the heart, being the doctrine concerning Christ, which we preach by inspiration, and confirm by miracles, ver. 8.—namely, that if thou wilt confess with thy mouth before the world, that Jesus is *Lord* and *Christ*, and wilt believe in thine heart, that God raised him from the dead, and thereby declared him to be both *Lord* and *Christ*, thou shalt be saved: a reward which the law does not promise to any one, ver. 9.—For with the heart we believe, so as to obtain righteousness, and with the mouth confession of our faith is made, so as to have assurance of our salvation, ver. 10. The righteousness of faith, therefore, enjoined in the Gospel, is in its nature and in its reward entirely different from the righteousness enjoined in the law.

To the second objection, that the admission of the Gentiles into the church and peculiar covenant of God without circumcision is contrary to the covenant with Abraham; the Apostle replied, that the prophets have taught the salvation of the Gentiles by faith; particularly Isaiah, in these words; *Whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed*, ver. 11.—And to shew that the expression *whosoever*, does not mean *whosoever of the Jews* only, but *whosoever of the Gentiles* also, the Apostle observed, that in bestowing salvation, God makes no distinction between Jew and Greek; but, being equally related to all, is rich in goodness towards all who call upon him, ver. 12.—Besides, Joel has expressly declared, chap. ii. 32.—*That whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved*, ver. 13.—But perhaps you will

reply, that Joel does not speak of the Gentiles, because it cannot be said, that they believe on the true God, and worship him, since he was never preached to them by any messengers divinely commissioned, ver. 14.—although such messengers ought to have been sent to them long ago, according to Isaiah, who insinuates, that they would have been received with joy, namely, in that passage, where he says, *How beautiful are the feet of them*, &c. ver. 15.—But to this I answer, that in the passage last mentioned, Isaiah declares what ought to have happened, and not what would have happened, if the true God had been preached to the Gentiles. For he foresaw, that even the Jews, who should have been acquainted with the true God, would not believe the report of the preachers of the Gospel, concerning the Christ, (who is the true God and eternal life, 1 John, v. 20.) notwithstanding it ought to have been as acceptable to them, as the preaching of the true God to the Gentiles, ver. 16.—However, granting that faith in the true God cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God preached, it will not follow, that the Gentiles could not believe on the true God, ver. 17.—For though you say, they have not heard concerning him, so as to be able to believe on him and worship him, I must tell you, yes verily they have heard; for from the beginning of the world, God has preached to all men his own being, perfections, and worship, by that grand exhibition of himself which he has made in the works of creation, as is plain from Psalm xix. 4. *Their sound hath gone through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world*. All mankind, therefore, may through the secret influences of divine grace (which must be always understood) know and worship the true God, and be saved, agreeably to Joel's declaration above mentioned, ver. 18.—But you will say, is it not a great objection to this doctrine, that Israel, to whom the oracles of God were intrusted, is ignorant of the salvation of the Gentiles through faith, and of their reception into the church and covenant of God equally with the Jews? I answer, if the Jews are ignorant of these things, it is their own fault. For Moses foretold them in the law, ver. 19.—and Isaiah yet more plainly, ver. 20.—who insinuated that the calling of the Gentiles to be the people of God, by the preaching of the Gospel, would provoke the Jews exceedingly and harden them in their infidelity; inasmuch, that though Christ in person, and by his Apostles, should long and earnestly endeavour to persuade them, they would not believe on him, ver. 21.

In this manner did the Apostle lay open the true causes of the unbelief of his countrymen. They rejected the Gospel, because it reprobated that meritorious righteousness, which they endeavoured to attain by performing the sacrifices and ceremonies of the law of Moses; and because it required them to seek salvation by believing on Jesus, as Lord and Christ, and offered salvation to all the Gentiles who believed. To conclude; the same prophets having expressly foretold, that the Jews, by the calling of the Gentiles, would be provoked to reject the Gospel, and for that

(that is, to "bring up Christ again from the dead.)

thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

8 But what faith it? "The word is nigh

9 That "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth

^a 1 Cor. 15. 3, 4. Mark, 16. 7. & 16. 9. ^b Deut. 30. 14. Ch. 1. 16, 17. Acts, 2. 39. & 3. 26. & 13. 26, 46. & 23. 28. & 10. 36. 16. 37. 19. ^c Mat. 10. 32. Luke, 12. 8. ^d John, 4. 15. Ver. 13.

that sin should themselves be cast off, the Apostle represented these things to them, in the hope that such among them as were candid, when they observed the events to correspond with the predictions, would acquiesce in the appointment of God concerning the Gentiles; sensible, that it was proper to preach *him* to all the nations of the earth, in *whom* all nations were to be blessed.

Ver. 2. *That they have a zeal of God*] See this zeal of theirs for God described, Acts xxi. 27—31. and xxii. 3.

Ver. 3. *God's righteousness*] That is, the method of salvation which is provided for mankind by the mercy and wisdom of God.

Ver. 4. *Christ is the end of the law, &c.*] Here the Jew's argument is supposed. St. Paul, who was well acquainted with the notions of the Jews, and had often disputed with them, knowing well what the Jew would allege, for the sake of brevity puts in his answer, without formally stating the Jew's argument; and yet from the Apostle we may probably collect what was *the Jew's argument*. He insisted that Christ was the end or design of the law in the following sense: that is to say, that the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom, and an interest in the privileges of it, depended upon, or was the result of their submission to or observance of, the law of Moses. Against this *the Apostle* argues, that by obedience to the law the Jews could never have procured the coming and kingdom of Christ, or redemption by him. In that way, (ver. 6, 7.) they could never have brought down Christ from heaven, or have raised him from the dead; it is the grace and power of God alone must do that; which they have done; and in order to an interest in the privileges and blessings of his kingdom, have left nothing on our part to be done, but faith in the heart by the operation of the Spirit of God (which the Divine Spirit is willing to accomplish), and a practice and profession suitable to it. Compare ver. 9. and Gal. iii. 23—25. This and the following verses may be paraphrased thus: "Thus far indeed the Jews think justly, that the end and design of the law is to introduce the kingdom and dispensation of Christ the Messiah: not, as they suppose, to procure the blessings of his kingdom by the observance of the law; but *Christ is the end of the law*, as the law leads and obliges us to fly to that justification, or way of life and salvation, which is open and free to all who believe; ver. 5. For the way of gaining a title to life and salvation by the law, as Moses describes it, is perfect immaculate obedience; a way in which no people in the world, not the Jews themselves, can hope to procure the blessings of the kingdom of the Messiah. But the way of salvation, which is by faith in Christ, runs in a quite different strain; ver. 6, 7. It forbids the supposition of procuring the grace of redemption by any works of righteousness which we can do: for, in order to our redemption, Christ was first to come down from heaven, and to be raised

" from the dead after he was crucified, otherwise he could be no Saviour to us. And what man, through the perfection of his obedience to the law, could acquire either power or interest enough to bring Christ down from the heavenly mansions to this earth; or to loose the bands of death, restore him again to life, and exalt him to God's right hand, to be the author and captain of our salvation? Such mighty effects are not to be accomplished by our works; and therefore the way of salvation by faith very rightly teaches us to disclaim such vain impracticable schemes. On the contrary, it instructs us, ver. 8. that the mercy and kindness of God our Saviour has cleared all difficulties on his part, and reduced the affair to the lowest and easiest conditions on ours, by leaving nothing for us to do, but what through the inspiration of the Spirit of God may be performed by our heart and mouth:—I mean, that *faith* which I preach among the Gentiles, and which is set forth, ver. 9." It may be proper to observe here, that the Apostle does not quote Moses, Deut. xxx. 12—14. by way of proving the point, but only alludes to the manner of expression; as what might with no less, if not with greater propriety, be applied to the Gospel than the law. This appears from the explication he inserts, as, *that is, to bring down Christ from heaven;—that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead;—that is, the word of faith which we preach*. Which explication he adds, to shew that, though he uses the words of Moses, yet he does not suppose that Moses is discoursing upon the same subject with himself. See Locke, who gives a different exposition of these verses, which, for the satisfaction of the reader, shall be mentioned on ver. 9.

Ver. 8. *The word is nigh thee*] The original Πῆμα, often signifies *word*, but sometimes *affair, business*; and so does דבר *deber* in the Hebrew,—the word used by Moses, Deut. xxx. 14. In this place the meaning seems to be, *the affair is nigh thee*, (that is, is rendered easy and feasible,) *even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the affair of faith, which we preach*. See Matt. xviii. 16. Luke, i. 37. ii. 15. 2 Cor. xii. 4. xiii. 1.

Ver. 9. *That if thou shalt confess, &c.*] St. Paul had told them, ver. 4. (says Mr. Locke) that the end of the law was to bring them to life by faith in Christ, that they might be justified, and so be saved. To convince them of this, he brings three verses out of the book of the law itself, declaring that the way to life was by hearkening to that word, which was ready in their mouth, and in their heart; and that therefore they had no reason to reject Jesus, the Christ, because he died, was removed into heaven, and remote from them. Their very law proposed life to them by something *nigh them*, which might lead them to their Deliverer; namely, by words and doctrines, which might always be at hand, *in their mouths, and in their hearts*, and so lead them to Christ; that is, to that *faith* in him which the Apostle preached. We may observe farther from this

place,

the Lord Jesus, and ' shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth ^a unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made ^r unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, ' Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

12 ^r For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

^a John, 6. 69. Acts, 8. 37. ^r John, 5. 1. ^r Pet. 1. 21. Mark, 16. 16. ^r Ch. 1. 17. & 3. 22. Gal. 2. 16. ^r Mat. 10. 32. ^r John, 4. 15. Ver. 13. ^s If. 28. 16. & 49. 23. Jer. 17. 7. Ch. 9. 33. ^t Acts, 10. 34, 35. & 15. 9. & 10. 36. Ch. 3. 22, 29, 30. & 4. 11, 12, 16. & 9. 24. Eph. 1. 7. & 2. 4, 7. ^r Tim. 2. 5, 6. Pl. 103. 17. & 150. 4, 7, 8. ^u Joel, 2. 22. Acts, 2. 21. Gal. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11. If. 45. 22. Titus, 1. 3. Mark, 16. 16. ^x Heb. 11. 6. Ch. 14. 23. ^y Mark, 16. 15, 16. If. 52. 15. & 53. 1. John, 15. 22. Prov. 29. 18. Eph. 2. 12. Titus, 1. 3. ^z Jer. 23. 32. Heb. 5. 4. Mat. 9. 38. ^l If. 52. 7. Nahum, 1. 15. Rev. 14. 6. Mark, 16. 15. Luke, 2. 10, 11, 14. Acts, 13. 26.

place, that the expectation of the Jews was, that the promised Messiah should be their deliverer; in which they were right: but that which they expected to be delivered from at his appearing, was the power and dominion of temporal, not spiritual enemies. When our Saviour came, the time predicted for his coming was completed, and the miracles which he did concurred to persuade that he was their Messiah; but his obscure birth and mean appearance did not correspond with those ideas which they had formed of his splendour. This, with his prediction of the destruction of their temple and state, set the rulers against him, and held the body of the Jews in suspense till his crucifixion, which made them wholly averse to him. They gave up all thoughts of being delivered by him; he was gone; they saw him no more;—and it was past a doubt with them, that a dead man could not be the Messiah or deliverer even of those who believed in him. It is against these prejudices that this and the preceding verses seem directed; wherein St. Paul teaches them, that there was no need to bring the Messiah from heaven or the grave, and introduce him personally among them; for the deliverance that he was to work for them, and the salvation he was to procure, was salvation from sin and its condemnation; and that was to be had by believing and openly avowing him to be Messiah their king, and that he was raised from the dead; for by this they would be saved, without his personal presence among them.

Ver. 11. *For the Scripture saith, &c.*] In this and the two preceding verses, the Apostle intends to shew the nature and efficacy of the gospel faith and profession, in opposition to the mean opinion which the Jew might have of them, in comparison with the several branches of his dependence; and which, in his eye, appeared much more honourable and magnificent. It is not necessary to spend time in settling the precise difference between *believing with the heart*, and *confessing or professing with the mouth*. Thereby the whole of true religion, both in principle and practice, is denoted;—the root in the heart, and the fruit in the life: only, *professing with the mouth* may be particularly mentioned, because that gives a right to the present privileges of Christ's kingdom;—none but professed be-

13 ^r For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 ^r How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and ^r how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 ^r And how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, ' How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

lieders have right to a place and standing in the church of God. Nor need we be curious to inquire into the distinction between *righteousness* or justification, and *salvation*. The Apostle's design, it seems evidently, is to express all the blessings which God will bestow in this and the future world: that the one or the other of these comprehends the present blessings and privileges of the kingdom of God, none perhaps will question: and that the one or the other takes in the final and eternal salvation of the faithful saints of God will appear, if we consider that the 11th verse, *Whosoever believeth*, &c. certainly refers to final salvation, or the full accomplishment of Christian faith and hope. But this quotation in the 11th verse is intended to confirm at least one of the clauses in the foregoing verse, and therefore one of these clauses must refer to the final issue of faith in everlasting life to the persevering Christian. Faith is the grand principle of the Gospel; a professed faith intitles us to present privileges; and faith, as a principle in the heart, discerning, valuing, and improving the grace of God in the Redeemer, and enabling us to resist temptation, to be steadfast and unmoveable in adhering to truth and duty is that which constitutes the Christian, the life of sobriety, righteousness, and godliness, and such as, if persevered in (the power and blessing of God supposed) will carry us safe to eternal life. And as we are to be saved, not by mere power considered abstractedly, but in a moral way, nothing less than this *faith* can be appointed, or be effectual to our salvation.

Ver. 13. *Whosoever shall call, &c.*] *Believing in Christ, or God*, ver. 11. and *calling upon him*, ver. 12, 13, 14. are in effect the same thing, as *calling upon God* necessarily supposes faith in him; and he who duly believes in Christ, has such a sense of his dependence upon divine grace, that he looks unto and trusts in the power and goodness of his God alone for happiness; which is the true religion of the Gospel. Bishop Pearson argues at large from this verse, that if Christ be not here called *Jehovah*, the Apostle's argument is quite inconclusive. The reader cannot fail to observe and admire the fine climax in the next verse. See Benson, and Pearson on the Creed, p. 149.

Ver. 15. *How shall they preach, except they be sent?*] St. Paul

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, ° Lord, who hath believed * our † report ?

17 So then ° faith cometh by hearing, and

hearing by the word of God.

18 But I say, Have they not heard ? Yes, verily, ° their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

° Heb. 4. 2. Acts, 28. 24. John, 10. 26. Ch. 11. 7. ° If. 53. 1. John, 12. 38—40. * Gr. the bearing of us. † Or preaching.
 Luke, 16. 29. 1 Cor. 1. 21. Eph. 1. 13. Heb. 11. 13. Ver. 14. Ch. 1. 16, 17. ° Pf. 19. 4. Mat. 24. 14. & 26. 13. & 28. 19. Mark, 16. 15. Acts, 2. 5. Ch. 1. 8. & 15. 19. Col. 1. 6, 23.

Paul is careful every where to preserve the esteem of his brethren the Jews. May not therefore this, with the two foregoing verses, be understood as an apology to them for professing himself an Apostle of the Gentiles, as he does by the tenor of this epistle, and in the next chapter expressly? ver. 13. In this chapter (ver. 12.) he had shewn, that both Jews and Greeks, or Gentiles, were to be saved by receiving the Gospel of Christ; and if so, it was necessary that somebody should be sent to teach it to them; and therefore the Jews had no reason to be offended with any one sent on that employment. Feet are variously used in Scripture, and sometimes have respect to things internal and spiritual: for as the life of man and the practice of piety are compared to *walking*, Psalm i. 1.; so his *feet* may signify the principles upon which he acts, and the disposition of his mind, as Eccles. v. 1. *Keep thy foot, when thou goest to the house of God.* Agreeably to this, the feet of the messengers in Isaiah, and of the apostles in this verse, may signify the validity of their mission, the authority upon which they acted, and any character or qualifications with which they were invested. Bos observes that, in Sophocles, the *hands and feet* of those who came upon a kind design are represented as *beautiful* to such as receive benefit by their arrival. See Locke, and Isai. lii. 7.

Ver. 16. *But they have not all obeyed*] This seems an objection of the Jews to what St. Paul had said, which he answers in this and the following verse. The objection and answer may stand thus: “You tell us, that you are sent from God to preach the Gospel. If it be so, how comes it that all who have heard, have not received and obeyed; especially if, as you would insinuate, the messengers of good tidings were so welcome to them?” To this he answers, out of Isaiah, ‘That the messengers sent from God were not believed by all. And from those same words he draws an inference to confirm the argument he was upon, namely, “That salvation cometh by hearing and believing the word of God.” He had laid it down, ver. 8. that it was by their having *ἤκουσαν τὸν λόγον*, the word of faith, *high* them, or *present with them*, and not by the bodily presence of their Deliverer among them, that they were to be saved. This *word* he tells them, ver. 17. is by preaching brought to be actually present with them and the Gentiles; so that it was their own fault, if they believed it not to salvation. See Locke and Bos.

Ver. 18. *Their sound went into all the earth*] As the passages in the Gospels and Epistles relating to the extensive spreading of religion during the dispensation or reign of the Messiah, have a reference to the ancient prophecies, this may be the full and proper import of them;—that, as the Gospel is a scheme of instruction commensurate to all the wants and circumstances of all, both Jews and Gentiles, it seems to have been the grand object of the

grace and providence of God in this constitution, that a gradual conveyance of these salutary benefits should be vouchsafed in different ages and nations; so that, before the kingdom of the Messiah should terminate, effectual means should be used for the most extensive propagation of its light and truth: and that all knowledge of Christ is not confined within such narrow bounds as infidels imagine, will appear from the following observations: The Mohammedan, Turk, or Persian, acknowledges the miraculous birth of Christ; and the Jew, before he is permitted to embrace Mohammedanism, must profess his belief in Christ. The Mohammedan expects a second appearance of our Lord from heaven, and believes that all men will then unite in one religion. The opinion of other people in the Eastern world, who have long been considered as pagans only, may be known for certainty from their writings and religious ceremonies. Porphyry, a Grecian philosopher who wrote against Christianity, assures us, that the Indians believed that God created the world by his Son; and in their sacred book called *VEDAM*, whatever may be the practice of the Indians, nothing is to be found that encourages idolatry. We will now consider those opinions and practices of these people, which will shew that they are not entirely strangers to the history and doctrines of our Lord, though intermixed with pagan notions, and grossly corrupted. The Indians have applied to their god XACA, almost every circumstance in the life of Jesus. “He was born of a virgin, washed with the dew of heaven; the whole world shines with unusual splendour at his birth; the earth trembles; chosen hymns are sung; the infant is adored, and gifts are offered to him. He is presented in the temple, and worshipped. They who are inspired, foretel many miracles to be performed by him; and the most ancient prophet, taking him in his arms, embraces him with tenderness, speaks of the wonders that he is to perform, the divine truths that he is to unfold, and particularly what was to happen to him in the desert. From his mother’s womb he is endowed with the knowledge of all things, self-taught, astonishing the most learned. He is led into the wilderness, where he continues a long time praying and fasting.— Again he returns to the wilderness; the adversary of mankind is astonished at the greatness of his contemplation, and, surrounded by his infernal agents, assails him. XACA is victorious, and the evil-one with his followers leave him. After this, he chose disciples, gave them a new law, and provided the proper remedies against sin. Infinite and most marvellous were the works that he performed upon the minds of unbelievers, to convert them to his religion. His doctrine is preached to all nations, and, supported by miracles, is universally embraced.—The law being restored, he dies! the earth

19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First by ^e *them that are no people, and* by a foolish nation I will anger you. Moses saith, ^f *I will provoke you to jealousy*

^f Deut. 32. 21. with 4. 6. Acts, 22. 27, 22. 1 Thess. 2. 16. Ch. 11. 11. 22. 2. Titus, 3. 3. Ch. 1. 21—32.

^e Hosea, 1. 10. 1 Pet. 2. 10. Mat. 21. 43. Jer. 10. 8. 1 Cor.

“ shakes with dreadful concussions! a thick darkness obscures the sky! After the death of XACA, his disciples commit all the actions of their master to writing.”—If any difficulty arises in ascribing the actions of Christ to XACA, from the change of names only, we shall find that these eastern people are not absolutely strangers to the name of Christ and other persons recorded in the Gospel.—They speak of CHRIST, whom they expressly call KRISNU, as one whose conception was miraculous, born under the constellation of the *Virgin* in the *Agiodia*, or *Judea*, of whom it was foretold by *Aggr*, an angel, — “ He shall save his nation Judah, of the race of shepherds.” *Sridorob*, or *Herod*, feigning a desire to see the infant, commands the slaughter of the innocents. This KRISNU of the Indians performed many miracles exactly the same with those recorded of Jesus. The transfiguration upon mount Tabor is related in their histories, and John in particular is said to have been one of those who were present.—KRISNU, before his death, sups with his disciples, and they are washed: after this, near Gethsemané, a tumult arises; he is embraced by Judas, whom they call *Giudifira*, and he recommends the women to the care of *ARGIUN*, or *John*.—XACA (*Sefac*), *BISNU*, the Chinese *Fo*, and *KRIS*, or *KRISTNU*, is Christ; who is crucified in every mind; the first man; the first offspring; only Son; lawgiver; deliverer; *Saviour*! The many *crosses* erected by the Indians of Nepal, seem originally to have been in commemoration of the crucifixion of our Lord. These Indians of Nepal erect crucifixes, with nails through the hands and feet; and the grand lama celebrates a sacrifice with bread, and what he is permitted to drink, (wine being forbidden,) of which he takes a small portion himself, and distributes the rest to the *lamas* who assist at that ceremony. Hence it is evident, that these nations, though Persians, Indians, Tartars, and Chinese, have some knowledge of Christ, his history, doctrines, and institutions; and there Christianity has been more universal than many imagine. It is said that the patriarch of Mousul had under him one of the most numerous sees of the world; for he had under his jurisdiction all the north of Asia, the ancient churches of China, Ceylon, Malabar, and other Christian nations among the Indians, exclusive of the churches of Persia, Zocotora, Chaldaea, Syria, Arabia, and perhaps other provinces which are unknown. We have a more particular account by *Cosmas Indicopleustes*, an author who lived in the middle of the sixth century. “ The Christians,” says he, “ having been at first severely persecuted by Greeks and Jews, conquered and converted those who persecuted them; thus the church is not overthrown but multiplied; so that the whole earth is filled with the doctrine of the Lord Christ, and yet it increases; and the Gospel is preached throughout the world, which in many places, when present, I have seen, and, having learned, I therefore declare the truth. In the island of Taphrobane [Ceylon] in the interior India, surrounded by the Indian sea,

“ is a church of Christians. In like manner, in the country called *Male* [Malabar], and in *Kalliana* [Calecut], is a bishop, who is consecrated in Persia. Also in the island called *Dioscorides* [Zocotora] are clergy ordained in Persia, and sent from thence into this island. Also among the *Bactrians*, *Hunns*, *Persians*, and other *Indians*, *Persians*, *Armenians*, *Medes*, *Elamites*, throughout all the region of Persia are churches innumerable, and bishops, and many martyrs: likewise, in *Ethiopia*, in *Axomi*, and in all that country. Among the inhabitants of *Arabia-Felix*, now called the *Homeritæ*, throughout all *Arabia*, *Palestine*, *Phœnicia*, and all *Syria*, and *Antiochia*, to *Mesopotamia*, among the *Nobatæ* and *Garamantæ* in *Egypt*, *Lybia*, *Pentapolis*, *Africa*, and *Mauritania*, as far as *Gades* to the south, are Christian churches wherein the Gospel of Christ is preached: again also, in *Lilicia*, *Asia*, *Cappadocia*, *Lazica*, *Pontus*, and the northern parts of *Scythia*, among the *Hyranni*, *Heruli*, *Bulgarians*, *Helladici*, *Illyrians*, *Dalmatians*, *Goths*, *Spaniards*, *Romans*, *Franks*, and other nations, as far as *Gades* in the South-sea, all believing and preaching the Gospel of Christ. And thus we see the prophecies accomplished in the whole world!” Upon the whole, the amazing progress that Christianity made in the world, when first promulgated, is a very strong argument in its favour. It was not propagated, at its commencement, during its grand increase, and while in its glory, by the sword, nor by tumult; nor enforced by the arts of vain philosophy, or the enticing words of man’s wisdom: it derived all its force and evidence from the power of God exerted in the performing of miracles; from the veracity of God in accomplishing the ancient prophecies; from the Spirit of God; from the voice of reason and truth, the blameless lives and heroic martyrdom of its professors, its own superior excellence, and the suitableness of it to the exigencies of mankind. When we consider the number and characters of the Apostles,—how few! how unqualified by education for the conversion of the world! when we know that some few fishermen, and others of the lower class, undertook and succeeded in the establishing of a new religion in the world; we cannot deny them to have had the gift of tongues, and the power of working miracles. It is credulity unworthy of the most superstitious to believe, that such men as the apostles were, without those extraordinary powers which the Jews and Pagans, and more particularly such an artful impostor as *Simon Magus*, confessed them to have had, should be able, in a short time, to propagate Christianity throughout the world. What have other men of superior parts and education been able to perform without miracles or force? See *Raverette*, *Sharpe’s Discourse on Want of Universality*, *Matth. xxiv. 14. Acts, ii. 5. xiii. 47.*

Ver. 19. Did not Israel know? In this and the next verses, St. Paul seems to introduce the Jews as arguing, that they did not deserve to be cast off, because they did not know that the Gentiles were to be admitted; and so might

20 But Esaias is very bold, and faith, ^a I was made manifest unto them that asked not was found of them that sought me not; I after me.

^a II. 65. 1. & II. 10. & 42. 6, 7. & 49. 6, 22. & 60. 3. & 58. 15. & 55. 4, 5. Ch. 15. 19. & 9. 30.

might be excused if they did not embrace a religion where- in they were to mix with the Gentiles: to which he answers in this and the following verses; *First, Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy. Jealousy is an affection of the mind excited by another's being our rival, or sharing in those honours or enjoyments which we highly esteem, which we account our own property, and which we are greatly desirous of securing to ourselves. Thus the Jews moved God to jealousy, by giving to idols the honour and worship due to him alone, or by acting towards God in such a manner as usually creates jealousy in a man. For which reason it is predicted, Deut. xxxii. 21. that they should be repaid in their own coin, and be moved to jealousy:—How?—By transferring from them the honours and privileges in which they gloried, to those whom they despised;—to a lo-am, a no-people; that is, to the Gentiles. Lo-am, a no-people, or not a people, is the character of the heathen world, as not interested in the peculiar covenant of God. Therefore this text, as it lies in Deuteronomy, is full to the Apostle's purpose; and does not relate to their being conquered by heathen nations, but to their being stripped of boasted honours, and seeing them conferred upon those whom they contemned as the vilest people. How much the Jews were irritated at the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles is well known. See Matt. xxi. 43, &c. Acts, xxii. 21, 22. 1 Theff. ii. 15, 16.*

Inferences.—It is certain, that we ought not to infer from the two last chapters, that God is a despotic, arbitrary sovereign, whose mere will, without the most perfect coincidence of all his moral perfections, is the only rule of all his actions. The great God, though he be supreme and accountable to none, always governs himself by the eternal and unalterable rules of wisdom, equity, and goodness. His will is not *itself*, abstractedly considered, the standard and measure of the divine conduct; but there is an intrinsic necessary difference, in the nature of things, between just and unjust, beneficence and cruelty, which cannot be altered. Indeed, what God wills is always right and fit; always, upon the whole, fittest and best. But why? not *merely* because he wills it, but because he is necessarily wise, just, and good. For can any man imagine, that if he should will to deceive, to vex and torment his innocent creatures, and employ his infinite power only to make them miserable, (which is a very possible supposition, if his will alone, in this abstract sense, be the rule of his proceedings,) such a conduct would be *justifiable*? Nay,—for ever this must be maintained, as a necessary consequence from such principles, that it would be *better*, and more praiseworthy, than righteousness, truth, and mercy?

There cannot be a more dishonourable reflection on God, than to suppose that he acts without a reason, merely from humour, and arbitrary pleasure. It represents him as a tyrant, not as a wise and righteous governor. It renders him frightful to our contemplation, the object of

aversion and horror, and destroys all rational esteem and love of him, and confidence in him. All reasonable expectations of favour from him must sink and vanish at once: for who knows how such a capricious being, who is not determined by reason and justice, but makes his mere will his only law,—who can know in what manner he will act? What possible assurance can there be, that he will not resolve on the misery and ruin of his rational creatures at all events and without any reason? Nay, if he has *promised* the contrary, can we have any certainty that the same arbitrary will that made, will not also break the promise? Mere will and humour are fickle, uncertain, changeable things; but truth and goodness are steady principles, and a solid foundation for our trust and hope. We may add, that the representing of God in this manner, renders him infinitely more formidable than any earthly tyrants ever were or can be; even those who have been the greatest scourges and plagues of mankind; because he is possessed of almighty and uncontrollable power; and the thought of almighty power, that is not directed by wisdom and goodness, must fill the considerate mind with the utmost astonishment and terror. Shall we then give such a reproachful character of the most perfect, the most amiable of all Beings? Shall we picture the very best of Beings as the very worst? And represent *Him*, in whose unerring wisdom, strict impartial justice, and universal unchangeable goodness, the whole rational world have the highest reason to rejoice, as one whom every wise man must wish not to exist?

We may next consider to what cases the words of ch. ix. 20. may be properly applied: we hope it appears sufficiently from what has been said in the course of the foregoing notes, that the passages before us, which have been so confounded and darkened by many expositors, relate only to God's dealings with national and collective bodies of men; and not to his favour or displeasure towards particular persons, and determining absolutely, without any regard to their actions, their eternal state hereafter. The argument which St. Paul pursues is only this: "That God might dispense his extraordinary favours as he saw fit; and consequently eminently distinguish one nation, and pass by others, without the least injustice; and to censure such a way of proceeding, in the Proprietor and sovereign Disposer of all things, was arrogant and presumptuous." And hence we learn to what questions the words in ch. ix. 20. may be properly and justly applied; namely, to such as these:—Why God vouchsafes a revelation of his will to some nations and not to others? Why, for example, he has not made the Christian revelation universal?—Why does he permit moral and natural evil?—Why has he not made all creatures of the highest order, and communicated to all equal degrees of perfection and happiness?—Nothing of this can be shewn to be contrary to justice, because they are all favours, which his creatures have no right to *claim*. And therefore in these, and all other cases of a like nature, it is very pertinent

21 But to Israel be faith, ¹ All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

¹ Il. 65. 2. Prov. 1. 24. 1 Theff. 2. 14, 15. Heb. 2. 3. & 10. 26—31. Acts, 13. 45, 46. Ch. 11. 7, 8, 20.

inent to say to an objector, *Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?*

Hence then we learn, 1st, How necessary it is that we consider the *uses* to which passages of Scripture are applied, —without arguing *generally* from what is only adapted to a *particular* case. This is one reason why texts are so perverted, and strained to such absurd and unnatural senses, as are not only contrary to their true design, and the general scope and tenor of the revelation, but strike at the foundation of all religion.

2dly, Let us cultivate in our minds the highest reverence of God, especially the most honourable apprehensions of his moral character; and being persuaded that all his counsels are the result of infinite wisdom, and that his will is ever determined by the highest reason, let us humbly acquiesce in all the methods of his grace and providence. Survey the works of God, the exquisite beauty and harmony of the whole, the admirable connection and subserviency of the several parts; nay, survey thy own frame, —the curious and astonishing structure of thy body, —the noble faculties and capacities of thy mind; —and, from the surprising marks of wisdom and goodness, which thou canst not distinctly perceive, in thine own make, and in the whole constitution of things, draw the just and natural inference: that the great Author and Governor of the universe is possessed of these perfections, in the most absolute and complete manner; and consequently, that all things are contrived and ordered with the same wise and benevolent view; though in particulars it does not appear *equally*, and in some, perhaps, *not at all*, to thy limited understanding.

The improving constantly in our minds worthy notions of God, as a Being supremely wise, and immutably just and good, will be attended with very great advantages. It will restrain that impertinent humour of scepticism and cavilling, which makes men oppose their ignorance and prejudices to his infinite wisdom: we shall always consider the great God as the most amiable and delightful object of our contemplation; neither as a weak, capricious being, whom we cannot *revere*; nor as a rigid, tyrannical being, whom we cannot *love*. In short, our religion, built on the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, and embracing and coinciding with the whole round of his divine perfections, will be wise and rational, just and good, and holy; and there can be no foundation for any of those superstitious mixtures which expose the most excellent, most good and most useful thing in the universe, to the contempt and ridicule of the infidel and profane.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Apostle here,

1. Expresses his fervent desire for the salvation of his countrymen. *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.* Notwithstanding what he was, in the discharge of his office, compelled to say concerning the general rejection of the Jews, he was yet affectionately desirous of their salvation, and ceaseless

in supplications at a throne of grace that they might yet be convinced and converted, and thereby plucked as brands from the burning. *Note:* (1.) Those we preach to, we must fervently pray for, that God may give them repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth. (2.) They who know the value of immortal souls, will feel their eternal interests warm upon their hearts.

2. He speaks most respectfully of them, *For I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, a fixed aversion to idolatry, a strong attachment to his law and divinely instituted ordinances, and in their persecutions of Christianity really think they do God service: but they are misguided, and do not act according to knowledge; they understand not the nature and design of the law, and have imbibed the strongest prejudices against the true Messiah, and the way of salvation which he has brought to light by the Gospel. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, resting their acceptance before God on the footing of their own moral and ceremonial services, have not submitted to the righteousness of God, which he has provided and accepted in his dear Son, and which, embraced by faith, is, and can be, the only ground of the sinner's justification before God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* He alone immaculately fulfilled the moral law, and in his life and death fully satisfied the demands of divine justice; and he hath abolished the ceremonial law, being himself the substance of which that was the shadow. He alone therefore, being embraced by faith, can justify the sinner before God. *Note:* Nothing is more fatally dangerous to the soul, than ignorance of the spirituality of God's law, and of our own inability to answer its demands.

2dly, There are two methods of justification.

1. By the law; and that justification is thus described by Moses, *The man that doeth these things, all that is written in the book of the law, perfectly, universally, abidingly, without failure, flaw, or infirmity, shall live by them, and be entitled to life eternal.* But no fallen creature ever did, or ever can do this; therefore justification and salvation are not this way attainable.

2. By the Redeemer's substitution in our stead, accompanied with faith in him. The law of works, in our present condition, only preaches despair; *but the righteousness which is of faith, which God has provided and accepted, and faith embraces, speaketh on this wise, to the conscience burdened with sin and guilt; Say not in thine heart, as if despairing of justification before God, Who shall ascend into heaven, that is, to bring Christ down from above to make atonement for sin: it is needless, seeing that by one oblation, once offered, he has completed the great atonement. Or who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.* This is already done, and God, by the resurrection of Jesus, has testified the full satisfaction which has been made to his law and justice; so that the bar to our acceptance before God is now removed. Instead, therefore, of the impossibilities which guilty fear and unbelief

CHAP. XI.

God hath not cast off all Israel. The Gentiles may not insult over them. God's judgments are unsearchable.

[Anno Domini 58.]

I SAY then, ^a Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. ^b For I also am an

Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

² God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Know ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

^a 1 Sam. 12. 22. Ps. 94. 14. Jer. 31. 37. with Gen. 17. 7. Deut. 32. 9. Ch. 8. 28-30. & 9. 6, 8, 23. John, 10. 14, 28, 29. Acts, 13. 48.

^b 2 Cor. 11. 22. Phil. 3. 5. Ch. 9. 3. Acts, 22. 3. & 26. 3.

belief would suggest, the Gospel opens a door of hope to the miserable and the desperate. *But what saith it? Why, all that we can wish and desire, to silence our terrors, and revive our drooping hearts. The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; brought near in the Gospel revelation, acknowledged, and made effectual by the Spirit to the believing heart; that is the word of faith which we preach, holding up Christ as the glorious object, whom faith embraces: the tenor of our declarations, as authorized of God to speak, is this, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, as the true Messiah, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* No works of the law, nor other title whatever, is needful to justification, but this; and all who, renouncing themselves, repose their whole confidence upon Jesus, as delivered for their offences, and raised for their justification, are built on the only true foundation. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; faith is not a mere notion entertained in the head, but the cordial submission of the heart; and with the mouth confession is made of our faith before God and men unto salvation, there being an inseparable connection between true faith and real internal salvation; for the Scripture saith, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed; whatever his condition has been, he will not now be ashamed of Christ; and however great his guilt has been, no condemnation now lies against him. Lord, in this faith may I be found, living and dying!*

And, Under the Gospel dispensation, mankind are in some sense on a level, without respect to any people or nation. *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; both have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; both must be saved freely by grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ, or perish everlastingly: for the same Redeemer, who is Lord over all, is rich in grace, and boundless in mercy unto all that call upon him, as perishing and helpless without him. For, so it was foretold, Joel ii. 32. Whosoever (without exception) shall call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, depending faithfully upon his atonement, shall be saved, from guilt and sin. But if the Gentiles are included in the dispensation of the Gospel, then,*

1. It was needful that the Gospel should be preached to them; and St. Paul's brethren had no just ground for their enmity against him, because he was appointed the Apostle of the Gentiles. *For how then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? Faith is essential to the very being of prayer, and without it the service of the lip and the knee is vain and unprofitable; and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? They must hear of*

Jesus in his saving offices, before they can possibly trust in him: *and how shall they hear without a preacher, to make known to them the revelation of God's will? and how shall they preach, except they be sent with a divine commission? Note; Before any presume to preach, let it be clear that they have a mission from God. To run unsent is insolent presumption.*

2. The Gospel contains the best news that ever reached mortal ears, and should be matter of joy wherever it is carried; *as it is written (Mai. lii. 7.), How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!* Which prophesy terminated not in the joyful messages of Israel's deliverance from Babylon, but looked forward to the great redemption of Jesus, and that Gospel which his ministers should publish, *a Gospel of peace, where God was, in Christ, reconciling sinners to himself, and proclaiming the glad news of pardon and salvation to guilty and perishing souls; and they who feel the comfort of the message, cannot but, for its sake, delight in and honour the messengers.*

3. Though the Gospel in itself contained such a welcome message, yet in general both among Jews and Gentiles, it has been rejected. *But they have not all obeyed the Gospel, and yielded themselves up to the Saviour. No; contrariwise, the generality of those to whom it is preached harden their hearts. For Esaias saith, foreseeing the little comparative success which the ministers of Christ should meet with, Who hath believed our report? How few are found faithful among the many called? Yet the Gospel report is the favour of life unto life in them who are saved. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, this being the ordinary means, and made effectual by the Spirit's power, that arm of the Lord which reveals Christ to the hearts of all that will believe.*

4. *But I say, have they not heard, both Jews and Gentiles, the Gospel word? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. And this extensive spread of the Gospel, by those preachers whom God sent forth, however the multitude rejected the counsel of God, was a token of his good will to the Gentiles.*

5. *But I say, did not Israel know that God designed to shew mercy to the Gentiles? Had they attended to their own prophets, they would have seen how groundless their imaginations were, that the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom should be confined to them, and the Gentiles excluded. For first Moses saith, for whom they profess peculiar veneration, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. The Gentiles were long excluded from the peculiar privileges.*

3 ⁴ Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and they seek my life.
 digged down thine ^c altars; and I am left alone, 4 But what saith the answer of God unto

⁴ 1 Kings, 19. 20, 24. & 18. 4, 30.

^c Judges, 6. 24. & 21. 4. 1 Sam. 7. 17. & 11. 25. & 16. 2, 5. 2 Sam. 24. 18, 25. Exod. 20. 24. Deut.

27. 6.

of God's people, and, amidst all their wisdom, were in general entirely ignorant of spiritual things: to have them therefore now brought into the peculiar kingdom of the Messiah, should have provoked a holy emulation in the Jewish nation; but it wrought a contrary effect, exciting the greatest bitterness and enmity against the converted Gentiles. He produces another Scripture, strongly proving the divine determination with regard to the calling of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews. Moses had intimated it, *but Isaiah is very bold*, and, with great plainness and freedom, foretels to his countrymen this mortifying event, *and saith, I was found of them that sought me not, I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me*, preventing the Gentiles with the blessings of his goodness, and the calls of his grace, when they were in general without one thought of the true God, worshipping their idols. *But to Israel he saith, now to be rejected for their impenitence and obstinacy, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people*; his patience therefore being wearied out, especially by their opposition to the Gospel, he abandons them to ruin. *Note*; (1.) If God had not first sought us, we should never have inquired after him. (2.) When the Lord has waited long to be gracious, and used the most powerful means to work upon the sinner's heart,—if he still rejects the counsel of God against his own soul, justly does God decree, "My Spirit shall not always strive," and leaves him to the destruction which he has chosen.

CHAP. XI.

OUR Lord having declared to the chief priests and elders of the Jews, that the kingdom of God was to be taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles, Matt. xxi. 43. also having foretold to the same persons the burning of Jerusalem, Matt. xxii. 7. and to his disciples the demolition of the temple, and the dispersion of the nation, on account of their unbelief, Luke, xxi. 24. we cannot think that the Christian preachers would conceal these things from their unbelieving brethren. Stephen seems to have spoken of them, Acts, v. 13. and St. Paul often. For the objection which he puts in the mouth of a Jew, Rom. iii. 3. *Will not their unbelief destroy the faithfulness of God?* is founded on his having affirmed that the nation was to be cast off, and driven out of Canaan. Farther, the same Apostle, in chap. ix. of this epistle, has shewn, that without injustice God might take away from the Jews privileges which he had conferred on them gratuitously; and even punish them by expelling them from Canaan for their disobedience. Wherefore that the foreknowledge of the evils which were coming on their brethren, might not affect the Jewish Christians too much, the Apostle, in this chapter, comforted them, by assuring them that the rejection of the nation was not to be *total*, ver. 1—10.—Neither is it to be *final*, but for a limited time only, to make way for the entering of the Gentiles into the church, by whose reception the Jews at last will be provoked to

emulate them, and will receive the Gospel; ver. 11—18. —On this occasion the Apostle exhorted the Gentiles, now become the visible church of God, not to speak with contempt of the Jews who were rejected, because if they themselves became disobedient to God, they should in like manner be cast off; ver. 17—24.—Then, for the consolation of the Jewish converts, he assured them that, after the fulness of the Gentiles is come into the church, the whole nation will be converted to the Christian faith, as was predicted by Isaiah; ver. 25—27.

The great events in the divine dispensations displayed in this chapter; namely, the rejection and dispersion of the Jewish nation, the abrogation of the law of Moses, the general conversion of the Gentiles, and the future conversion and restoration of the Jews, St. Paul was anxious to place in a proper light; because the Jews, believing that no person could be saved out of their church, interpreted the prophecies concerning the calling of the Gentiles, of their conversion to Judaism. What impression his declarations concerning these events made on the unbelieving Jews of his own time, is not known. This only is certain, that in a few years after the Epistle to the Romans was written, the Apostle's prediction concerning the rejection of the Jews, and the destruction of their religious and political constitution, received a signal accomplishment. Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, the temple was thrown down to the foundation, and such of the Jews as survived the war were sold into foreign countries for slaves. The Levitical worship, by this means, being rendered impracticable, and the union of the Jews as a nation being dissolved, God declared, in a visible manner, that he cast off the Jews from being his peculiar people, and that he had put an end to the law of Moses, and to the Jewish peculiarity. Wherefore, after the pride of the Jews was thus humbled, and their power to persecute the Christians was broken, any opposition which, in their dispersed state, they could make to the Gospel was of little avail; and any attempts of the judaizing teachers to corrupt its doctrines, on the old pretence of the universal and perpetual obligation of the law of Moses, must have appeared ridiculous. And this is what the Apostle meant, when he told the Romans, chap. xvi. 20. *That the God of peace would bruise Satan under their feet shortly*.—Farther, in regard that the Apostle's predictions concerning the rejection of the Jews have long ago been accomplished, we have good reason to believe that the other events foretold by him will be accomplished likewise in their season; namely, the general coming of the Gentiles into the Christian church, and the conversion of the Jews in a body to the Christian faith, and their restoration to the privileges of the people of God.

His discourse on these important subjects the Apostle concluded with remarking, that Jews and Gentiles, in their turn, having been disobedient to God, he has looked them all up as condemned criminals, that he might in one and the same manner have mercy on all, by bestowing on them, from mere favour, the blessings promised in the covenant with

him? 'I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.

5 * Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

† 1 Kings, 19. 18. with Jer. 2. 8. & 11. 13. & 19. 5. & 23. 27. & 32. 35. Hosea, 2. 8. Zeph. 1. 4. * Ch. 9. 27. Acts, 13. 48. Ver. 6, 7.

with Abraham, ver. 30—32. And being deeply affected with the survey which he had taken of God's dealings with mankind, he cried out, as ravished with the grandeur of the view, *O the riches, both of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* ver. 33, 34, 35.—Then he ascribed to God, the glory of having created the universe, and of preserving and governing it, so as to make all things issue in the accomplishment of those benevolent purposes, which his wisdom had planned from the beginning, for making all his believing creatures happy, ver. 36.

In this sublime manner has the Apostle finished his discourse concerning the dispensations of religion which have taken place in the different ages of the world. And, from his account, it appears, that these dispensations were adapted to the then circumstances of mankind; that they are parts of a grand design, formed by God, for delivering all that will believe of the human race from the evil consequences of sin, and for exalting the faithful to the highest perfection of which their nature is capable: and that both in its progress, and its accomplishment, the scheme of man's salvation contributes to the establishment of God's moral government, and to the displaying of his perfections in all their lustre to the whole intelligent creation. This grand scheme, therefore, being highly worthy of God its author, the Epistle to the Romans, in which it is so beautifully displayed in its several parts, is certainly one of the most useful books of Scripture, and merits to be read with attention, not by Christians only, but by unbelievers, if they wish to know the real doctrines of revelation, and what the inspired writers themselves have advanced, for shewing the propriety of the plan of our redemption, and for confuting the objections which have been raised, either against revelation in general, or any part thereof in particular.

Ver. 1, &c. [*I say then, &c.*] This chapter is of the prophetic kind. It was by the spirit of prophecy that the Apostle foresaw the rejection of the Jews, which he supposes in the two foregoing chapters; for when he wrote this Epistle, they were not in fact rejected, seeing that their church and polity were then standing: but the event has proved that he was a true prophet; for we know that in about ten or eleven years after the writing of this letter, the temple was destroyed; the Jewish polity overthrown; and the Jews expelled the promised land, which they have never been able to recover to this day. This, *first*, confirms the arguments which the Apostle has advanced to establish the calling of the Gentiles; for the Jews are in fact rejected; consequently our calling is in fact not invalidated by any thing which they have suggested, relating to the perpetuity of the Mosaical dispensation; but that dispensation being wholly subverted, our title to the privileges of God's church and people stands clear and strong. The Jewish constitution alone could furnish objections against

our claim; and the event has silenced every objection from that quarter. *Secondly*, The actual rejection of the Jews proves St. Paul to be a true Apostle of Jesus Christ, who spake by the Spirit of God; otherwise, he could not have argued so fully upon a case which was yet to come, and of which there was no appearance in the state of things, when he wrote this Epistle. This should dispose us to pay great regard to the present chapter, in which he discourses concerning the extent and duration of the rejection of his countrymen, to prevent their being insulted and despised by the Gentile Christians. *First*, As to the extent of this rejection: it is not absolutely universal; some of the Jews have embraced the Gospel, and are incorporated into the church of God with the believing Gentiles. Upon the case of those believing Jews he comments, ver. 1—7. *Secondly*, As to the duration of it; it is not final and perpetual; for all Israel, or the nation of the Jews, who are now blinded, shall one day be saved, or brought again into the peculiar kingdom and covenant of God. Upon the state of those blinded Jews he comments, ver. 7. to the end of the chapter. His design in discoursing upon this subject was not only to make the thing itself known, but partly to engage the attention of the unbelieving Jew; to conciliate his favour; and, if possible, to induce him to come into the Gospel scheme; and partly to dispose the Gentile Christians not to treat the Jews with contempt; (considering that they derived all their present blessings from the patriarchs, the ancestors of the Jewish nation, and were ingrafted into the good olive-tree, whence they were broken) and to admonish them to take warning by the fall of the Jews, that they improved their religious privileges, lest through unbelief any of them should relapse into heathenism, or perish finally at the last day. The thread of his discourse leads him into a general survey and comparison of the several dispensations of God towards the Gentiles and Jews; which he concludes with adoration of the depths of the divine knowledge and wisdom, exercised in the various constitutions erected in the world: ver. 30, &c.

This first verse is a question in the person of a Jew, who made the objections in the foregoing chapter, and continues to object here. The word *Ἀπόστατο*, rendered *cast away*, is very strong and emphatical. "Hath God absolutely, universally, and for ever thrust his people away from him?" See Acts, vii. 27. 31., xiii. 46., 1 Tim. i. 19. Instead of *Wot*,—*Wot ye not*,—and *maketh intercession*; some read, *Know ye not*—*maketh complaint*.

Ver. 3. *Digged down thine altars*] It hence seems, that though, according to the law there was only *one altar* for sacrifice, and that in the place where God had fixed his peculiar residence; yet, by some special dispensation, pious persons in the ten tribes built altars elsewhere. It is well known, at least, that Samuel and Elijah had done it; and perhaps they were either kept up, or others raised on the same spots of ground. *Baal*, or *Baalim*, (see ver. 4.) was a general

6 ^h And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

7 What then? ⁱ Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but ^k the election hath obtained it, ^l and the rest were ^m blinded

8 (According as it is written, ⁿ God hath given them the spirit of ^{*} slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear,) unto this day.

9 And David saith, ^o Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompense unto them:

10 ^p Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

11 I say then, ^q Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but *rather* through their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

12 Now ^r if the fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the [†] diminishing of them

^h Deut. 9. 4. Gal. 5. 2. 4. & 2. 21. Ch. 4. 4, 5. Eph. 2. 4—9. Titus, 3. 5. Ch. 3. 27, 28. ⁱ Ch. 9. 31, 32. & 10. 3. ^k Ch. 8. 28—30, 33. & 9. 23. Acts, 13. 48. 2 Tim. 2. 19. John, 10. 27, 28. ^l John, 12. 40. 2 Cor. 3. 14. & 4. 3, 4. Deut. 29. 4. Acts, 28. 27. Ch. 9. 31. & 10. 3. ^m Or *hardened*. Ch. 9. 18. ⁿ If. 29. 10. & 6. 9. & 41. 18. Ch. 1. 24. 2 Thess. 2. 11. Deut. 29. 4. Jer. 5. 21. Ezek. 12. 2. Mat. 13. 14. Acts, 28. 26, 27. ^o Or *remorse*. ^p If. 69. 22. & 28. 4. Prov. 1. 32. Deut. 32. 13—15. If. 8. 14, 15. & 66. 3, 4. 1 Pet. 2. 8. ^q Pf. 69. 23. Ver. 8. John, 12. 38—40. 2 Cor. 3. 14. Deut. 28. 64—68. ^r Ezek. 18. 23, 32. & 33. 11. [†] Acts, 13. 42, 45, 46. & 18. 6. & 28. 25, 28. Ch. 10. 19. Ver. 31. [†] Or *decay, or loss*.

a general name, whereby the false gods and idols were denoted in Scripture. See Judges, xi. 11—13., Hosea, xi. 2. Locke and Doddridge.

Ver. 6. *And if by grace*] Here the Apostle has his eye upon the remnant of the Jews who had embraced the Gospel, mentioned in the foregoing verse; and he throws in this verse to shew them, that their standing in the Christian church had no relation to or dependence upon their past or present observance of the law of Moses. Their standing in the church and covenant of God was according to the election of grace; grace, received by faith, was the only ground upon which they stood, and had a title to the privileges of God's people. The election of grace is not a particular act of sovereign grace, which singled out some few of the Jews, who deserved to have been cast off as well as the rest; but it is that general scheme of grace, according to which God purposed to take into his church and kingdom any, among either Jews or Gentiles, who believed in Christ; and the remnant of the Jews were taken in, not because God singled them out from the rest of their countrymen, by such a special act of favour as might have taken in all the Jews, had he so pleased; but because they believed, and so came into the scheme of election which God had appointed: out of which election they, as well as others, would have been excluded, had they, like the rest, remained in unbelief, and into which election all the Jews, to a man, notwithstanding they were all sinners, would have been taken, had they all believed in Christ. This, and the preceding verse, may be paraphrased thus: "So it is at this very time: "there is a remnant of the Jews, a considerable number, who have accepted of the grace of the Gospel, "and are the people of God, after the only true way of "choosing his people, which is by grace; and here, by "the way, (ver. 6.) let me put this remnant of the Jews, "who have embraced the Gospel, in mind, that if their "standing in the church is of grace and favour, it is "wholly so, and in no part or respect dependent upon "their observance of the law of Moses; for if it were, "grace would lose its proper nature and cease to be "what it is; a free undeserved gift. On the other hand,

"were it true that they are invested in the privileges of "the kingdom of Christ by the observance of the law of "Moses, then grace would be quite set aside; for if it "were not, work, or the merit of obedience, would lose "its proper nature, which excludes favour and free gift." See Locke and Doddridge.

Ver. 7. *That which he seeketh for*] Namely, that righteousness, whereby he was to continue the people of God. See ch. ix. 31. It may be observed, that St. Paul's discourse being concerning the national privilege of continuing the people of God, he speaks here, and all along, of the Jews in the collective term *Israel*; and so likewise he calls by the name of *election* the remnant, which would remain his people, and incorporate with the converted Gentiles into one body of Christians; owning the dominion of the one true God in the kingdom that he had set up under his Son, and owned by God for his people. See the preceding note. How the rest were blinded, see 2 Cor. iii. 13, &c.

Ver. 8—10. *According as it is written*] We need not suppose that the Apostle quotes these passages of Scripture as if they predicted the blindness and obduracy of the Jews in his time. It is sufficient for his purpose, if the case of wicked Jews in former ages shews the true reason of the infidelity, obstinacy, and wretchedness of the Jews who rejected the Gospel: for that is the point in view; not to prove that the infidel Jews were blinded,—which was but too evident from their bitter opposition to the Gospel, and so wanted no proof; but to shew them the malignant cause and direful effects of their unbelief.

Ver. 11, 12. *Have they stumbled—?* &c.] The English reader may imagine that as the same word *fall* is used in the translation, so it is in the same word in the Greek. But *their fall*, and *the fall of them*, is *παραπτώματα*, the same word which we render *offence*, ch. v. 15, 17, 18. whereas *that they should fall*, is *ἵνα πτωσῶσι*. Now *πτωσῶσι*, to fall, is used sometimes in a sense so very emphatical as to signify being *slain*; and it is in this sense that St. Paul uses it here; when he says, *that they should fall*, he means a fall quite destructive and ruinous: whereas by *their fall*, and *the fall of them*, he means no more than such a lapse as was recoverable; as in the case of Adam's offence.

Through

the riches of the Gentiles, 'how much more their fulness?

13 For I speak to you Gentiles, 'inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office :

14 'If by any means I may provoke to

emulation *them which are my flesh*, and might save some of them.

15 For 'if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving of *them be*, but 'life from the dead?

16 'For if the first-fruit *be* holy, the lump

¹ Ver. 15. 31. Rev. 11. 15—19. & xix—xxii. If. lx—lxiii. lxx. lxxvi. Jer. xxx. xxxi. xxxlii. Ezek. xxxiv—xlvi. Zech. 2. 11. & 8. 20—21. & ix—xiv. ² Ch. 15. 16, 19. Gal. 2. 2, 7, 8. 1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Tim. 2. 11. Acts, 9. 13. & 13. 2. & 22. 21. & 26. 17. ³ Ch. 9. 1—3. & 10. 1. 1 Cor. 9. 21. 1 Tim. 4. 16. James, 5. 20. Ver. 5, 11. 1 Cor. 7. 16. ⁴ Ver. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. Eph. 1. 10. Col. 1. 20, 21. ⁵ Dan. 12. 1. Ezek. xxxvii. Rev. 11. 11. & 20. 4—6. ⁶ Lev. 23. 10, 11. Numb. 15. 17. with Gen. 17. 7. 1 Cor. 7. 14. Ver. 11, 18.

Through their fall, must imply only, "Through that which occasioned their fall:" for it should be well observed, that the fall of the Jews was not in itself the cause or reason of the calling of the Gentiles, or of their obtaining salvation: for, whether the Jews had stood or fallen, whether they had embraced or rejected the Gospel, it was the original purpose of God to take the Gentiles into the church; and that purpose, which he purposed when he made the covenant with Abraham, was the reason why the Gentiles were taken into the church,—and not the fall of the Jews. Nor, for the same reason, was their fall the necessary means of salvation to the Gentiles; for the unbelief of the Jews could be no cause of the faith of the Gentiles. Therefore their fall must not be here understood simply, but under its proper circumstances, or in connection with its cause; or as connecting the dispensation which occasioned it. The extensiveness of the divine grace, which threw down the boundaries of their peculiarity, occasioned their fall; and thus through their fall salvation came to the Gentiles; or that which made them fall, brought salvation to us. Their fall is put for the cause of their fall, by a metonymy of the effect; nor is this mode of speech objectionable, any more than that, 1 Cor. xi. 10. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head, because of the angels; where power is put for a veil, the token of man's superiority, and the woman's subjection. And to the glory of God, Rom. iii. 23. is put for that whereby God is glorified; and the enmity, Ephes. ii. 15. is put for the cause of their enmity. Though the same word is used here and ver. 14. that is used ch. x. 19. which is there well enough rendered *provoked to jealousy*; yet in this place it is improperly translated in that manner: for it is to be understood here, in the good and laudable sense; namely, being excited to emulate the good and virtuous; and therefore should be rendered, *to excite them to emulation*. The extensiveness of the divine grace occasioned the fall of the Jews; which extensive grace brought salvation to the Gentiles. And the Jews seeing the Gentiles enriched with the honours of God's people, appearing illustriously in the gifts of the Spirit conferred upon them, ought to have been thereby convinced of their mistake, and excited by repentance and faith to have recovered the degree of dignity whence they were fallen. Thus the Jews were so far from being fallen beyond a possibility of recovering themselves through grace, that their fall was so circumstanced, as to afford them a motive to be zealous in attempting to gain what they saw they had lost. See Locke. Ver. 13, 14. For I speak, &c.] Some read these verses in a parenthesis, thus: (I say to you, Gentiles, so far as I am Vol. II.

the Apostle of the Gentiles, I am used to honour my ministry, ver. 14. That I may by any means excite to emulation *them who are of my flesh*, and may save some of them:). Magnify, unless when applied to the Most High, who never can be too highly exalted, in our language carries in it the idea of stretching beyond the bounds of truth, or making a thing seem greater than it really is. The word is δόξαζω, I glorify,—honour: so we render it, 1 Cor. xii. 26. and so it should be translated here;—I honour my ministry: for the word δεικνύω, in the like case, is always rendered *ministry*. See Acts, xxi. 19., 1 Tim. i. 12, &c. St. Paul *honoured his ministry*, by speaking magnificently of the state of the Gentiles, whom he had converted to the faith, in comparison of the poor and low condition to which the unbelieving Jews were reduced. His sense will appear, if in reading, ver. 12, 13. we lay the emphasis upon the RICHES of the world,—the RICHES of the Gentiles. St. Peter sets the honours of the believing Gentiles, and the degraded state of the infidel Jews, in a still more striking contrast, 1 Pet. ii. 8, 9. They stumbled at the word, and are fallen; but ye are raised to the honour of being a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people. Ver. 14. If by any means, &c.] The Apostle has generally very extensive and complicated views in writing; and it seems very evident, that he had not only intended to excite the Jews to emulation by turning their thoughts to the consideration of the privileges they had lost, but also that it was his aim to insinuate himself, and the Gospel he preached, into the good opinion of the Jews: for he cautions the Gentile against insulting the Jew; labours to give him an honourable opinion of the Jew; and so explains the case of the Jew's present rejection, and future reception, as to dispose him to think favourably of the Gospel dispensation; which allowed him the opportunity of recovering himself through divine grace immediately, would he immediately repent and believe; and which concurred with the prophets in asserting, that one day the whole nation would be gloriously restored. The Apostle's affirming and arguing upon this event with so much assurance and pleasure, had a natural tendency to soften the Jew, and incline him to think. Ver. 15. The reconciling of the world.] See ch. v. 11. But life from the dead, means "to the world; to us Gentile Christians; the world, reconciled and enriched by the casting off of the Jews." When we were at first reconciled by being converted to the power of Christianity, we were raised from the dead to a new life, ch. vi. 13. and the approaching glorious dispensation which the Apostle here speaks of, will again be to us as life from the dead.

is also *holy*: and if the root *be* holy, so *are* the branches.

17 And ^b if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive-tree;

18 ^c Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, ^d thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

19 Thou wilt say then, ^e The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

20 Well; ^f because of unbelief they were

broken off, and thou ^g standest by faith. ^h Be not high-minded, but fear:

21 For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee.

22 Behold therefore ⁱ the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou ^k continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

23 And they also, if they abide not in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.

^b Jer. 11. 16. Mat. 21. 43. & 8. 11, 12. Eph. 2. 12—20. Acts, 13. 45, 46. Ver. 11, 15. John, 1. 16. Acts, 2. 39. Eph. 3. 6. ^c Ver. 20. ^d 1 Cor. 4. 7. & 10. 12. ^e John, 10. 16. Ch. 4. 16. Eph. 2. 19, 20. & 3. 6. ^f Ver. 11, 12, 15, 17. ^g Acts, 13. 45, 46. & 18. 6. ^h 2 Chron. 20. 20. 11. 7. 9. Rom. 5. 1, 2. & 14. 4. 1 Cor. 15. 1. 1 Pet. 5. 12. 2 Cor. 1. 24. Eph. 6. 13, 14. ⁱ Jer. 11. 15. Prov. 28. 14. ^j If. 66. 2. Ch. 12. 16. Phil. 2. 12. James, 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5. 1 Cor. 10. 6, 11, 22. ^k Ch. 9. 18, 22, 23. Mat. 8. 11, 12. & 21. 43. ^l John, 15. 2, 4. 1 Cor. 15. 2. Heb. 3. 6, 14. Gal. 6. 9, 9. 2 Cor. 3. 15. Ver. 11, 12, 15, 24, 26, 31. Pl. 68. 22. If. 11. 11—16. & 24. 23. & 27. 12, 13. & 49. 14—26. & 51. 22. & 1v. lv. lx—lxiii. lxv. lxvi. Jer. iii. xxx. xxxi. & 32. 37—44. & xxxiii. Ezek. xxxiv. xxxvi—xlvi. Hosea, 3. 5. & 1. 10, 11. & 2. 14—23. Joel, 3. 16—21. Micah, iv. v. Amos, 9. 11—15. Zeph. iii. Zech. ii. viii—xiv.

By which we may understand, that the future glory of the church, when this great event of the restoration of the Jews shall take place, will be so much more glorious than its present state, as to appear to the people of God like a life from the dead. Numberless prophecies of the Old Testament evidently refer to this event; and the wonderful preservation of the Jews, as a distinct people, not only leaves a possibility, but encourages our strong hope of it. When it shall be accomplished, it will be so unparalleled, as necessarily to excite a general attention, and to fix upon men's minds such an almost irresistible demonstration both of the Old and New Testament revelation, as will probably captivate the minds of many thousands of deists, in countries professedly Christian; of whom, under such corrupt establishments as generally prevail, there will of course be increasing multitudes. Nor will this only captivate their understanding, but will have the greatest tendency through grace to awaken a sense of true religion in their hearts; and this will be a means of propagating the Gospel with an amazing velocity in pagan and Mahometan countries; which, probably, had been evangelized long ago, had genuine Christianity prevailed in those who have made a profession, and God knows, for the most part, a very scandalous profession of its forms. See Doddridge, Hartley's Observations, vol. ii. p. 373. and Lardner's Discourses on "The Circumstances of the Jewish People, an Argument for the Truth of the Christian Religion."

Ver. 16. *For if the first-fruit be holy, &c.*] *Now if, &c.* The Apostle makes use of these allusions to shew that the patriarchs, the root of the Jewish nation, being accepted by God, and the few Jewish converts who at first entered into the Christian church, being also accepted of God, are as it were *first-fruits*, or pledges, that God will in due time admit the whole nation of the Jews into his visible church, to be together with the Gentile Christians his peculiar people again. By *holy* here is meant that relative holiness, whereby any thing has an appropriation to God. See Locke. Instead of *lump*, Dr. Heylin reads, *the whole product*.

Ver. 17. *Thou, being a wild olive-tree, &c.*] This is another way of expressing the justification and election of us Gentiles; and it is also an incontestable proof, that we Gentile Christians are taken into the Abrahamic covenant, (for the Sinai covenant is abolished) as truly and fully as ever the nation of the Jews were. Consequently, any argument relating to our church privileges, taken from the nature of the Abrahamic covenant, must be just and valid; for we are grafted into the church, which sprung from that root, and are partakers of its fatness. It is to very little purpose to object, that it is unnatural to suppose an ignoble branch grafted on a rich stock; for it was not necessary that the simile from inoculation should hold in all its particulars; and the engagement to humility, arises in a considerable degree from the circumstance objected against. Had the scion been nobler than the stock, yet its dependence on it for life and nourishment would render it unfit that it should boast against it: how much more, when the case was the reverse of what in human usage is practised; and the wild olive is ingrafted on the good! See Doddridge and Calmet.

Ver. 18. *Boast not against the branches*] Though the great fault which most disordered the church, and principally exercised the Apostle's care in this Epistle, was from the Jews pressing the necessity of legal observances, and not brooking that the Gentiles, though converts to Christianity, should be admitted into their communion without being circumcised; yet it is plain from this verse, as well as from ch. xiv. 3. 10. that the convert Gentiles were not wholly without fault on their side, in treating the Jews with disesteem and contempt. To this also, as it comes in his way, he applies fit remedies, particularly in this chapter, and in ch. xiv. See Locke.

Ver. 20. *Be not high-minded, &c.*] Dr. Heylin connects this with the next verse, thus: *Be not presumptuous, but fear, lest God should not spare you, since he did not spare even the natural branches.*

Ver. 22. *Behold therefore the goodness, &c.*] What is here meant by *goodness* to the believing Gentile, as it stands opposed

24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive-tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the

Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.

29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief;

¹ Pf. 3. 2. & 107. 43. Hosea, 14. 9. Deut. 32. 29. with Ch. 16. 25. Eph. 3. 3, 6. Col. 1. 27. ^m Ch. 12. 16. Prov. 3. 5, 7. & 26. 12, 16. II. c. 11. ⁿ Or *corinths*. Ver. 5, 7. Ch. 9. 18. 2 Cor. 3. 14-16. ^o Hosea, 3. 5. Rev. 11. 15. & xix-xxii. Zech. 14. 8-21. & 8. 20-23. II. 11. 9, 10. & liv. 1x. Ezek. xxxiv-xlviii. Luke, 21. 24. Rev. 7. 9. ^p Jer. 3. 18. & 30. 3. & 31. 1, 8, 9. Ezek. xxxvii. II. 60. 15. ^q II. 59. 20. Pf. 14. 7. II. 27. 9. Jer. 31. 31. Ezek. 20. 40. ^r Jer. 31. 31-34. & 32. 38-40. Heb. 8. 8-12. & 10-16. ^s Mat. 21. 43. Act. 15. 45, 46. & 28. 24, 28. Ver. 11, 20, 25, 30. ^t Lev. 26. 44. Exod. 32. 13. Gen. 17. 7. & 26. 4. & 28. 14. Deut. 7. 8. & 4. 31. ^u Gen. 17. 7. Numb. 22. 19. Deut. 7. 7. & 9. 5. & 10. 15. Jer. 4. 27. & 46. 28. Hosea, 13. 14. ^x Eph. 2. 12, 19, 20. & 3. 6. Col. 3. 6, 9, 10. Titus, 3. 3, 5, 7. 1 Cor. 6. 9-11.

posed to severity against the rejected Jew, is very evident. It is the same with *salvation being come to them*, ver. 11. with their being *enriched*, ver. 12. with their being *grafted into the good olive-tree*, ver. 17. with their having *obtained mercy*, ver. 30. with their being *called and chosen*, ch. ix. 24. It is, in short, the same with their *being justified by the grace of God*, upon their *faith*.

Ver. 24. *The olive-trees, which is wild by nature—whicb be the natural branches*] The original in both these places is *κατα φύσιν*, and therefore our translators should either have rendered it in the first clause, *The natural wild-olive tree*, or in the latter, *Which are branches by nature*. See Heylin.

Ver. 25. *The fulness of the Gentiles*] The *fulness* of the Jews, ver. 12. is the whole body of the Jewish nation professing Christianity, and therefore the *fulness of the Gentiles* here must be the whole body of the Gentiles professing Christianity. It is well remarked by Dr. Harris, that as this Epistle was written about the year 57, that is, long after the most remarkable conversion of the Jews by the first preaching of the Apostles, and after St. Paul had been about thirty years engaged in his work, it appears that the prophecies relating to the calling of the Jews were not accomplished then, and consequently are not yet accomplished. Dr. Whitby very justly observes, that there is a double harvest of the Gentiles spoken of by St. Paul, in this chapter; the first called *their riches*, ver. 12. as consisting in the *preaching the Gospel* to all nations; whereby indeed they were happily *enriched* with divine knowledge and grace; the second, the *bringing in their fulness*, in the latter age of the world. See Locke, Whitby, Harris's Discourse on the Messiah, p. 91. Limb. Collat. p. 94. and Doddridge.

Ver. 26, 27. *And so*] That is, by that means: so the word *εὐαγγέλιον* signifies, John, viii. 59. The reference in this and the next verse to the Old Testament, is commonly supposed to point at Isai. lix. 20. But whether the Apostle directs to any particular prophecy, or to the current sense of all the prophets, is uncertain; though the

latter opinion seems most probable. The restoration of the Jewish commonwealth, in a higher degree than seems to be yet accomplished, is, as we have before observed, frequently spoken of in the prophetic writings. See Locke and Whitby.

Ver. 28. *They are enemies for your sakes*] *Enemies* signify *strangers, or aliens*; that is to say, such as are no longer to be the peculiar people of God: for they are called *enemies*, in opposition to *beloved* in this verse; and the reason given why they are *enemies*, makes it plain that this is the sense; namely, for the Gentiles' sake: that is, "they are rejected from being the peculiar people of God, that you Gentiles may be taken in to be the people of God in their room," ver. 30. *Enemies* has the same signification, ch. v. 10. *As concerning the Gospel, enemies*: that is, all those who not embracing the Gospel, not receiving Christ for their king and Lord, are aliens from the kingdom of God;—and all such aliens are called *enemies*: and so indeed were the Jews now; yet they were, as touching the election, *beloved*; that is, not actually within the kingdom of the Messiah, his people, but within the election which God had made of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their posterity, to be his people; and so God had still intentions of kindness to them, for their fathers' sakes, to make them again his people. The *election* is the same with that mentioned ver. 5. and ch. ix. 11. Therefore the unbelieving Jews were not so cast off, as to be intirely deprived of the favour of God in a national sense; agreeably to what he had long before declared, Lev. xxvi. 44, 45-47, Deut. iv. 31. This clearly shews the nature of that election, concerning which the Apostle discourses in this and the two foregoing chapters. See Locke, and on ch. v. 11.

Ver. 29. *For the gifts and calling of God, &c.*] "For the favours which God shewed to those their fathers in calling them and their posterity to be his people, he does not repent of; but his promise, that they shall be his people, shall stand good." So *God's repenting* is explained, Numb. xxiii. 19. See Elmer.

31 ⁷ Even so have these also now not * believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.

⁷ Ver. 15. 25.

* Or obeyed.

² Ch. 3. 9. Gal. 3. 22.

32 For ⁸ God hath † concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

Ver. 30. 31. John, 12. 32.

† Or shut them all up together.

Ver. 30, 31. For as ye in times past, &c.] When the promise was made to Abraham, the calling of the Gentiles was not a secondary design, to take effect in case the Jew rejected the Gospel, but an absolute purpose, to be accomplished whether the Jews complied or refused. The refusal of the Jew was no way necessary to the calling of the Gentile; nor did the Apostles preach to the Gentiles only because the Jews had refused to accept the Gospel. Had the Jews embraced the faith of Christ, the Apostles would still have preached to the Gentiles. *Their unbelief* is evidently to be understood, as their *fall*, and the *casting them off*, ver. 11, 12. not simply and absolutely, but considered under its proper circumstances, or in its cause; namely, that extensive grace, which threw down their peculiarity, in order to make room for the Gentiles, and so occasioned their unbelief. These verses may be paraphrased thus: "For as you Gentiles, for many ages past, were in a state of alienation from God, yet not so as to be totally and for ever excluded,—for you are now taken into his peculiar kingdom by that method which has occasioned the unbelief of the Jews;—so in like manner (ver. 11.) the Jews, in their turn, are through infidelity shut out of the present peculiar kingdom of God; not to their utter exclusion, but to open a new scene, when, through the farther displays of God's mercy to you, they shall be taken into his kingdom again." See Locke, and on ver. 11.

Ver. 32. For God hath concluded them all, &c.] *Them* is not in the original, and should not be in the translation. *Concluded* is no English word in this place; the sense of the Greek verb *συνέλασε* is, *he hath locked*, or *shut up together*, which may be properly rendered by the Latin word *concludo*; but we never in English use the word *conclude* to signify to *lock* or *shut up*. The word in the original is found but in three places besides this, viz. Luke, v. 6. where it is well rendered *inclosed*; and Gal. iii. 22, and 23. where in one verse it is rendered very improperly *concluded*, and in the other *shut up*. *All were locked up under sin*, and the Jews in particular were locked up under the law; so here God has *locked up all together in unbelief*. Now, as all Jews and Gentiles, before Christ came, were locked up under sin, and the Jews were locked up under the law, condemning them to death;—(not as if none of them could be saved, or be in a state of acceptance with God, but only so far, and in this sense, as the ground of their pardon and redemption was not laid, or the price of their redemption was not paid, till Christ, by the sacrifice of himself, took away the sin of the world;) so here first the Gentiles, afterwards the Jews are *locked up in unbelief*; not as if they were therefore locked out of the favour of God, and excluded from eternal life; for *unbelief* is here to be understood, not in the absolute, but in the relative sense;—not in the *absolute* sense, as it is a principle which renders a man wicked, but with reference to the kingdom of God in this world, or as it disqualifies a person from being a

sharer in the honours and privileges of that kingdom.—It is *unbelief in profession*, which stands opposed, not to a life of holiness and virtue, or of eternal happiness in the world to come, but only to *faith in profession*. That the Apostle here means *unbelief* in this general relative sense, and only so far as it excludes a person out of the present kingdom of God, is evident; for this verse stands in immediate connection with the two foregoing; and ALL here includes the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles in those verses. But the *unbelieving Gentiles* are those (ver. 30.) who in times past had not believed God; but now, upon their conversion to Christianity, had obtained mercy; consequently, they were the whole body of Gentiles, who, from the time when the covenant was made with Abraham, to the time when they embraced the faith of the Gospel, had not believed God; that is, had not been numbered among the subjects of his visible kingdom, as the Jews were during that period. And the *unbelieving Jews* are those (ver. 31.) who now do not believe God; but at last shall upon their conversion to Christianity, obtain mercy; consequently, they are the whole body of Jews, who, from the time of their rejecting the kingdom of God under the Messiah, have not believed God; that is, have not been numbered among the subjects of his visible kingdom, as the believing Gentiles now are. All this is clear; and therefore we may conclude, *first*, that the *unbelief* which the Apostle here speaks of is not the faulty character of particular persons, but the general profession of whole nations through a long tract of time: neither, *secondly*, is it that unbelief which subjects persons to final condemnation; for that unbelief will not terminate in their *obtaining mercy*: but the unbelief under which the Gentiles were locked up, terminated in their obtaining mercy, and so will the unbelief of the Jews also. *Thirdly*, the whole body of Gentiles, who embraced the Christian religion, obtained mercy; and so will the whole body of the Jews, at the future period whereof the Apostle speaks; but evidently this relates to their being admitted to the privileges of God's kingdom in this world; consequently their *unbelief*, which stands opposed to their *obtaining mercy*, relates only to their being excluded from those privileges. In short, the Apostle considers the unbelieving Gentiles, during the Jewish peculiarity, as one body of men; which body of men afterwards obtained mercy, when they were taken into the visible church of God: and he likewise considers the unbelieving Jews, from the time of their rejecting Christ, to the future time of their conversion, as one body of men, who shall then also obtain mercy, or be brought again into the peculiar kingdom of God. Therefore, as this obtaining of mercy is no other than the election about which he argues in this Epistle, it is certain he does not therefore mean that election only of particular persons; but he means such an election as may be applied to bodies of men, with respect to their being taken into the kingdom of God in this world. Mr. Locke's note on this place is very

33 ^a O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

34 ^b For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

35 ^c Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

36 For ^d of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: ^e to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.

^a Job, 5, 9. & 9. 10. & 11. 7. & 28. 12, 14. & 37. 23. & 26. 14. Pf. 36. 6, 7. & 77. 19. Eccl. 3. 11. Dan. 4. 35. ^b Job, 15. 8. & 35. 22, 23. Pf. 92. 5, 6. & 40. 5. If. 40. 13. Jer. 23. 18. 1 Cor. 2. 16. ^c Job, 35. 7. & 41. 11. ^d Pf. 33. 6. Prov. 16. 4. 1 Cor. 8. 6. & 10. 3. Col. 1. 16. Acts, 17. 25, 28. Rev. 21. 6. ^e Gal. 1. 5. 2 Tim. 4. 18. Heb. 13. 21. 1 Pet. 5. 11.

very excellent, and sets the whole of this important subject in a very clear light. "The *unbelief*," says he, "here charged nationally on Jews and Gentiles in their turns, in this and the two preceding verses, whereby they ceased to be the people of God, was evidently the disowning of his dominion; whereby they put themselves out of the kingdom which he had and ought to have in the world, and so were no longer in the state of subjects, but aliens and rebels. A general view of mankind will lead us into an easier conception of St. Paul's doctrine, who through this whole Epistle considers the Gentiles, Jews, and Christians, as three distinct bodies of men. God, by creation, had no doubt an unquestionable sovereignty over mankind, and this was at first acknowledged in their sacrifices and worship of him. Afterwards they withdrew themselves from their submission to him, and found out other Gods, whom they worshipped and served. This revolt from God, and the consequence of it, God's abandoning them, St. Paul describes, ch. i. 18—32. In this state of revolt from God were the nations of the earth in the time of Abraham. And then Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their posterity the Israelites, upon God's gracious call, returned to their allegiance to their ancient and rightful King and Sovereign; owned the one invisible God, creator of heaven and earth, for their God, and so became his people again, to whom he, as to his peculiar people, gave law. And thus remained the distinction between Jews and Gentiles, that is to say, the *nations*, as the word signifies, till the time of the Messiah; and then the Jews ceased to be the people of God, not by a direct renouncing the God of Israel, and taking to themselves other false gods whom they worshipped; but by opposing and rejecting the kingdom of God, which he proposed at that time to set up with new laws and institutions, and to a more glorious and spiritual purpose, under his Son Jesus Christ; him God sent to them, and him the nation of the Jews refused to receive as their Lord and Ruler, though he was their promised King and Deliverer, answering all the prophecies and types of him, and evidencing his mission by his miracles. By this rebellion against him, into whose hand God had committed the rule of his kingdom, and whom he had appointed Lord over all things, (and who himself is God over all, blessed for ever,) the Jews turned themselves out of the kingdom of God, and ceased to be *his people*, who had now no other people but those who received and obeyed his Son as their Lord and Ruler. This was the *ἀπίστια, unbelief*, here spoken of. And I would be glad to know any other sense of *believing* or *unbelief*,

"wherein it can be nationally attributed to a people (as visibly here it is), whereby they shall cease, or come to be the people of God, or visible subjects of his kingdom here on earth. Indeed, to enjoy life and estate in this, as well as other kingdoms, not only the owning of the prince, and the authority of his laws, but also obedience to them is required: for a Jew might own the authority of God, and his law given by Moses, and so be a true subject, and as much a member of the commonwealth of Israel as any one in it, and yet forfeit his life by disobedience to the law. And a Christian may own the authority of Jesus Christ, and of the Gospel, and yet forfeit eternal life by his disobedience to the precepts of it; as may be seen, ch. vii. viii. and ix."

Ver. 33. O the depth, &c.] This emphatical conclusion seems in an especial manner to regard the Jews, whom the Apostle would hereby teach modesty and submission to the over-ruling hand of the all-wise God, unfit as they are to call him to account for his dealing so favourably with the Gentiles. "His wisdom and ways are infinitely above their comprehension; and will they take upon them to advise him what to do? Or is God in their debt?—Let them say for what, and he shall repay it to them." This is a strong rebuke to the Jews, but delivered, as we see, in a way very gentle and inoffensive: a method which the Apostle endeavours every where to observe towards his nation. See Locke.

Ver. 35. Or who hath first given to him, &c.] This has a manifest respect to the *Jews*, who claimed a right to be the people of God so far, that St. Paul (chap. ix. 14.) finds it necessary to vindicate the justice of God in the case; and here also, in this question, he exposes and silences the folly of any such pretence. See Locke.

Ver. 36. For of him, &c.] *Of him*, as the original author; *through him*, as the gracious preserver; and *to or for him*, as the ultimate end,—*are all things*: For his pleasure all things were created; by his providence all things are preserved; to his glory all things terminate. Antoninus, speaking of *nature* (by which he evidently means God), has an expression which one would imagine he had borrowed from this of St. Paul, *Ἐξ οὗ πάντα, ἐν οὖι πάντα, εἰς οὗ πάντα*,—"All things are of thee, in thee, and to thee." Thus, says Mr. Locke, St. Paul concludes, with a very solemn epiphonema, that admirable evangelical discourse to the church at Rome, which had taken up the eleven foregoing chapters. It was addressed to the two sorts of converts, viz. Gentiles and Jews; into which, as into two distinct bodies, he all along through this Epistle divides all mankind, and considers them as so divided into two separate corporations. 1. As to the Gentiles, he endeavours

ours

C H A P. XII.

God's mercies must move us to please God. No man must think too well of himself, but attend every one on that calling wherein he is placed. Love, and other duties, are required of us. Revenge is especially forbidden.

[Anno Domini 58.]

I ^a BESEECH you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, ^b that ye present your

bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is your reasonable service.*

² And be not conformed to this world: but ^d be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may ^c prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

³ For I say, through the grace given unto

^a 2 Cor. 5. 20. & 10. 1. Eph. 4. 1. John, 4. 19. Pf. 116. 12. ^b 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. Ch. 6. 4, 6, 13, 16. 1 Cor. 9. 27. & 6. 19, 20. Col. 1. 22. Heb. 10. 22. with Lev. i—vii. Numb. xxix. ^c Exod. 23. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 14, 18. 1 John, 2. 15, 16. ^d 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. Col. 3. 10. Eph. 1. 18. & 4. 22—24. ^e Ch. 2. 18. Phil. 1. 10. Eph. 1. 18. & 5. 10, 17. 1 Thess. 4. 3. Col. 1. 21, 22. & 3. 10. with ch. 7. 12, 14. 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. Pf. 19. 7—10. ^f Mark, 2. 11. Gal. 5. 16. with Ch. 1. 5. & 15. 15. 1 Cor. 3. 10. & 15. 10. 1 Pet. 4. 11. Eph. 3. 8. Ver. 6, 8.

vours to satisfy them, that though they for their apostasy from God to idolatry, and the worship of false gods, had been abandoned by God, had lived in sin and blindness, without God in the world, strangers from the knowledge and acknowledgment of him, yet that the mercy of God through Jesus Christ was extended to them, whereby there was a way now opened to them to become the people of God. For since no man could be saved by his own righteousness, no, not the Jews themselves, by the deeds of the law, the only way to salvation, both for Jews and Gentiles, was by faith in Jesus Christ. Nor had the Jews any other way now to continue themselves the people of God, than by receiving the Gospel; which way was opened also to the Gentiles, and they were as freely admitted into the visible kingdom of God, now erected under Jesus Christ, as the Jews, and upon the sole terms of believing. So that there was no need at all for the Gentiles to be circumcised to become Jews, that they might be partakers of the benefits of the Gospel. 2. As to the Jews, the Apostle's other great aim in the foregoing discourse is, to remove the offence which the Jews took at the Gospel, because the Gentiles were received into the church as the people of God, and were allowed to be subjects of the kingdom of the Messiah. To bring them to a better temper, he shews them, from the sacred scripture, that they could not be saved by the deeds of the law, and therefore the doctrine of righteousness by faith ought not to be so strange a thing to them. And as to their being for their unbelief rejected from being the people of God, and the Gentiles taken-in in their room, he shews plainly, that this was foretold them in the Old Testament; and that herein God did them no injustice. He was Sovereign over all mankind, and might choose whom he would to be his peculiar people, with the same freedom that he chose the posterity of Abraham among all the nations of the earth, and of that race chose the descendants of Jacob before those of his elder brother Esau, and that before they had a being, or were capable of doing good or evil. In all which discourse of his, it is plain the election spoken of has for its object only nations or collective bodies politic in this world, and not particular persons, in reference to their eternal state in the world to come.

Inferences.—It appears from this prophetic chapter, as well as from many striking predictions in other parts of Scripture, that the Jews will hereafter be restored to the favour and protection of their God, and will become with

the Gentiles *one fold, under one shepherd, Jesus Christ.* For this purpose they are remarkably preserved a distinct and separate people from all the nations of the earth; and nothing can afford a more striking proof of the truth of the Christian religion, than their present subsistence as a people, together with all the peculiar circumstances of their state and dispersion. With a view to them we may observe, that some evidences of the truth of our holy faith are not weakened, but rather gain force by length of time. Jesus often spoke of *many coming from the east and the west, and from the north and the south, to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven;* that is, to partake of the privileges of the Gospel, and the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom: so long therefore as there are Gentiles in the world, who thankfully embrace the Gospel, this declaration is fulfilled; and the longer it is since these words were spoken, the more are they verified; and every accession to the church of Christ from among ignorant and darkened Gentiles, is a fresh confirmation of the truth of his doctrine. The dispersion of the Jews, the longer it lasts, still more and more strengthens the evidences of the Christian religion; it is the more remarkable; it is a plainer and more affecting token of divine displeasure against them; it affords greater assurance that the Messiah is already come; and it is rendered the more impossible for any man to prove himself of the tribe of Judah, and the family of David, whence the Messiah was to arise. For these reasons their present dispersion is prolonged, and may it be duly attended to by all to whom the consideration of it may be of use!

St. Paul directs us to consider these things as warnings; *Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith: be not high-minded, but fear, &c.* ver. 20. For if we improve not our privileges, the glory may depart from us also. The seven churches of Asia in the book of Revelation were warned, and most of them threatened with the removal of their candlestick, unless they speedily repented, and did their first works. Many Christian churches, planted by the apostles of Jesus, and watered by their fellow-labourers, have fallen to decay and ruin: the name and title of Christian will not save particular persons in the day of judgment; nor will the name of Jesus or Christian alone secure churches and societies in this world. There should be not only the leaves of a fair profession, but also fruits of love and peace, and all the branches of righteousness and true holiness. Christians should have heavenly minds, and

me, to every man that is among you, ^e not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think ^{*} soberly, ^h according

as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 For ⁱ as we have many members in one

^f Prov. 25. 27. Eccl. 7. 15. Ch. 11. 20. Gal. 6. 3. Prov. 26. 12, 16. & 2. 7. ¹ Cor. 4. 7. Luke, 19. 13.

^{*} Gr. *te sobriety*.

^h ¹ Cor. 3. 10. & 12. 7—11. & 15. 10. Gal. 1. 15.

Co. 2. 19.

and their lives should be adorned with acts of meekness, patience, self-denial, and zeal for each other's welfare. Christ will dwell with such. They honour him, and he will honour them with a distinguished care and protection.

We learn from the Apostle's arguments, that as in past ages the Jews had been of great service in upholding religion in the world, and from them at length it was brought to the Gentiles; so when in the end the Jews are converted to the faith of Christ, it will be perhaps in some measure through the Gentiles; and probably upon some more general conversion of the latter than has yet been. See ver. 30, 31. But whenever this general conversion of the Jews to the faith of Jesus takes place, they will become *Christians indeed*, and their fondness for the rites of the Mosaic law will cease, that they and the Gentiles may become one people and one flock.

We have good reason to wish and pray for that great event,—that *the fulness of the Gentiles may be brought in*. In the mean time, we should both labour for the conversion of ignorant Gentiles, and do what lies in our power to excite the people of the Jews to emulation, by the simplicity of our worship, the purity of our faith, and the holiness of our lives.

From the state of things represented to us in this chapter, we cannot fail to admire the exceeding riches of the wisdom and goodness of God, who has graciously afforded mankind in all ages helps, more or less, for knowing the great truths of religion. God ever spoke to all by the secret inspiration of his Holy Spirit: when that was not duly attended to, and the danger of universal ignorance became great, he separated a family, that of Abraham, from the rest of the world; and of a part of it he made a great nation, to whom he gave a law; and who thereby were set up as a lamp upon a hill, to lighten the world around them. Among them, by his grace and by frequent interpositions of his wise and powerful providence, religion was maintained, and they were kept a distinct nation, enjoying many privileges until the Messiah came, and religion was spread far and wide in the nations of the earth, according to promises made long before: and then the Jews generally rejecting that blessing, God cast them off from being his people, as they had been, and poured down upon them dreadful tokens of his displeasure; yet not destroying them utterly, but making use of them, even under afflictions, to support the truth of the mission and authority of his only-begotten Son, whom they had crucified.

Nor is there herein any injustice, or unkindness; for still they are provoked to jealousy by those who are taken in their room: and in this respect they now enjoy an advantage with regard to religion, beyond what the Gentiles had formerly. For then it was the nation of the Jews only, to whom God was known; and many of the nations of the earth were remote from them. But the unbelieving Jews, for the most part, live among or near the followers of

Jesus, and have better opportunities to inform themselves of the principles of their religion, than the Gentiles had of old to know that of the Israelites.

And the wisdom of divine Providence in the former and the latter dispensation is admirable, as the Apostle observes at the end of this chapter, ver. 30—36. on addressing himself to Gentile Christians; a passage, whence we may conclude with St. James at the council at Jerusalem, that *known unto God are all his works from the beginning*. Acts, xv. 18.

It may moreover be reasonably supposed, that it will be highly delightful in the heavenly state to know and observe the various methods of divine Providence, relating to his creatures in the world where we have lived; particularly to observe the manifold designs of wisdom and goodness, with regard to the concerns of religion.

A wise, pious, and discerning person has now great delight and profitable entertainment in reviewing these works of divine Grace and Providence, as recorded in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; but the discoveries in a future state must be incomparably more full and complete, and consequently more delightful. We shall then see the overspreading deluge of ignorance in some places and ages, the wonderful steps by which light was restored, and all the virtue of the instruments raised up and employed by God; the faithful and disinterested zeal with which they served God, and promoted the welfare of their fellow-creatures; and how even afflictive events subserved beneficial designs. And though such extensive knowledge should not be the portion of those who are finally *separated from God*, yet there will be a remembrance of things past; what men have done and neglected to do; what means of knowledge were offered them in this world; what convictions they had of duty; what helps they enjoyed for securing a holy and virtuous life and conduct, and strengthening them against temptations; in short, to bring them to Christ and eternal salvation,—and how they failed to improve those many advantages!

How piercing must it be, in the place of torment, for a descendant of Abraham, who lived *in the time of our Lord*, to recollect the *gracious words* he heard from his mouth! That though Jesus taught in the *streets* of his city, and in the most winning manner promised everlasting life to such as believed in and obeyed him; and though he performed numerous *miracles*, healing and beneficial, suited to the goodness of his doctrine, and tokens of inexpressible mildness and benevolence,—yet he despised and abused this amiable Person! And though he knew that the *prophets* had spoken of a *great Deliverer* to arise among them, and it was the prevailing opinion that *that* was the very time prefixed for his coming; he would not hearken to him, nor regard him, because of some groundless prejudices, and too strong an affection for worldly possessions and enjoyments.

body, and all members have not the same office :

5 So * we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

* Ver. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 17. & 12. 12—28. Eph. 1. 23. & 4. 4, 25. & 5. 21, 23, 30. Col. 1. 24. & 2. 19.

In like manner, to how many others also will not the recollection of religious, of *Christian* privileges, not improved, but rejected and abused, be matter of torment and vexation!—For instance, *Children* of pious parents, who *set at naught all their counsel, and will have none of their reproofs!* *Servants*, who are averse to the order and restraint of religious families, and offended at daily devotions and frequent readings of the Scripture, or other books of piety; who choose the habitations of the wicked, where there is not so much as a form of godliness, or an appearance of religion, and prefer the company and manners of the dissolute, who are a reproach to human nature!—A *Christian*, partaking in all the ordinances of the Gospel, yet acting contrary to the obligations he is under!—A *minister* in God's house, shewing to others the way to salvation, but not walking in it himself!—

How grievous must the recollection of such advantages be hereafter, if finally abused and disregarded! What consolation can then be given to the trembling souls of men?—Alas, the sad reflection on their own folly will be unavoidable, and for ever incurable!

May we therefore be wise to *know* and mind *the things of our peace, now in this our day!*—Securing time, while we have it, for serious reflections on our conduct and our advantages, and comparing our light and knowledge with our actions and purposes! For between these there ought, there must be an agreement, or miserable will be the consequence. Where much is given, much may and will be expected: and *the servant who knew his Lord's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.* Luke, xii. 47.

These are certain truths:—these are things which will some time afford either a pleasing and comfortable, or an afflictive and sorrowful recollection to the soul. It is an awful and awakening observation of our Lord:—*This is the condemnation, That light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil,* John, iii. 19. If any of us should perish, have we not reason to dread this aggravated condemnation?—For we must be sensible that we have had sufficient instruction to assure us, that *things above* are preferable to *things on this earth*; that nothing therefore ought so to divert and engage us, as to prevent our *laying up to ourselves treasures in heaven*; and that we ought to order our present concerns, and the whole of our conversation, in such a manner as may best promote our most important interests,—the everlasting salvation and happiness of our souls. See Lardner, and on ver. 11.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, Nothing could be more grating to the Jews than this subject of their rejection; and some one might say, *Haith God cast away his people? God forbid.*

1. Though some are cast off through unbelief, yet all are not unbelievers.
2. If the nation of Jews in general be at present aban-

doned through their rejection of the Gospel, the Gentiles are called into the Messiah's kingdom.

3. The time will come when the Jews shall be brought back, and admitted into the peculiar church of the Messiah.

[1.] Though some are cast off through unbelief, yet all are not unbelievers: of this St. Paul was himself an instance. *For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin*; and though none shewed greater bitterness against the Gospel, yet have I obtained mercy; and multitudes besides, of the Jewish people, share the same blessing, for *God hath not cast away his people, which he foreknew would believe, and be faithful to his grace*: and these were more than might be at first imagined, as was the case in the days of Elias, when, on account of their general defection to idolatry, and persecution of God's prophets, that zealous reformer complained to God as if he was left alone, and his life daily in jeopardy; and, from the melancholy appearances could not but conclude that the people were ripe for ruin. But God informs him that, had as things were, he had still seven thousand faithful worshippers, who had not bowed to Baal; *even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace*,—who accede to the election of grace by believing. *Note*; (1.) There are many more faithful souls, than we, looking round on the general apostacy, are ready to suppose. (2.) When religion is out of countenance, it is a great thing to dare to be singular, and not bow the knee to Baal.

What then is the case? Why the fact is evident, Israel hath not attained that which he seeketh for; the reason of which is given, chap. ix. 31, 32. *but the election hath attained it, through faith in Jesus, and the rest were blinded, left to their impenitence and unbelief, and perishing by the sentence of that law, for their obedience to which they expected justification before God.* *Note*; (1.) They who trust in whole or in part on their works for justification, make Christ to have died in vain, and the grace of God of no effect. (2.) They who trust on their own righteousness, are ever most hardened against the Gospel method of salvation.

In proof of what he had alleged, terrible as it might appear to some, he appeals to the Scriptures, *according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day.* They are sunk into stupidity and insensibility, and in just judgment for their rejection of all the means, mercies, and corrections vouchsafed to them, especially for their wilful unbelief of the Gospel, God has abandoned them to a reprobate mind. *And, to the same effect, David saith, when speaking of the enemies of the Messiah, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompence unto them.* The altar, and all the ritual service on which they depended, would prove the means of their ruin; or those bounties of Providence, which they abused

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith ;

¹ 1 Cor. 12. 7—11, 28—30. & 6. 14. & 14. 1, 3. & 13. 2. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. Acts, 11. 27. & 13. 1. & 15. 32. & 21. 9. 2 Cor. 10. 13. Eph. 3. 5. & 4. 11.

abused to pride and luxury, should intoxicate them, and, like drunken men, for the punishment of their infidelity, they should stumble into perdition. *Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see ;* since they hate the light, they shall be left in blindness ; *and bow down their back always,* under perpetual bondage and servitude, enslaved by the powers of the earth, and more enslaved by worldly-mindedness, by sin and Satan. *Note ;* (1.) Of all judgments, spiritual ones are most to be dreaded, and yet are usually least perceived. (2.) They who mind earthly things, cannot but walk in darkness.

[2.] Though the Jews were cast off for a while from the peculiar kingdom of the Messiah, the Gentiles were called into the church.

Isay then, have they stumbled that they should fall, utterly and irrecoverably ? *God forbid : but rather,* so hath God ordered it in his providence, that *through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles* (see Acts, xiii. 46, 47.), *for to provoke them to jealousy ;* that, ashamed to be outdone by the Gentiles, they may be stirred up to a noble emulation. *Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles,* God in his infinite wisdom and mysterious designs, making the apostacy and obliquity of the Jews the occasion of spreading his Gospel the sooner among the Gentiles, whom he is pleased to enrich with the abundance of his grace ; *how much more* will the Gentiles be confirmed in the faith, and the multitude of converts increase when they shall see *their fulness,* the restoration of the dispersed Jews to their forfeited privileges, when at the last they shall be turned to the Lord ? *For I speak to you Gentiles,* for your comfort and caution, *inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles,* particularly appointed of God to preach the Gospel to you ; *I magnify mine office,* I glory in my employment, and bless God for having honoured me so far as to appoint me thereunto. And this I say, *If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh,* to outstrip the Gentiles, ashamed to be exceeded by them in faith and holiness, *and might thus save some of them,* by leading them to Christ for pardon, grace, and eternal life ; *for, as I said, if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, the Gospel, through their infidelity, being sent unto the Gentiles, what shall the reconciling of them be, but life from the dead ?* How surprising and delightful will that great event be, when the Jews in general shall be converted to Christ, and restored to the church as men raised from the dead ; and their conversion inspire the Gentiles with fresh life and vigour ! *For if the fig-fruit be holy, and some few converts of the Jewish people now appear the pledges and earnest of what God will do for the nation hereafter, the lump is also holy, and they shall at last be consecrated as a nation to God : and if the root be holy, Abraham and the patriarchs, from whom the Jews descended, considered as their federal head, to whom and his seed the promises were made, so are the branches ; they have a relative holiness in virtue of their descent ; and, though at present their unbelief cuts them off from all*

the privileges of the covenant, yet for the fathers' sake, in future ages God's love to them, *as a nation,* shall appear, and they shall again be received into the bosom of his church. *And if some of the branches be broken off,* for their unbelief, *and thou, a Gentile, being a wild olive-tree,* by birth an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, and a stranger to the covenants of promise, *were grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree,* admitted in common with Abraham's natural descendants, who believe, to share in all the blessings and privileges of the peculiar covenant of the Messiah, *beest not against the branches,* looking down with scorn on the Jews, who for their infidelity are broken off ; *but if thou beest,* and grow proud of thy advancement, remember *thou bearest not the root, but the root thee,* and all the mercies thou enjoyest are from the Jews ; from them, according to the flesh, Christ descended ; the first preachers of the Gospel were of their nation ; and all thy church privileges are derived from Abraham, the great father of the faithful : therefore this people, though now fallen, mult not be trampled upon. *Thou wilt say, then, perhaps, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in ;* I was preferred to them, and have reason to esteem myself above them. *Well ; because of unbelief they were broken off ;* it was not on account of any goodness in you, but because of their own infidelity ; *and thou standest by faith,* not holding your privileges on account of any descent, but through God's free grace in Christ Jesus : and therefore all boasting is excluded. *Be not then high-minded : but fear,* lest you also should be the same example of unbelief. *For if God hath not spared the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee ;* if the Gentiles imitated their pride and unbelief, they might much more apprehend he would deal with them in the same manner, and deprive them of all the privileges to which he had admitted them. *Behold therefore, and admire, the goodness and severity of God : on them which fell,* he hath exercised just severity, cutting them off from his visible church, and depriving them of all the privileges of his peculiar people ; *but toward thee, unworthy as thou art, he hath shewn the most transcendent goodness, admitting thee, a despised idolatrous Gentile, into his kingdom, and will continue to bless thee, if thou continue in his goodness, and do not abuse the merciful dispensation, under which you at present stand, by pride and infidelity : otherwise thou also shalt be cut off : and no nominal profession of Christianity, if the heart prove apostate, will secure any man from the wrath of God.*

[3.] There is still hope in the end, that all Israel, as a nation, notwithstanding their present rejection, shall at last be converted and saved. *And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in :* and when they receive the Gospel, and believe in Jesus as the Messiah, shall be readmitted into the visible church, *for God is able to graft them in again,* as the children of believing Abraham. Nor is this at all inconceivable or improbable ; *for if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree, which is wild by nature, sprung from the*

7^m Or ministry, *let us wait on our minister-*
ing: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

8ⁿ Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation:
he that * giveth, *let him do it* † with sim-

^m 2 Tim. 4. 2. 1 Tim. 4. 16. 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3. Acts, 20. 28, 31. Ezek. 3. 17-21. & 33. 7-9. Col. 1. 28, 29. with Eph. 4. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 12. 5, 28. 1 Tim. 3. 8. ⁿ Deut. 15. 7. Prov. 22. 8. Acts, 6. 3, 5. Phil. 1. 1. 2 Cor. 9. 7. * Or *imparteb.* † Or *liberally.*

Gentile stock, which was out of the peculiar covenant, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive-tree, which is like grafting a wild scion on a good tree, how much more shall these which be the natural branches, and descendants of Abraham, be grafted into their own olive-tree, and be received into the Gospel church, which was once wholly confined to their people and nation,—if they believe? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, (lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; puffed up with an opinion of your own excellence, and fancying that the favour of God is henceforth to be confined to you alone,) that blindness in part is happened to Israel, and they are left to their unbelief for a while, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, when in the latter days the nations of the earth shall, in a more general manner than ever become obedient to the faith. And so all Israel shall be saved; in general they shall be brought into the Gospel-church, and converted to the Lord: as it is written, *There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob;* the adored Messiah in the last days shall go forth in the power of his Gospel, and by the efficacy of his word and Spirit shall bring the sons of Jacob, the Jews at large, into his Gospel-church. For this is my covenant unto them; and he will fulfil his promises, as will be seen in the latter day; when I shall take away their sins, freely pardoning, for his name's sake, all that is past, and receiving into the arms of his love all that shall embrace in faith the true Messiah.

Upon the whole, then, the state of the case stands thus: As concerning the Gospel, they are at present enemies to it, and permitted so to be for your sakes, that the Gospel might be the sooner and farther diffused through the Gentile world (Acts, xiii. 46, 47.). But as touching the election of them as a nation to be his peculiar people, they are beloved for the Fathers' sakes; and though for the present abandoned, yet there is still mercy in store for the nation. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance; God having made his promises to Israel, as a chosen nation, they shall assuredly be called again into his church. For as ye in times past have not believed God, but lived without him in the world, serving stocks and stones, yet have now obtained mercy, through God's boundless grace admitted into the fellowship and privileges of the Gospel, through their unbelief, who put that Gospel from them: even so have these also now not believed, have been left to their infidelity, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy; provoked to emulation by you, and led by faith to embrace the same Redeemer, through whom the Gentiles have found acceptance with God. And this conversion of the Jews is at least as likely, and will be as sure, as the conversion of the idolatrous Gentiles. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief; both Jews and Gentiles have been left by turns out of the visible church; that he might glorify the riches of his grace towards both, and have mercy upon all; upon the body of Jews and Gentiles in general, making them at last one fold under one Shepherd.

2dly, Having evidently reconciled the rejection of the Jews with the justice and goodness of God, and shewn that there was mercy yet in store for them; in the view of this astonishing dispensation the Apostle breaks out, *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* Farther the Apostle dares not pry into the divine counsels, but stands admiring on the ocean's brink, and cries, *O the depth of the riches of that grace, which both Jews and Gentiles experience, unworthy as they are of the least of it!* What wisdom and knowledge appear in the contrivance of this admirable scheme, planned in the divine mind, to make even the rejection of the Jews subservient to the calling of the Gentiles; and their conversion, the means at last of restoring the Jews as a nation to the divine favour. These counsels are too deep for us to fathom; and the methods which in his providence he takes to effect his own purposes, are beyond our ken; we are lost in the labyrinth, of which he who is infinite in wisdom only holds the clue. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? what creature ever pried into the deep things of God, or could fathom his infinite wisdom? Or who hath been his counsellor? nor man nor angel was consulted in planning his designs of grace. Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? Who can claim any thing by right from him? He is debtor neither to Jew nor Gentile; and how then dare any arraign his procedure, or say unto him, What doest thou? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; all things in nature and providence own him their former and upholder, their efficient cause and ultimate end; to whom therefore it is most fit, that the saints upon earth, and the exalted spirits in heaven, should ascribe glory for ever! and all who have tasted of his grace, will add their joyful Amen! Note; Though we have the deepest insight into the mysteries of grace, the wisest must own, that they know but a part of God's ways. There are many things which our thort line cannot fathom. Our business therefore is to acquiesce in the divine determinations; not to cavil, but to admire and adore!

CHAP. XII.

THE Apostle, having now finished the doctrinal part of his Epistle, judged it fit, in this and in the following chapters, to give the Roman brethren a variety of precepts respecting their behaviour, both as members of the church, and as subjects of the state. Some of these precepts are of universal and perpetual obligation, and others of them were suited to the circumstances of the brethren at the time they were written; such as the precepts concerning meats and holy days, which, though they may seem less necessary now that the disputes which gave rise to them no longer subsist, are nevertheless of great use still, as they may be applied for directing our conduct in other points of equal importance to society and to the church.

The Apostle begins with observing, that as the Jewish church

plicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

9 Let love be without dissimulation. Ab-

hor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 Be kindly affectioned one to another

* 1 Cor. 12. 28. 2 Thess. 5. 12, 13. Heb. 13. 17. 1 Tim. 5. 17. 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3. P 1 Tim. 1. 5. 2 Cor. 6. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 22. & 4. 8. 1 John, 3. 18. 1 Pl. 34. 14. & 36. 4. & 97. 10. & 101. 3. & 119. 104. & 139. 21. 1 Cor. 13. 6. Amos, 5. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 11. Heb. 13. 1. Job, 1. 4. Pl. 133. 1. 1 Pet. 3. 3. & 4. 3. & 1. 22. & 2. 17. 2 Pet. 1. 7. Eph. 4. 3. 1 Thess. 4. 9.

church was dissolved, and the sacrifices of beasts were no longer a part of the worship of God, it was highly proper that Jews and Gentiles should offer their bodies a sacrifice to God, not by slaying them, but by putting the lusts thereof to death; ver. 1.—And that both should take care not to conform themselves to the heathen world, either in its principles or practices; ver. 2.—And because the brethren at Rome, and more particularly the stated ministers of religion, there, who possessed spiritual gifts, had from vanity fallen, or were in danger of falling into some irregularities in the exercise of their gifts, he desired them not to think too highly of themselves on account of their endowments, whatever they might be; ver. 3.—but to remember, that they were all joint-members of one body; ver. 4, 5.—and had spiritual gifts as well as natural talents bestowed on them, suitable to their office in that body, which they were to exercise for the good of the whole; ver. 6, 7, 8.—Next the Apostle inculcated on the Roman brethren, the practice of those moral graces and virtues, which were the glory of the Christian name; such as zeal in the service of Christ, patience in afflictions, love to mankind, even to enemies, forgiveness of injuries, and the overcoming of evil with good; ver. 9—21.

Ver. 1. The Apostle has now finished his proofs and explications relating to the justification, calling, and election of the believing Gentiles, or to their being admitted into the kingdom and covenant of God, and interested in all the privileges and honours of his children and peculiar people,—in all the blessings and hopes of the Gospel. This our happy state he has well established by solid and substantial arguments, and guarded it against every attack of the unbelieving Jew. He has demonstrated that it stands right in the nature of things; ch. i. ii. iii. That it is set upon the same footing with Abraham's title to the blessings of the covenant; ch. iv. That it gives us a title to privileges and blessings as great as any of the Jews could glory in, by virtue of that covenant; ch. v. 1—12. He goes still higher, and shews, that our being interested in the gift and grace of God in Christ Jesus, is perfectly agreeable to the grace which he has confessedly bestowed upon all mankind in Christ Jesus, in delivering them from that death which came upon them by Adam's offence; ch. v. 12. to the end. He has clearly explained, both with regard to Gentiles and Jews, the nature of the Gospel constitution, in respect to its obligations to virtue and holiness; and the advantages that it gives for encouraging our obedience, and supporting us under the severest trials; ch. vi. vii. viii. Farther; as the Jews' pretences, that God was bound by express promise to continue them, and such as come into their peculiarity, to be his only people forever, were directly inconsistent with the calling and election of the Gentiles, upon the foot of faith alone. The Apostle demonstrates, that the rejection of the Jews is

consistent with the truth of God's word, and with his righteousness. He shews the true cause and reason of their rejection; and concludes with an admirable discourse upon the extent and duration of it, which he closes with adoration of the divine wisdom in its various dispensations; ch. ix. x. xi.—Thus having cleared this important subject with surprising judgment, and the nicest art and skill in writing, he now proceeds, after his usual method in his Epistles, and the apostolic manner of preaching, to inculcate various Christian duties; and to exhort to that temper of mind and conduct of life, which are agreeable to Gospel privileges and profession.

Mercies of God] He means all the blessings and privileges given us freely in the Gospel by the mercy of God. There seem to be two reasons why St. Paul's first exhortation to them is, to present their bodies undefiled to God, 1. Because he had before, especially in ch. vii. so much insisted on this, That the body was the great source whence sin arose. 2. Because the heathen world, and particularly the Romans, were guilty of those vile affections which he mentions, ch. i. 24—27. The *body* is here, by a usual figure, put for the whole person; nor can the soul be now presented to God, otherwise than as dwelling in the body, or truly consecrated to him, unless the body be employed in his service. Nor, on the other hand, can the body be presented as a living sacrifice, otherwise than as acted and animated by the soul. The word *παρρησια*, rendered *present*, properly signifies “placing the victim before the altar.” It seems probable that the Apostle, in this first verse, had his thoughts principally upon the *Jewish*, and in the second verse upon the *Gentile* Christians; for in ver. 1. he opposes moral duty to the offering up of *sacrifices*, which must be the sacrifices presented by the Jews in the temple, and calls moral duty a *reasonable service*, or rational worship, as it seems, in opposition to *ritual*. In ver. 2. he exhorts from *conformity to the world*, which generally means the heathen world; and persuades them to be *transformed by the renewing of their mind*, which is the phrase that he uses to Gentile converts, Ephes. iv. 22, 23.—These verses may be paraphrased thus: “Having cleared your title to the blessings and privileges of God's peculiar kingdom in this world, I now earnestly exhort you, Christian brethren, from a consideration of the goodness of God, in revealing his Gospel, and admitting you all to an equal interest in the grace therein declared and promised, that, as a holy priesthood, instead of brutal dead sacrifices, you consecrate and offer your *bodies*, a *living sacrifice*, by mortifying the deeds of the flesh; that being free from every blemish of sensual impurity, you may practise holiness, and the things that are pleasing to God, which is the most rational worship and service that you can perform, and infinitely preferable to the ritual observances of the

* with brotherly love; ' in honour preferring one another;

11 ' Not slothful in business; " fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 * Rejoicing in hope; ' patient in tribulation; " continuing instant in prayer;

13 " Distributing to the necessity of faints; given to hospitality.

* Or in the love of the brethren. * Mat. 20. 26. Phil. 2. 3. 1 Pet. 5. 5. Gen. 13. 9. † Eccl. 9. 10. Gal. 6. 10. Heb. 6. 10. Mar. 25. 26. See Prov. 6. 6, 9. & 19. 15. & 10. 4. & 13. 4. & 22. 29. † Acts, 18. 25. Rev. 3. 15, 16. † Ch. 5. 2. & 15. 13. Luke, 10. 20. Phil. 3. 1, 3. & 4. 4. Pl. 71. 20—24. & 73. 24—26. & 178. 7, 8. 1 Thess. 5. 16. Col. 3. 16. Eph. 5. 19. † Luke, 21. 19. Pl. 37. 7. Rom 5. 3, 4. Heb. 6. 12. & 10. 36. & 12. 1, 2. James, 1. 5, 4. & 5. 7, 10, 11. 1 Pet. 2. 20. 2 Pet. 1. 6. † Acts, 1. 14. & 2. 47, 46. & 6. 4. Eph. 6. 18, 19. Col. 4. 2. 1 Thess. 5. 17. Heb. 3. 6. 14. Luke, 18. 1—7. † Gal. 5. 10. Heb. 6. 10. & 13. 16. Deut. 15. 8. & 10. 19. Pl. 58. 7. Eccl. 11. 1, 2. Mat. 5. 42. Luke, 6. 35, 36. Phil. 2. 14. 1 Cor. 10. 1. Gal. 2. 10. 1 Tim. 3. 2. & 2. 9. Eph. 4. 28. & 5. 2. Titus, 1. 8. Heb. 13. 2, 16. 1 Pet. 4. 9. 1 John, 3. 17. James, 2. 15, 16.

“ law. And as you are now become a separate and peculiar people of God (ver. 2.), do not mix yourselves again with a profane, wicked, and ignorant world; do not conform to the vicious customs, taste, and examples thereof; but be changed through the power of divine grace into new creatures in Christ Jesus, by receiving better principles and habits of mind; that you may thereby be enabled to discover, relish, approve, and recommend to others, that course of life, which is good, just, and true; most pleasing and acceptable to God, and whereby ye shall be accomplished in every part of “ the divine life.” We may just remark, that some commentators consider the three words *good*, *acceptable*, and *perfect*, as opposed to the Jewish ritual: this Christian sacrifice being more excellent in itself (Ezek. xx. 25.), more pleasing to God (Pl. xl. 7, 8.), and tending more to make us perfect, Heb. vii. 19. But perhaps they refer more generally to all the preceptive parts of Christianity, the excellency of which *they* will best understand, who endeavour to practise it most exactly. See Locke, and Elmer.

Ver. 3. For I say, &c.] “ I say and give it in charge.” So λέγειν signifies, Acts, xv. 24. Instead of *Not to think of himself more highly*, Doddridge reads, after Raphelius, *Not to arrogate to himself above what, &c.* Instead of *measure of faith*, some copies have it of *grace*; but either of them expresses the same thing; that is, gifts of the Spirit. See the next note.

Ver. 6. According to the proportion of faith] This *proportion of faith*, and the *measure of faith*, ver. 3. seem not to relate to the degree of any gift considered in itself, but rather to the relation and proportion which it bore to the gifts of others: for it is plain, that the Apostle is here exhorting every man to keep soberly within his own sphere. It is natural to suppose that the new converts might be puffed up with the several gifts which were bestowed upon them, and every one might be forward to magnify his own, to the disparagement of others; which would be attended with bad consequences. Therefore the Apostle advises them to keep every man within his proper sphere; to know and observe the just measure and proportion of his gift, intrusted with him not to gratify his own pride, but to edify the church. *Prophecy* originally implied the foretelling of the future events relating to the church, to the comfort and edification of the assembly; and these effects generally attending the act of prophecy, in a little time assumed its name: but the proper sense of *prophecy* is the foretelling of things to come; the import, the interpretation of sacred Scripture; and the explaining of prophecies already delivered. See 1 Cor. xiv. 29—32. and for an account

of the spiritual gifts and offices in the primitive church, Lord Barrington's *Miscell. Sacr.* Essay i.; Benson's *History of the first Planting of Christianity*, ch. i. sect. 4, 5. and 1 Cor. xii. 28.; Castalio, Erasmus, Bengelius, and others, connect this with the preceding verse: *We are members one of another; but, having gifts differing, &c.*

Ver. 8. He that ruleth, with diligence] Lord Barrington thinks this clause relates to the receiving and succouring of strangers; most probably, persecuted strangers; or, however, such as travelled for the propagation of the Gospel; and that for these reasons: *First*, because the Apostle has admonished them to use well all the gifts of the Spirit for the good of men's minds, ver. 6, 7. and in the first clause of the present verse. It seems, therefore, most natural to suppose, that he should in the three last clauses of this verse direct them how to use other gifts of God's providence for the good of men's morals and religion; and that he should lay the several instances of the kindness of others together in the same manner, as in Heb. xiii. 2, 3. *Secondly*, Προΐσται, a feminine word of the same original and signification with ὁ προϊσταμενός, is used in this sense, ch. xvi. 2. *She hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also*: the word προϊσταμαι signifies, among other things, to defend, patronize; and so it might be rendered, Titus, iii. 8, 14. *To patronize good works*; meaning to encourage and assist in them. In this sense the clause here should be rendered, *He that gives succour, or relief, let him do it with care and application.* See Lord Barrington's *Miscell. Sacr.* Essay i. p. 76.

Ver. 10. Be kindly affectioned, &c.] Perhaps the extremely expressive words of the original might justly be rendered, *Delight in the tenderest fraternal affection to each other.* The word Φιλοσσοργοί, not only signifies a *strong affection*, like that of parent animals to their offspring, but a *delight* in it. The words of the latter clause might literally be rendered, *Leading on each other with respect; or, In giving honour, going before each other.* Some render it, *Mutually prevent one another with honour.* See Balguy's *Sermons*, and Leighton's *Exposit. Works*, vol. ii. p. 429.

Ver. 11. Serving the Lord] Some copies read καιρω, instead of κυριω, *servicing the time*; that is, husbanding your opportunities: but though admitted by Dr. Mills, it appears an unnatural and inelegant expression in that sense, and very much sinks the noble meaning of the commonly-received reading; which contains a lively exhortation to Christians, to be always serving Christ, and to cultivate the temper which the Apostle expresses when he says, *To me to live is Christ*, Phillip. i. 21. See Doddridge, Mill, and Wetstein.

Ver. 13. Given to hospitality] It was the more proper for

14 ^b Bless them which persecute you : bless, and curse not.

15 ^c Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but ^d condescend to men of low estate. ^e Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 ^f Recompense to no man evil for evil.

^g Provide things honest in the fight of all men.

18 ^h If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, ⁱ avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath : for it is written, ^k Vengeance is mine ; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 ^l Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed

^b Mat. 5. 44. Luke, 6. 28. 1 Cor. 4. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 9. & 2. 23. If. 53. 12. Luke, 23. 34. Acts, 7. 60. ^c Ch. 5. 2. 1 Cor. 12. 26. Luke, 1. 58. 1 Cor. 11. 29. Noh. 1. 4. Heb. 13. 3. ^d Or be contented with mean things. Pl. 13. 1. Prov. 18. 12. & 29. 23. Jer. 45. 5. Ch. 15. 5. 1 Cor. 1. 10. 1 Cor. 3. 1. Phil. 1. 27. & 2. 2. & 3. 16. Col. 2. 18. 1 Pet. 3. 8. ^e Prov. 3. 7. & 26. 12, 16. If. 5. 21. Ch. 11. 20, 21. ^f Mat. 5. 39. 1 Thell. 5. 15. Prov. 20. 22. 1 Pet. 3. 9. & 2. 23. ^g Prov. 3. 4. Ch. 14. 16. 1 Cor. 6. 6, 7. & 8. 13. & 10. 32, 33. & 13. 4, 5. 1 Cor. 8. 21. ^h Mark. 9. 50. Heb. 12. 14. 1 Pet. 3. 11. James, 3. 17. 18. Pl. 34. 14. Zech. 8. 16, 19. Eph. 4. 3. 2 Cor. 13. 11. ⁱ Ver. 14. 17. Lev. 19. 18. Prov. 19. 11. & 24. 29. Ezek. 25. 12. Mat. 5. 39. Luke, 6. 29. & 9. 55. 1 Pet. 3. 9. ^k Deut. 32. 24. Heb. 10. 30. ^l Prov. 25. 21, 22. Mat. 5. 44. Exod. 23. 4. 1 Sam. 24. 16, 17. & 26. 21.

for the Apostles frequently to enforce this duty, as the want of public inns rendered it difficult for strangers to get accommodations; and as many Christians might be banished their native country for religion, and perhaps laid under a kind of excommunication, both among Jews and heathens; which would make it a high crime for any of their brethren to receive them into their houses. See Blackwall's Sacred Classics, vol. i. p. 232.

Ver. 16. *Be of the same mind, &c.*] *Be entirely united in your regards for each other.* Doddridge. Whitby paraphrases it, "Desire the same things for others, that you do for yourselves, and would have them desire for you." Dr. Heylin unites this with the preceding verse, and renders them as follows: *Live in a mutual sympathy, so as to rejoice with those who are in joy, and compassionate those who are in grief. Do not aspire to high things, but be contented with mean things.*

Ver. 17. *Provide things honest, &c.*] "Take care that your behaviour be such, as may be approved by all men." Dr. Wells reads, *In the fight of God, and in the fight of men.*

Ver. 19. *Avenge not yourselves*] The emperor Claudius, by his decree, banished all Jews from Rome, Acts, xviii. 2. Upon this occasion Aquila and Priscilla removed to Corinth, where St. Paul found them, and dwelt with them a considerable time. No doubt they gave him a full account of the state of the Christian church at Rome, and every thing relating to the late persecution under Claudius. That emperor's edict died with him in about two years time. Then the Jews and Christians [if the Christians were expelled] returned again to Rome; for Aquila and Priscilla were there, when St. Paul wrote this Epistle, (ch. xii. 3.), which was about the fourth year of Nero, successor to Claudius. Hence it appears more than probable, that the Apostle, in this and the following verses, has his eye upon the indignities and injuries done to the Christian Jews, if not to the Christians in general, in the forementioned persecution. See Benson's "First Planting of the Christian Religion," vol. ii. p. 106. and Eccl'us, xix. 17.

Ver. 20. *Thou shalt heap, &c.*] The sense cannot be, *thou shalt consume him* and bring judgments upon him; for that would be applying to revenge, and building upon it, while it is most expressly forbidden. It must therefore intimate, in

how tender a manner mankind in general are affected with favours received from one who has been considered as an enemy. See Doddridge.

Inferences.—How should a consideration of the endearing mercies of God engage us to yield up ourselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to him! This is every way a most reasonable service. And how should our hearts be loosened from this world, and from all its sinful fashions, customs, and practices; and how desirous of such a renovation of our minds, by the blessed Spirit, as shall transform us into the image of God, and give us an experimental, practical, and approving acquaintance with every thing that is good in itself, pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, and agreeable to his holy will! But, be our gifts, graces, and services ever so great, we should keep up modest and humble thoughts of ourselves, and not be wise in our own conceit, or despise others; since all that we receive is according to the measure of the gift of Christ to us, as his members, for the good of the whole body. Wonderful is the grace and care of the great Head of the church, in providing for it. He has furnished it with such gifts and officers, as are necessary for its spiritual edification, and for managing its temporal concerns; and has ordered all his servants to attend to their charge with integrity, diligence, and cheerfulness, according to the grace given them, and the rule of his word.—And, as to the duties of private Christians, they are called to the sincerest love, the most affectionate deportment, and honourable regards, one towards another; to detest every thing that is sinful, and cleave to all that is good; to be vigorously active in the business of their civil and religious stations, and fervent in every service, as doing it to the Lord; to rejoice in hope of eternal life, and to be patient and resigned to the will of God under all their trials and afflictions, and persevering in earnest prayer. How amiable are the Christian morals, founded in evangelical love! and how far surpassing all that was ever practised or taught by the most refined heathens! This love, which has such an influence upon and gives such a beautiful turn to all morality, is without dissimulation: it is liberal to the necessitous, especially to the poor that bear the characters of holiness; and is hospitable to good and honest strangers, especially those that suffer.

him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21^m Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

^m Prov. 24. 17. Luke, 6. 27—30. Mat. 5. 39—45. 1 Pet. 2. 23. & 3. 9. Ver. 14, 17.

suffer for righteousness' sake: it inspires us with such a fellow-feeling with others, as makes us rejoice with the happy and mourn with the afflicted: it is humble and condescending to men of the lowest degree, and benevolent to our very enemies: it implores blessings upon the heads of those that persecute, abuse, and curse us: it chooses to refer an injured cause to the righteous judgment of God, rather than render evil for evil, or seek private revenge: it endeavours to live peaceably with all men, and behave with honour toward them: and it takes pleasure in giving food and drink to poor necessitous enemies, in melting them with kindness, and overcoming evil with good.

REFLECTIONS.—The doctrines of grace are so far from leading to licentiousness, that nothing but these can effectually engage the heart to walk in holiness as Christ also walked.

1. The Apostle exhorts them to yield themselves wholly to God. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God; by the consideration of that boundless, undeserved grace, which you have tasted; that, constrained by a sense of such astonishing love, ye, as spiritual priests, present your bodies, not the carcase of a dead animal, but a nobler oblation than any which were offered under the law, even a living sacrifice; your whole selves to be employed for God's glory, holy, without allowed guile; in spirit, temper, and conduct, conformed to his will; and acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, in whom your persons and services are regarded as a sacrifice of a sweet smell; all which is your reasonable service, to be performed with all the powers of your rational souls, and most fit and right, considering the infinite obligations lying upon you. And, in order hereunto, be not conformed to this world, to its temper, maxims, fashions, manners; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God; discerning what is the mind of God in his word; commending to others the excellence and importance of the revelation he has made; and cast into the very mould of the Gospel, the best proof of your approbation of it.* *Note;* (1.) No argument is so powerful to engage the ingenuous heart, as a sense of the mercies of God. (2.) The most acceptable sacrifice to God is the surrender of our whole selves to him at the foot of the cross of Jesus, the altar which sanctifies the gift. (3.) They who yield themselves to God, must prove their simplicity in all holy conversation and godliness. (4.) Religion is indeed a reasonable service; the more we consider what we owe to God, the more shall we be bound to acknowledge, that he deserves to be served with every faculty of our soul, and every member of our body. (5.) They who partake of the true grace of God, and experience its transforming efficacy upon their tempers and conduct, they die unto the world, and live only for God.

2. He enforces upon them humility and lowliness of mind, that great ornament of the Christian character. *For*

I say, through the grace given unto me, in virtue of the office with which I am invested, to every man that is among you, whatever his rank or attainments may be, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; affecting a superiority over others, or pretending to be wise above what is written, and to intrude into things that are too high for him; but to think soberly and lowly, of his gifts, graces, and attainments, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith; and acknowledging, that whatever measure of faith he possesses, or however distinguished his endowments by nature or grace may be, yet he has nothing which he hath not received, and therefore all boasting is excluded. And as our talents are merely lent us for the good of our own souls, and the edification of others, it will become us to see that our profiting appears. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, but each discharges his separate function, and all are alike needful in their place, and contribute to the good of the whole; so we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another; united under our adored Head, each occupying his respective place according to the measure of the gift of Christ; and, therefore, instead of being puffed up in pride, and despising one another, we should give diligence to discharge the several services allotted to every member, acknowledging the mutual obligation which one has to the other, and contributing heartily to the prosperity of the whole. Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given unto us, as the Lord has been pleased to dispense to every man, let it be our care to improve them, according to our respective offices and station, for the glory of God, and the good of our fellow-members:—Whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith. They who are put in trust with the Gospel, must preach it with all fidelity and diligence, according to the measure of light, faith, and experience which they have received: or, according to the analogy of faith; in exact consistence with the grand principles laid down in the word of God, in Scripture-language, and with attention to the context:—Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering, in the inferior departments of the church, where attention, care, and constancy are required:—Or he that teacheth, on teaching; opening, explaining, and defending the doctrines of the Scripture:—Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; with warmth applying the word to the conscience, warning the unruly, supporting the feeble-minded, reproving the guilty, comforting the dejected, and, according to the different state of the people's souls, suiting his discourse for their edification and consolation. He that giveth, and is entrusted with the distribution of the public stock appropriated to charitable uses, let him do it with simplicity; without fraud, favour, or affection, according to the real wants of the church's poor. He that ruleth, and has the management of affairs, must do it with diligence, careful that proper discipline be observed. He that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness; ready to every work and labour of love; not dragged reluctantly

CHAP. XIII.

Of subjection, and the many other duties that we owe to the magistrates. Love is the fulfilling of the law. Gluttony and drunkenness, and the works of darkness, are reprov'd and condemn'd.

[Anno Domini 58.]

LET every soul ^a be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power

but of God: the powers that be ^{*} are ordained of God.

2 ^b Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

3 ^c For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of

^a Titus, 3. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 13—17. with 1 Cor. 7. 21. Jude, 8. 2 Pet. 2. 10. Prov. 8. 15, 16. Dan. 2. 21. & 4. 32. John, 19. 11. ^{*} Or
^b 1 Sam. 29. 9. Jer. 27. 8. Titus, 3. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 13. ^c Prov. 14. 35. & 16. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 14. & 3. 13. Deut. 25. 1.

to visit the sick or afflicted; or grudging the time, trouble, or expence; not treating the poor with coldness, or sternness, but with that affability, tenderness, and compassion, which bespeak the pleasure that he takes in assisting them. *Note.* Pride is a busy sin; we can never be enough on our guard against it. We are in danger of abusing even the gifts and graces of God, and of pluming ourselves upon them, if we do not watch unto prayer. (2.) If God has put us in trust with any office, our business is to approve our fidelity to him, employing the talents which he has lent us; not puffed up with any distinction which he may have made between us and others, but remembering the solemn account that we must shortly make before him, when he calls us to give an account of our stewardship. (3.) Ministers have different gifts, all excellent in their place. One is blessed with a clearer judgment, another with a warmer flow of eloquence, and all for the edification of the body of Christ.

3. The Apostle proceeds to urge Christians in general to walk before God and man in such a way, as may most eminently adorn the doctrine which they profess, and glorify their divine Master.

Let love be without dissimulation. Let your love to God in Christ be supreme, and your love to your brethren unfeigned and hearty; the living principle of every good word and work, and without which all our doings are nothing worth.

Avoid that which is evil. Turn away with abhorrence from all manner of iniquity, harbouring no allowed sin in yourself, and testifying your hatred of it wherever it appears, though in those who are nearest and dearest to you. And, on the contrary, cleave to that which is good; to God, his people, his word, his worship, will, and ways; never deterred by any danger, or seduced by any allurements, from the path of duty.

Be kindly affectioned one to another; tenderly desiring to promote each other's happiness; delighting in each other's prosperity; bearing each other's burdens; and ready to every word and work which fervent charity dictates: *with brotherly love in honour, preferring one another;* casting the veil of oblivion over the faults of others, and humbly acknowledging your own; *thinking and speaking honourably of the gifts, graces, and attainments of your brethren, and entertaining lowly thoughts of yourselves.*

Be steadfast in business. In the business of your station be vigorous and active, and what thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; but especially in all the work of God be lively, *servant in spirit,* animated with burning love and

holy zeal for his glory; *servant the Lord* in prayer, and praise, and all ordinances; in persevering obedience to his will, and submission to his providences, approving your fidelity unshaken to the adored Jesus.

Rejoicing in hope; believing the faithfulness of God to his promises, and going forward with cheerfulness and delight in his work and ways, knowing that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Patient in tribulation; resigned to the divine Providence; calm under every provocation; with holy courage sustaining the rudest shocks of opposition and persecution; and, under the longest afflictions, quietly waiting to see the salvation of God.

Continuing instant in prayer; fervently and frequently approaching a throne of grace; seeking help and strength for all the work and service to which you are called, deeply conscious of your own insufficiency, without continual supplies of power from on high, to do any thing aright before God.

Distributing to the necessity of saints; cheerfully, liberally, according to their wants, and your abilities. *Given to hospitality;* welcoming to your house and tables those who for the sake of Christ are destitute, and giving them that warm and cordial reception which true charity dictates.

Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not; speaking of them and to them respectfully; commending what is praiseworthy in them; never returning railing for railing; never harbouring a thought of resentment against your most malignant revilers; forgiving them, and praying to God that he would forgive them also, and turn their hearts.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice; sharing their joys, and, instead of envying, sincerely partaking of their prosperity: *and weep with them that weep;* feeling the tenderest sympathy with them in their sufferings, and, by prayer, advice, and every assistance, desirous to alleviate or remove the sorrows of the miserable.

Be of the same mind one towards another; united as much as may be in sentiment; and where any lesser difference in judgment subsists, still preserving the same warm affection towards each other; wishing all good to your brethren, and seeking to promote each other's happiness.

Mind not high things; affect not pre-eminence; aspire not after the honours and dignities of the world; nor court the company of the great; *but condescend to men of low estate;* treating your inferiors with kindness; and to whatever eminence or affluence you may arrive, be courteous, affable, and free to the lowest; ready to stoop to every

the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the fame:

4 For he is ^d the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil,

^d Ver. 1, 2. 6. 1 Chron. 28. 7. 2 Chron. 19. 6. 1 Kings, 10. 9. Jer. 25. 9. & 27. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14. John, 19. 11. Dan. 2. 21. & 4. 32. Prov. 8. 15, 16. 1 Chron. 29. 23.

every proper office of love for the service and comfort of the meanest saint of God. Or, *condescend to low things*, as the words may be rendered; let your mind be humbled to your condition, and cheerfully acquiesce in every dispensation of Providence, however strait and necessitous your circumstances may be.

Be not wise in your own conceits. Beware of entertaining a high imagination of your own abilities, gifts, or graces; treating the advice and admonitions of others with scorn, as if you were above all teaching, and satisfied in your own self-sufficiency.

Recompense to no man evil for evil, neither in looks, words, nor works.

Provide things honest in the sight of all men; not only taking care of your families and worldly concerns, but so ordering the general course of your conduct and conversation, that the unprejudiced part of mankind, at least, may bear you an honourable testimony; and that none may be able to reproach you with any thing mean, or unbecoming your Christian character.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men; studiously avoiding whatever may bring on disputes or uncharitableness; and as far as is consistent with truth, charity, and the glory of God, cultivating a spirit of love and peace; that at least, if through the perverseness of others it be not possible to avoid contentions, you may have the satisfaction of your own conscience in the reflection, that, *as much as lieth in you*, it has been your endeavour to please all men for their good to edification.

Dear! beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: forgive the injuries that you receive; take no private revenge; suppress the angry passions which may attempt to rise within you; give the soft answer which turneth away wrath; nor, by opposing, irritate; but, however unreasonable others may appear, yield, or go away till the storm has subsided: and if, after all, you meet with implacable resentment, refer the matter to God; *for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.* This is his prerogative, and not to be invaded by us. As magistracy is his ordinance, in some cases for the good of society we are bound to have recourse thereto; in others, where ourselves only are concerned, we must wait the great decisive day, when every man shall receive according as his work is. *Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head*; either by such instances of kindness you will melt him down (as the refiners do their metals) into repentance, and gain his heart to love you; or if he continue obstinate in hatred, it will exceedingly aggravate his condemnation, to add base ingratitude to his unprovoked enmity.

Finally, *Be not overcome of evil*; let no ill usage, however aggravated, repeated, or persisted in, discompose your spirit, weary out your patience, or quench your love; so as that you should give way to anger, be enslaved by sin,

and afford the enemy an occasion to triumph over you. *But overcome evil with good*, which is the most glorious conquest, the proof of the noblest spirit, and the assured evidence that you are born of him who causeth his sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth his rain upon the just and upon the unjust. Lord Jesus, give me such a heart, and stamp this thy image on my soul!

CHAP. XIII.

BECAUSE God had chosen the Jews for his subjects, and as their king had dictated to them a system of laws, and had governed them anciently in person, and afterwards by princes of his own nomination, they reckoned it impious to submit to heathen laws and rulers. In the same light, they viewed the paying of taxes for the support of the heathen governments, Mat. xxii. 17. In short, the zealots of that nation laid it down as a principle, that they would obey God alone, as their king and governor, in opposition to *Cæsar*, and all kings whatever who were not of their religion, and who did not govern them by the laws of Moses.

This turbulent disposition, some of the Jews who embraced the Gospel did not immediately lay aside; and even of the believing Gentiles, there were a few, who, on pretence that they had a sufficient rule of conduct in the spiritual gifts with which they were endowed, affirmed that they were under no obligation to obey ordinances imposed by idolaters, nor to pay taxes for the support of idolatrous governments. In that persuasion, they also refused to the heathen magistrates that honour and obedience, to which, by their office, they were entitled from all who lived under their government. But these principles and practices occasioning the Gospel to be evil spoken of, the Apostle judged it necessary, in his letter to the Romans, to inculcate the duties which subjects owe to magistrates; and to testify to them, that the disciples of Christ were not exempted from obedience to the wholesome laws, even of the heathen countries where they lived, nor from contributing to the support of the government by which they were protected, although it was administered by idolaters. Withal, having inscribed this letter to the unbelieving as well as to the believing inhabitants of Rome, the brethren were thereby directed, for the vindication of their religion, to shew the copies which they took of it to such of the heathens as were willing to read it.

This admirable part of his letter, the Apostle began with exhorting every one to obey the government of the country where he lives, whether it be established by the express consent of the people, or by their acquiescence, or by long usage; founding his exhortation on the following principle: That God having formed mankind for living in society, and some government being absolutely necessary for maintaining order and peace among the associated, whatever form of government happens to be established in any country, is authorized of God, and is subordinate to his general government of the world, ver. 1.—Civil govern-

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.

ment, therefore, being authorized of God, he who resists the established exercise of it in any country, on pretence that the persons holding the reins of government have no just title to do so, or on pretence that they profess a false religion, and exercise their power in supporting error, really resists the ordinance of God; and all who do so, bring on themselves just condemnation, both from God and men, ver. 2, 3.—On the other hand, magistrates, being servants of God, for good to the people, ought, agreeably to the end of their office, to exercise their power for the welfare of their subjects, by punishing none but evil-doers, and by protecting and encouraging all who obey the wholesome laws of the state, whatever religion they may profess, ver. 4.—It was therefore necessary for the brethren to obey the heathen magistrates, in all things consistent with their duty to God; not only to avoid punishment, but from a principle of conscience, ver. 5.—And that the rulers might be honourably maintained, and the government effectually supported; the Apostle ordered *tax*, and *custom*, and *tribute*, to be paid, as well as that *fear* or respect, which is due to rulers, on account of their office, ver. 6, 7.—In this, I suppose the Apostle had the Jews in his eye, who held it unlawful to pay tribute to Cæsar; yet what he says being general, and applicable to all who enjoy the protection of government, it could give the Jews no just offence. Lastly, The disciples of Christ, as members of society, are to owe no man any thing, except to love one another, because love leads to the performance of every social duty, and prevents all manner of injuries and crimes, ver. 8—10.

It deserves both notice and praise, that in explaining to the inhabitants of Rome their duty as citizens, the Apostle has shewn the finest address. For while he seemed only to plead the cause of the magistrate with the people, he tacitly conveyed the most wholesome instruction to the heathen rulers, who he knew were too proud to receive advice from teachers of his character and nation. For, by telling rulers that they are *the servants of God for good to the people*, he taught them the purpose of their office, and shewed them, that their sole aim in executing it ought to be, to promote the happiness of their people; and that as soon as they lose sight of this, their government degenerates into tyranny. Moreover, by establishing the office and power of magistrates on their proper foundation, and by teaching the people to obey their rulers from conscience, he made such of the heathens as read his letter, sensible that the Gospel nourishes no rebellious principles in its disciples; that it does not meddle with the political constitution of any state, on pretence of mending it; and that it enjoins subjects, in things not sinful, to obey their rulers, whatever the form of government is, under which they act. Such a discourse concerning obedience to laws and magistrates, was addressed to the Roman brethren with peculiar propriety, because they had been banished from Rome with the Jews, by the emperor Claudius, under the pretence of tumultuous behaviour, and were but lately returned.—The Apostle, however, gave the same directions to other churches, Titus, iii. 1. as did St. Peter likewise,

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1 Pet. ii. 13—17.; from which we may learn how turbulent the Jews were in all the heathen countries, and how anxious the Christian teachers were, to have their disciples free from blame in every respect.

In what follows, the Apostle earnestly recommended to the Romans the duties of temperance and chastity, because, in their heathen state, they had been extremely deficient in these virtues. And that his exhortation might make the deeper impression, he compared their former ignorance, from which their lewdness and intemperance had proceeded, to the darkness of night; and opposed thereto the knowledge which the Gospel had imparted to them, likening it to the light of day, springing up after a long dark night, and gradually advancing to meridian brightness. And the heathens lying in that ignorance, he compared to persons in a deep sleep, because they were as incapable of performing the rational functions of men, as persons are who sleep in the intoxication of drunkenness, ver. 11—14.

The precepts in this and the preceding chapter do great honour to the Gospel, and to its ministers. They shew us, that instead of contracting men's affections, and limiting them to their own pale, the Gospel enlarges their hearts, so as to embrace the whole human race, not excluding their very enemies: that it cherishes no rebellious principles in its disciples, but enjoins obedience to superiors from a regard to conscience; and that it allures no profelytes, by the prospect of criminal sensual pleasures of any kind.

Ver. 1. This epistle was written about the fourth year of the emperor Nero, about six years after Claudius had expelled the Jews from Rome. It is not improbable, that, as Suetonius relates in the Life of Claudius, this was occasioned by the tumultuous disposition of the Jews, in one shape or other; whether upon a civil or religious account, is not easy to determine. However, we know that they had notions relating to government favourable to none but their own; and it was with great reluctance that they submitted to a foreign jurisdiction. The Christians, under a notion of their being the people of God, and the subjects of his kingdom, might be in danger of being infected by those unruly and rebellious sentiments: therefore the Apostle here points out their duty to the civil magistrate. To understand him right, we must consider these two things: *First*, That these rules are given to Christians, who were members of the heathen commonwealth,—to shew them that, by being made Christians, and subjects of Christ's kingdom, they were not, through the freedom of the Gospel, exempt from any ties of duty or subjection which by the laws of the country wherein they lived they were bound to observe,—from paying all due obedience to the government and magistrates, though heathens, in the same manner as was done by their heathen subjects. But on the other side, these rules did not tie them up, more than any of their fellow-citizens who were not Christians, from any of those due rights which by the law of nature, or the constitution of their country, belonged to them. Whatever any other of their fellow-subjects, being in a like

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5 ^c Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience-sake.

6 For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

^c 1 Sam. 24. 5. Eccl. 8. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 13. Ver. 1—3.

station with them, might do without sinning, of that they were not abridged, but might still do the same, being Christians; the rule here being the same with that given by St. Paul, 1 Cor. vii. 17. *As the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk.* The rules of civil right and wrong, whereby he is to walk, are to him the same that they were before. *Secondly,* We must consider, that St. Paul, in this direction to the Romans, does not so much describe the magistrates who were then in Rome, as relate whence they, and all magistrates every where, derive their authority; and for what end they have, and should use it: and this he does as becomes his prudence, to avoid bringing any imputation on the Christians from heathen magistrates; especially those insolent and vicious ones of Rome, who could not brook any thing to be told them as their duty, and so might be apt to interpret such plain truths, laid down in a dogmatical way, into sedition or treason;—a scandal cautiously to be kept off from the Christian doctrine. Nor does he, in what he says, in the least flatter the Roman emperor: for he speaks here of the *higher powers*, that is, the supreme civil power, which is in every commonwealth derived from God, and is of the same extent every where; that is, is absolute and unlimited by any thing, but the end for which God gave it; namely, the good of the people, sincerely pursued according to the best skill of those who share that power; and so is not to be *resisted*. But how men come by a rightful title to this power, or who has that title, the Apostle is wholly silent: to have meddled with that, would have been to decide of civil rights, contrary to the design and business of the Gospel, and the example of our Saviour. If the reader is attentive, he must be pleased to see in how small a compass, and with how much dexterity, truth, and gravity, the Apostle affirms and explains the foundation, the nature, ends, and just limits of the magistrate's authority, while he is pleading his cause, and teaching the subject the duty and obedience due to governors. See Locke.

Let every soul] “Every one, however endowed with “miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, or advanced to any “dignity in the church of Christ:” for that these things were apt to make men overvalue themselves, is obvious from what St. Paul says to the Corinthians, 1 Ep. xii. and to the Romans, xii. 3, 4. But, above all others, the Jews were apt to have an inward reluctance and indignation against the power of any heathen over them, taking it to be an unjust and tyrannical usurpation upon *them*, who were the people of God, and their betters. These the Apostle thought it necessary to restrain, and therefore says, “Every soul, that is, every person among you, whether “Jew or Gentile, must live in subjection to the civil magistrate.” We see by what St. Peter says on the like occasion, that there was great need that Christians should have this duty inculcated upon them, lest any among them should *use their liberty for a cloak of maliciousness*, or misbehaviour, 1 Pet. ii. 13—16. The doctrine of Christianity

was a doctrine of liberty. Hence mistaken men, especially Jewish converts, impatient, as we have observed, of any heathen dominion, might be ready to infer, that Christians were exempt from subjection to the laws of heathen governments. This he obviates by telling them, that all other governments derived the power they had from God, as well as that of the Jews, though they had not the whole frame of their government immediately from him, as the Jews had. Whether we take the *powers* here, in the abstract, for political authority, or in the concrete for the persons *de facto* exercising political power and jurisdiction, the sense will be the same; viz. that Christians, by virtue of being Christians, are not any way exempt from obedience to the civil magistrates, nor ought by any means to resist them; though by what is said, ver. 3. it seems that St. Paul meant here *magistrates* having and exercising a lawful power. But whether the magistrates in being were or were not such, and consequently were or were not to be obeyed, that Christianity gave them no peculiar power to examine. They had the common right of others their fellow-citizens, but had no distinct privilege as Christians; and therefore we see, ver. 7. that where he enjoins the paying of tribute, custom, &c. it is in these words: *Render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute, honour to whom honour, &c.* But *who* it was to whom any of these, or any other dues of right belonged, he decides not; for that he leaves them to be determined by the laws and constitutions of their country. Instead of *ordained of God*, we may render the original τεταγμένοι, by *disposed*, or *established*. See Acts, xiii. 48. Divine Providence ranges, and in some sense establishes, the various governments of the world; they are therefore under the character of governments in the general to be revered: but this cannot make what is wrong and pernicious in any peculiar forms, sacred, divine, and immutable; any more than the hand of God in a famine or pestilence, is an argument against seeking proper means to remove it. See Locke, Doddridge, and Mintert.

Ver. 2. Resisteth the power] The word ἰσχυροσώμενος, in the most direct import of it, signifies “one who sets himself as it were in array against,” and may possibly allude to the word τεταγμένοι, ranged or marshalled by God, used in the former verse. The word rendered *damnation*, is κρίμα, and would be more properly rendered *condemnation*, as it is particularly applied to the sentence passed when punishment is denounced by a judge; though here it may signify not only the condemnation of the civil power, but likewise that of the Sovereign of the universe.

Ver. 3. Rulers are not a terror to good works] *To the well-doer, τῷ ἀγαθῶς ἔργῳ.* See Junius in Wetstein. Heylin renders the passage,—*to those who do well, but to those who do ill.* If circumstances arise to which the argument in this verse is not applicable, it is reasonably to be taken for granted, that the Apostle did not intend here to pronounce concerning such cases. Nothing can be said for interpreting

7 'Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; 'fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

8 'Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: 'for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt

not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

10 ^m Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.

11 And that, knowing the time, that ⁿ now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for ^o now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

^f Mat. 22. 21. Mark, 12. 17. Luke, 20. 25. Acts, 5. 37. ^g Eph. 5. 23. & 6. 5. Mal. 1. 6. Exod. 20. 12. 1 Pet. 2. 17. ^h Mat. 7. 12. Prov. 3. 27, 28. Gal. 5. 15. ⁱ 1 Tim. 1. 5. James, 2. 8. ^k Exod. 20. 12—17. Deut. 5. 16—21. Mat. 19. 18, 19. James, 2. 11. ^l Lev. 19. 18. Mat. 22. 39. Gal. 5. 14. James, 2. 11. ^m 1 Cor. 13. 4—7. Mat. 22. 40. ⁿ 1 Cor. 15. 34. Eph. 5. 14. 1 Thess. 5. 6. Mal. 25. 5. ^o Luke, 21. 28. James, 4. 14. Rev. 22. 7, 12, 20.

interpreting these passages in favour of unlimited passive obedience, which will not prove any resistance of a private injury unlawful, by the limited authority of our Lord's decision, Matt. v. 39, 40. This would subvert the great foundation of magistracy itself, which is appointed to ward off and prevent by force, or to avenge such injuries; but it was very prudent in the Apostle not to enter into any question relating to the right of resistance in some extraordinary cases; as those cases are comparatively few, and as the just decisions which could have been given on that subject might possibly have been misrepresented to his own detriment, and that of the Gospel. The general laws of benevolence to the whole, so strongly asserted in this context, are in particular cases to determine; and all particular precepts, in whatever universal terms they are delivered, are always to give way to them. See Doddridge, and Bishop Hoadley's "Measures of Submission."

Ver. 4. *For he beareth not the sword in vain*] This strongly intimates the lawfulness of inflicting capital punishments; to deny which, is in effect subverting the chief use of magistrates; though sanguinary laws should be as much as possible avoided. Bengelius reads the first clause of this verse, *For he is the minister of God, for good to thee*; and the last clause, *For he is God's vindictive minister, for a terror to the evil-doer*. See Heinsius and Wetstein.

Ver. 7. *Tribute to whom tribute*] The Jews had a favourite notion among them, that, as the peculiar people of God, they were exempted from obligations to pay tribute to Gentiles; against which notion this passage is directly levelled, though without pointing them out in any invidious manner. The word *Φέσιν*, rendered *fear*, may be more properly rendered *reverence*; for it expresses the inward disposition; as *τιμὴν*, *honour*, expresses the conduct and external behaviour proceeding from it. See Doddridge, Heylin, and Ephes. v. 33.

Ver. 11. *Nearer than when we believed*] *Than when we declared our belief*. Markland. *Than when we declared the faith*. Heylin. It seems by this and the following verse, says Mr. Locke, as if St. Paul looked upon Christ's coming as not far off; to which there are several other concurrent passages in his Epistles: see 1 Cor. i. 7. But with all due respect to Mr. Locke, Grotius, and other learned men who favour this sentiment, I am fully satisfied that they have

been mistaken, misunderstanding the particular passages of Scripture which they have adduced, and the true state of things in the present instance. That St. Paul did "not look upon Christ's coming as not far off," or as if it might happen while he and the men of that generation were living, is incontestably evident from 2 Thess. ii. 1. &c. where he professedly refutes this erroneous opinion. The case was this: the Thessalonians had mistaken some expressions in his first letter; just in the same manner, probably, as Mr. Locke and others have mistaken the like passages. He had told them, 1 Thess. v. 2—4. *That the day of the Lord so suddenly cometh, as a thief in the night; and that their only security against being surpris'd, or overtaken unawares, by that day, was their not being in darkness, but enjoying the light of the Gospel: ver. 4, 5. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. You are all children of the light*. This, their being forewarn'd of it, and furnish'd with all proper means to prepare for it, was their only security against being surpris'd by the coming of our Lord to judgment. Now taking this in connection with what he had said just before (1 Thess. iv. 15.), *We which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord*.—They concluded, as Mr. Locke does in respect to the sentiment of the Apostle, that the *Lord would come while they were alive*, and hereby were much alarmed and disturbed. But this notion was not only false, but of very bad tendency; and therefore the Apostle, with much earnestness, corrects the mistake in a second Epistle, ch. ii. 1, &c. where he plainly declares that he did not believe the coming of the Lord was at hand; and that he knew by the spirit of prophecy, that before the coming of the Lord, there would be a falling away, or great apostacy in the Christian church, and that the *man of sin* would appear, and erect a spiritual Anti-Christian tyranny in the temple, or church of God. Most certainly the Apostle knew that the coming of Christ would not be till several ages after the time in which he lived: and no doubt all the apostles knew this as well as he. And yet he, and the other apostles, always speak as if the coming of Christ, and the day of the Lord, the day of judgment, were near at hand; and accordingly exhort Christians to watch, and to keep themselves in readiness, that they may not be surpris'd by it; as in the present passage, Phil. iv. 5., 1 Thess.

12 'The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore 'cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on 'the armour of 'light.

13 'Let us walk *honestly, as in the day; 'not in rioting and drunkenness, *not in cham-

bering and wantonness, 'not in strife and envying.

14 But 'put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and 'make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

^p Song, 2. 17. ¹ Theff. 5. 4-6. ² Pet. 1. 19. ¹ John, 2. 8. ¹ Pet. 4. 7. ¹ Cor. 7. 29. ⁹ Eph. 5. 11. ¹ Theff. 5. 7. ¹ John, 3. 20. ¹ Job, 24. 14-17. ¹ Col. 3. 5, 8. ¹ Eph. 5. 3. ² Cor. 6. 7. ¹ Col. 3. 10-17. ¹ Theff. 5. 8. ¹ Eph. 6. 11-18. ¹ John, 1. 4, 9. & 3. 19. & 8. 12. & 12. 35. or Mat. 5. 16. ¹ Phil. 2. 15, 16. ¹ Phil. 1. 27. & 4. 8. ² Cor. 1. 12. ¹ Acts, 24. 16. ¹ Ch. xii. xiii. ¹ Eph. 5. 15. iv-vi. ¹ Theff. v. & 4. 12. ¹ Pet. 2. 12. * Or decently. ¹ Luke, 21. 34. ¹ Gal. 5. 21. ¹ Pet. 4. 3. ¹ Gal. 5. 19. ¹ Eph. 5. 3-5. ¹ Cor. 6. 5, 10. ¹ Col. 3. 5. ¹ Theff. 4. 3, 5. ¹ Pet. 4. 3. ¹ James, 3. 14-16. & 4. 1. ¹ Gal. 5. 15, 26. ² Gal. 3. 27. & 2. 20. ¹ Eph. 4. 24. ¹ Col. 3. 10. ¹ Rev. 16. 15. & 19. 8. ¹ Il. 61. 10. ¹ Gal. 5. 16. ² Gal. 5. 24, 17. ¹ Pet. 2. 11. ¹ John, 2. 16. ¹ Col. 35. 8. ¹ Eph. 5. 3, 4. ¹ Luke, 21. 34.

v. 2., Heb. x. 37., James, v. 7-9., 1 Pet. iv. 7., 2 Pet. iii. 10, 11, 12. Our blessed Lord also knew very well that he should not come while that generation to whom he preached, was alive: and yet he exhorts that generation to watch and have all things in readiness, that they might not be surpris'd by his coming; Matt. xxiv. 42, &c. xxv. 13., Mark, xiii. 33, &c. Luke, xxi. 34, &c. and after his ascension, Rev. xxii. 7, 12, 20. This is the current language and sense of our Lord and his apostles. They represent his coming as *at hand*,—as *drawing nigh*, and admonish their hearers to *watch*, lest his coming should find them unprepared; though they knew his coming would not be till many ages after these persons whom they so exhorted, were dead, and in their graves. But how shall we reconcile this seeming inconsistency?—Thus:—"The time of our Lord's coming coincides, or happens at the same time with the time of our death; how near to, or how far soever from his coming we happen to die." To confirm this proposition, we need advance but one argument, out of more that might be produced; it is this: certainly our Christian course [of preparatory duties, sufferings, watchings, patience, &c.] ends when we die: but *Christ comes* when our Christian course ends; or, our Christian course in this life terminates in the coming of Christ. This is evident from the following texts: 1 Cor. i. 8., Philip. i. 6, 10., 1 Theff. iii. 13., v. 23., 2 Theff. i. 7., 1 Tim. vi. 11-15., 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8., James, v. 7., 1 Pet. i. 5, 13., 2 Pet. iii. 11, 12., and Rev. ii. 25., iii. 11. In short, throughout the New Testament, we are never exhorted to prepare for *death*, but always for the *coming of our Lord*, &c. From all which it appears, that the end of our Christian course, and consequently of our present life, is the coming of our Lord; when the faithful shall receive the *salvation*, the *crown of righteousness*, which he will give to them that *love his appearing*.—An awful, important, awakening truth! of great weight and force in religion; infinitely worthy of our most serious consideration every day and hour of our life! That which is here called *our salvation*, is in Jude, ver. 3. termed *the common salvation*; that is, that salvation, or rest, which we have all a promise left of obtaining, as all the Israelites had a promise left of entering into the land of Canaan, even they who fell short through unbelief, Heb. iv. 1, 2. The beautiful and lively metaphor in ver. 11, 12. is very observable. This present imperfect state of trial, he compares to the *night*; and the salvation and glory we have in prospect, to the *day*: he supposes Christians in name

may be asleep, negligent of their most important concerns, or immersed in sensuality: as the Apostle therefore of Christ, and a preacher of the Gospel, he knocks at the chamber-door, and calls to them, "It is high time to awake out of sleep; the day appears, the glorious day of your everlasting salvation. Awake, awake! throw off the loose clothes which cover you in the night, and in which it is unseemly to appear before men; and put on that comely dress, which is agreeable to the day, and gives a decent and honourable appearance in the world;" meaning that disposition and conversation which are agreeable to the Gospel, lovely in the eyes of good men, and which fits us to appear among the blessed in the realms of light.

Ver. 12. The armour of light] Beza observes very justly, that the sense of *σπλα*, *armour*, is very extensive, and comprehends any accoutrements of the body. Hence it evidently signifies *dress*: and, the Apostle's meaning will be obscured, if it be not so translated. "Put on the dress and ornaments of that virtue and holiness, which is suitable to the heavenly light of the Gospel." See Locke.

Ver. 13. Let us walk honestly] *Ἐσχημένως*, *honourably*, or *gracefully*. Dr. Milner renders the passage, *Let us walk with a grace*. The word for *chambering* is *κοίταις*, which Leigh explains of *lying long in bed*. It implies effeminacy and luxury of that kind. The word *ἀελαγεία*, rendered *wantonness*, properly signifies a soft and dissolute manner of life, attended with an affected delicacy, very detrimental to that resolution which is so necessary an ingredient in the character of one who would approve himself a good soldier of Jesus Christ. The general meaning may be, "Do not indulge any intemperate lewd conversation among your heathen acquaintance, nor any strife or envy against your Christian brethren." See Doddridge, Stockius, and Milner's "Fading Flowers of Life," p. 38.

Ver. 14. Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ] A strong expression for endeavouring to be clothed, through divine grace, with all the virtues and graces which compose his character. It is observable, that the Apostle does not say, "Put on purity, sobriety, benevolence, &c." But he in effect says all at once, in saying, *Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*. Plutarch tells us concerning the kings of Persia, that on the coronation-day they put on a robe which the first Cyrus wore before he was king, to remind them of imitating his exemplary temper and behaviour. Dr. Hammond renders the last clause of this verse very well, "Take care

CHAP. XIV.

Men may not condemn one another for things indifferent; but take heed that they give no offence in them; for that the apostle proveth unlawful by many reasons.

[Anno Domini 58.]

HIM ¹that is weak in the faith receive ye, ²but ³* not to doubtful disputations.

² For ¹one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, ^ceateth herbs.

³ ^dLet not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

⁴ ^eWho art thou that judgest another man's

¹ Il. 42. 3. & 35. 3, 4. Ezek. 34. 4, 6. Mat. 18. 10. Ch. 15. 1, 7. ¹ Cor. 8. 11. & 9. 22. ² Or not to judge his doubtful thoughts. ^b 1 Cor. 10. 1. 1 Tim. 4. 3. Titus, 1. 15. ^c Dan. 1. 12. Lev. 17. 10—14. ^d Acts, 10. 34, 44. ^e Col. 2. 16. ^f 1 Cor. 4. 4. James, 4. 11, 12.

"care your providence for the flesh do not turn into covetousness, or irregular desires;" for it is literally, *Make not provision for the flesh unto covetousness.* See Plutarch's Life of Artaxerxes, and Hammond.

Inferences.—What a wise and important appointment of Providence is civil government, for the good of mankind; for a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well! And what a friend is the Christian religion to its happiness, peace, and order! It directs rulers how to answer the valuable ends of the high trust which God has committed to them; and teaches subjects to yield all dutiful obedience to them, for conscience-sake as well as for escaping the vengeance of the sword of justice, and reaping the benefits of government. While magistrates rule for the general good of the community, according to the laws and constitution of the state, we ought to reverence and honour them in their public character, as the ministers and ordinance of God for good, and to pay the customs and tributes that are their due, as an equitable and grateful return for their care, trouble, and expence in protecting us, and our rights and properties: public as well as private debts, ought to be faithfully discharged; only we are never to think that we have so fully paid the debt of love one to another, as to be under no farther obligations to it. What an amiable and constraining principle is true Christian love! It inclines and engages us to fulfil all the duties of morality towards our neighbour; it restrains us from adultery, murder, theft, falsehood, and lying, and from all covetous desires of any man's goods and enjoyments; and it obliges and disposes us to a performance of all the contrary duties, yea, of every thing contained in the Second Table of the Law. But, alas! how imperfect is the present state of things! The best that can be said of it is, that the night is far spent, and the day is at hand; and that complete salvation is continually approaching nearer and nearer to every true and persevering believer. How should these thoughts excite Christians to shake off sloth, and renounce all works of darkness; such as rioting and drunkenness, uncleanness and wantonness, strife and envy; and to walk honourably, as becomes children of the light and of the day, and as those that put on Christ, and the illustrious armour with which he has furnished them, to guard against all evil; and that are careful never to do any thing to indulge the flesh, and fulfil its sinful desires!

REFLECTIONS.—1st, From the duties they owed to each other, as members of civil society, the Apostle proceeds to enforce submission in all lawful things to the authority of

the civil government under which they lived. The Christian doctrine makes no alteration in the natural and civil rights of mankind. Dominion is not founded in grace; therefore *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; respectful and obedient to all lawful magistrates, from the highest to the lowest, and willingly observant of the laws with the execution of which they are entrusted. For there is no power, but of God; he is the source of all authority, dignity, and honour; by him kings reign. The powers that be are ordained of God; whatever be the mode of government, whether the ruling power be lodged in the hands of one person or many, submission is our duty; and though the men who are invested with the authority be never so vile and wicked, their lawful commands are nevertheless to be obeyed; and the magistrate is to be honoured, however despicable the man may appear. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, and refuseth obedience to the lawful orders of the established government, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation, κείρα, the punishment due to their offence, according to the laws, from the sword of the magistrate, and judgment also from God for the transgression against his ordinance. For rulers are not a terror to good works: they who behave quiet and submissive have nothing to fear, for such subjects the magistrates are bound to protect and cherish; but they are appointed to restrain the evil actions of men, which tend to disturb the peace of society, to dishonour God, or injure their neighbour. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, be peaceable and obedient to the laws, and thou shalt have praise of the same, in every well-ordered government such subjects will be protected and encouraged. For he is the minister of God, appointed to preserve the peace of the state, to redress injuries, administer justice, suppress vice, profaneness, and immorality; to punish offenders, and promote the general welfare: and therefore if thou be found obedient, the office of magistracy will be to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, and violate the established laws, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; being obliged by his very office impartially to inflict the penalty due to every offence; for he is the minister of God, who puts the sword of judgment into his hands, as a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil; not out of any private personal resentment, but coolly as God's vicegerent, without partiality or favour, according to the dictates of justice. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, merely through fear of punishment and penalties, but also for conscience-sake; from a principle of duty towards God, whose ordinance is binding; and obedience for his sake is due to human*

servant? to his own master he standeth or is able to make him stand.
 falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God 5^e One man esteemeth one day above an-

^f Will make, as ch. 4. 21. & 11. 23. Heb. 2. 18. Ver. 3. ^g Gal. 4. 10. Col. 2. 16.

human laws, though no pains or penalties were annexed. *For, for this cause pay ye tribute also*; the taxes and duties necessary for the support of the government whose protection you enjoy: *for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues*, according to the laws human or divine; *tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom*; all subsidies, taxes, &c. imposed by lawful authority; *fear, to whom fear and reverence should be paid; honour, to whom honour is due*, according to the superior rank and relation in which by the providence of God they are placed.

2dly, From the payment of dues to magistrates, the Apostle passes on to enforce the discharge of every debt, to whomsoever due.

Owe no man any thing; never run in debt where you have no immediate prospect of paying; nor continue in debt when you have ability to discharge it; and in every relation of life be ready to fulfil the duty which you owe. One debt there is, however, and but one, where, though ever paying, you neither wish nor desire that it should be less, and that is, *to love one another* as men, and especially as Christians, seeking to promote each other's present and eternal welfare; and this, as the great and reigning principle in all your conduct: *for he that loveth another*, and, from a sense of the love of God in Christ, experiences this godlike charity, *hath fulfilled the law*; if his love be perfect, he will be complete in all the will of God. Yet so far as love is in vigorous exercise, so far will his spiritual obedience advance towards perfection. *For this, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, and act conscientiously towards him, as, were our circumstances reversed, we might reasonably expect he should behave towards us; for then, were there no human restraints or punishments, love would effectually prevent every violation of our neighbour's person, goods, or fame: we cannot hurt the body which we love; we cannot defraud those whom we love; we cannot speak evil of those whom we love; we cannot defile those whom we love, though lawless lust (which is real hatred) often covers its horrid features with the false vizard of this sacred name. *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour*, neither in act nor intention; *the love is the fulfilling of the law*.

3dly, The Apostle enforces what he had been recommending to their practice, by a very awful consideration. *And this duty of love I press upon you, knowing the time, the day of Gospel grace and light having broke in upon us; so that now it is high time to awake out of sleep*; and shake off all spiritual sloth and carnal security: *for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed*; and as our journey's end draws nearer, we should mend our pace, not loiter, when the mansions of eternal rest are, as it were, in view. *The night is far spent*, the night of trials, and afflictions, and remaining ignorance, is drawing to an end; *the day*

of the complete redemption of the faithful from darkness, trouble, and suffering, *is at hand*, when in eternal glory their sun shall rise, to set no more: *let us therefore cast off the works of darkness*; as persons rising from their beds remove the clothes, so must we reject and put far away all those sinful tempers and practices, which are opposite to the light of truth, are usually done in secret, and for which the blackness of darkness is the reserved punishment: *and let us put on the armour of light*, all those bright and shining graces of the Spirit, which adorn our holy profession, and enable us to stand against the assaults of sin, the world, and Satan, till triumphantly we shall appear in all the lustre of eternal glory. *Therefore let us walk honestly as in the day*, shewing a conversation such as becometh godliness in the eyes of men; guided by the light of truth, and the Spirit of purity; and able to bear the strictest scrutiny of our Observer; *not in rioting and drunkenness*, indulging to excess in meat and drink our sensual appetites; *not in chambering and wantonness*, for which sensuality supplies the fuel; but restraining every lascivious thought, immodest word, indecent action, as well as abstaining from the grosser pollutions which are in the world through lust; *not in strife and envying*, contentious, quarrelsome, and grieved, instead of rejoicing in the prosperity of our neighbours. *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*, that you may be complete in him; put on his image, that, being like him, you may come to be with him; put on his holy profession, owning your entire dependence upon him, as your Prophet, Priest, and King; that all who see you may take knowledge of you that you indeed belong to him; *and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof*; let your soul, and your eternal interests, be your great concern, without anxiety about a worldly provision; and, especially, mortify your sensual appetites in whatever would tend to inflame the passions; and to as many as walk after this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and on the Israel of God.

CHAP. XIV.

SOME of the Jewish converts at Rome, fancying that the meats forbidden by Moses were unclean in themselves, ver. 14. and that the days which he ordered to be kept holy, were still to be sanctified, looked on their Gentile brethren as profane persons, because they ate all kinds of meat without distinction, and regarded every day alike. On the other hand, the Gentiles despised the Jews as ignorant bigots, for making any distinctions of meats and days, and refused to admit them into their company. To remedy these disorders, the Apostle, in this chapter, commanded the Gentile converts who were well instructed, to be in friendship with such of their Jewish brethren as were weak in the faith, and to converse familiarly with them; not however for the purpose of disputing about their particular opinions, but for knowing each other's good qualities and graces, that mutual love might be promoted, ver. 1.—He acknowledged that it was natural for the Jews

other: another esteemeth every day *alike*. ^b Let every man be * fully persuaded in his own mind.

^a Phil. 3. 15. Ver. 23.

* Or *fully assured*.

6 He that † regardeth the day, regardeth it ¹ unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.

† Or *observeth*. . ¹ 1 Cor. 10. 31. † Pet. 4. 11.

and Gentiles to differ in opinion concerning meats, ver. 2.—But the Gentile brother, who ate all kinds indifferently, was not to despise the Jew as a weak bigot, because he ate such meats only as were allowed by the law of Moses. On the other hand, the Jew was not to condemn the Gentile as a profane person, for eating meats forbidden by Moses; for God had received him into his church, notwithstanding he did not obey the law, ver. 3.

Having thus advised the Gentile and Jewish Christians to forbear despising and condemning each other, for not following the same rule respecting meats, the Apostle asked them what title they had to condemn one another for their conduct in that matter, seeing they were all Christ's servants, employed by him in his family or church, alone, whose prerogative it is to acquit or condemn his own servants. Farther, he assured them that, notwithstanding they condemned one another on account of meats, Christ, at the judgment, will acquit his sincere servants, although they may have erred in that matter, provided they have acted therein according to conscience, ver. 4.

—Next, with respect to the days which Moses ordered to be hallowed, the Apostle likewise acknowledged, that it was natural for the Jews and Gentiles to have different opinions. But whether they observed these days, or did not observe them, their duty was, to be fully persuaded in their own mind concerning the lawfulness of what they did, ver. 5.—And therefore, though they differed in their practice concerning meats and days, the Apostle charitably hoped they all acted in these matters from a regard to the will of Christ, ver. 6.—This regard, he told them, it became them to maintain habitually, because none of them was his own lord: none of them was at liberty in religious matters to act according to his own pleasure, ver. 7, 8.—For Christ both died and rose again that he might acquire a right to rule the dead and the living, ver. 9.—Christ then being their only ruler, the Apostle asked them, how they dared to intrude themselves into his place, the Jews by condemning the Gentiles, and the Gentiles by insolently despising the Jews? Instead of having a right to judge one another, they were all to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, ver. 10. as Isaiah foretold;—and to give an account to him, not of their neighbour's actions, but of their own, ver. 11, 12.

Christ then being the only Lord of the conscience of his servants, and the judge of their actions, the Apostle commanded the Romans no longer to judge one another, but to judge this rather to be a fit measure, not to lay, either by their severe judgments, or by their example, any temptation in one another's way, which might occasion their falling into sin, ver. 13.—And, to shew them what he meant by this advice, he told them, that though no meat be unclean in itself, every kind is unclean to him who thinketh it unclean; because, while he entertains that opinion, he cannot eat it without sin, ver. 14.—And therefore,

said the Apostle, if thy weak brother be tempted, either by thy severe censures, or by thy example, to eat meats which he thinks unclean, thou actest not according to the love which thou shouldst bear to thy brother, if thou continuest to tempt him in that manner. I beseech thee, do not destroy him with thy meat, for whom Christ died, ver. 15;—nor occasion the good liberty which belongs to the disciples of Christ, to be evil spoken of by the Jews, ver. 16.—Besides, there is no reason for using your liberty on every occasion; especially as the religion of Christ does not consist in the use of meats and drinks, but in a righteous and peaceable behaviour towards all men; neither are the pleasures which his religion promises, the pleasures of sense, but those joys which result from the possession and exercise of the graces and virtues which the Holy Ghost infuses into men's minds, ver. 17.—Farther, the person who by righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost, serves Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved by all his saints, ver. 18.

Upon these principles, the Apostle exhorted his brethren, in things about which they might entertain different opinions with a good conscience, to follow such a course as would promote their mutual peace and edification, ver. 19;—and by no means, for the trifling pleasure of eating this or that kind of meat, to incur the hazard of destroying one another's grace or virtue, which is the work of God. For although all meats are clean, that meat is bad to him who eateth it contrary to his conscience, through the *stumbling-block*, or temptation of another's example, ver. 20.—Every one's duty therefore is, to avoid all those things which have any tendency to lead others into sin, or to weaken their grace, ver. 21.—For the direction, however, of the well-instructed, the Apostle told them, that, having a right faith concerning meats and days, they were under no obligation to display that faith at all times. It was sufficient, if they held it fast in the presence of God, for the regulation of their own conduct: and that it would be happy for them, if they never subjected themselves to condemnation, by doing that which they knew to be lawful, ver. 22.—Yet condemnation they would assuredly bring on themselves, if by eating meats which they knew to be lawful, they tempted others to sin by eating them contrary to their conscience. For he who believes certain meats to be unlawful, sins if he eats them; because *he eateth not of faith*, that is, from a belief that they are lawful; but in eating them violates his conscience. And in general, whatever a man does without believing it to be lawful, being a violation of his conscience, is sin: which is the true meaning of the famed aphorism, *Whatever is not of faith, is sin*, ver. 23.

Here the xvth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans ends, according to the common division. But as the Apostle continues the subject treated of in that chapter, through the first seven verses of the xvth chapter, it will be

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He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for ^h he to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God
giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, thanks.

^h 1 Cor. 10. 26, 28. Mat. 14. 19. & 15. 36. & 26. 26. 1 Tim. 4. 3, 4.

be proper to add an account of these verses also, that the reader may have the whole of the Apostle's discourse under his eye at once.

To proceed then. The Apostle having declared in the xivth chapter, that the weak Jewish Christians, in the affair of meats and days, were bound to act according to their own conscience, notwithstanding it might be erroneous, he, in the beginning of the xvth chapter, told the well-instructed Roman brethren, that they ought to *bear* or *carry* the weaknesses of the ignorant and prejudiced, that is, they ought to do what they could to prevent their weaknesses from being hurtful to them. In particular, they were not to please themselves with the eating of meats, which their weak brethren reckoned unclean, if they had reason to think that any who entertained that belief would by their example be tempted to eat such meats contrary to their conscience, ver. 1.—He therefore exhorted every one to please his neighbour for his good, by abstaining from such meats as were offensive to him, in order that the body of Christ might be edified, ver. 2.—To this they were called by the example of Christ, who pleased not himself by sensual gratifications; but subjected himself to all manner of hardships and reproaches for the glory of God, and the good of men, as was foretold concerning him, ver. 3.—Here the Apostle took occasion to inform the Romans, that whatever things were anciently written in the Scriptures, were written for our instruction; that by what is recorded concerning the patience and consolation granted to the saints in their trials, we might have hope of receiving the like patience and consolation in our trials, ver. 4.—And being exceedingly desirous to promote the purity and peace of the Roman church, he prayed God to bestow on its members the good dispositions which he had been recommending; that, laying aside their disputes, they might cordially join in worshipping God publicly, and in praising him for his goodness to men, ver. 5, 6.—This admirable discourse, the Apostle concluded with an exhortation to the Jewish and Gentile brethren to *receive one another*, that is, to live in peace and friendship with one another, even as Christ had received them all into his friendship and church, to the great glory of God the Father, ver. 7.

It is proper now to observe, that although the controversy concerning the holy days, and the distinction of meats enjoined by the law of Moses, which led the Apostle to give the Roman brethren the rules contained in the xivth and in the beginning of the xvth chapter of this Epistle, has no place in the present state of the church, these chapters must not be considered as useless. The general principles of morality explained in them, are of unalterable obligation, and may be applied with great advantage for preventing us, both from lording it over the conscience of our brethren, and from submitting to their unrighteous impositions in matters of religion. For what can be more useful to Christians in every age, than to be assured by an inspired Apostle, that Christ is the only Lord of the con-

science of his servants, and the judge of their hearts?—That he has not delegated this great prerogative to any man or body of men whatever—That to him alone, and not to one another, they are accountable for their religious opinions and actions—That in all cases where difference of opinion in religious matters takes place, every man should guide himself by his own persuasion, and not by the opinion of others—That no man or body of men has any right to force the conscience of others by persecuting them, or punishing them for their opinions—That all who do so, usurp the prerogative of Christ, and therefore, instead of hating them, either for their opinions, or for their mode of worshipping God, we ought to live in peace and friendship with them, notwithstanding these unessential differences.—That, as the kingdom of God does not consist in meat and drink, but in righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, the teachers who make holiness to consist in abstaining from this or that kind of meat, miserably corrupt their disciples, by leading them to believe that they can render themselves holy and acceptable to God without experiencing and practising holiness.—Lastly, in the above-mentioned chapters, the Apostle has laid it down as an indispensable rule, that no one, even by doing things innocent, should, by his example, tempt a weak brother to follow him, contrary to his conscience; because, while the weak brother thinks the thing sinful, his doing it is a sin, although in itself it may really be innocent.

The foregoing principles and rules being the strongest barrier against all usurpations on the rights of conscience, whether by the ecclesiastical or the civil powers, this passage of the Epistle to the Romans, in which they are laid down by the inspiration of God, should be regarded as the great charter of Christian liberty; and as such, it is highly to be valued, frequently read, deeply meditated on, and carefully observed by Christians of all denominations. If these liberal principles and excellent rules had been sufficiently understood and duly respected from the beginning, innumerable mischiefs would have been prevented, which miserably wasted the church in former times; and there would have been at this day more of the genuine spirit of the Gospel among the disciples of Christ, than in any period of Christianity since the first ages. But, alas! it was the misfortune of the church, very early, to fall under the teaching and direction of a number of proud, ignorant, ambitious men, who, being actuated by an immoderate love of power and wealth, impiously usurped the prerogative of Christ, and imposed on the people, not only doctrines not taught by Christ and his Apostles, but doctrines directly contrary to theirs, together with a variety of usages in the worship of God, of their own invention, many of them downright superstitions, and all of them sinful, when imposed as terms of Christian communion. Nay, which is worse still, these ungodly spiritual guides, vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds, obtruded on man-
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7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the

1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. Gal. 2. 20. 2 Cor. 5. 15. 1 Theff. 5. 16. 1 Pet. 4. 2. Eph. 1. 12. Phil. 1. 21—23. Rev. 14. 13.

kind *their own definitions* of doctrines confessedly above human comprehension, as the infallible dictates of the Spirit of God, by whom they pretended to be guided in their decisions. And, having deluded ignorant superstitious princes with that false pretence, they excited them to persecute all who resisted their unrighteous usurpations, and who rejected that corrupt form of religion which they had established. For these deluded princes, to stop the mouths of those who stood up for the truth, made use of the diabolical arguments of fire and sword, racks and gibbets, and every cruelty which furious bigotry could devise. So that during many ages, the saints were worn out, and genuine Christianity was well nigh banished from the earth. May God preserve his church in the present, and in all succeeding times, from the like evils, that the religion of Jesus may never again be made the instrument of gratifying the evil passions of covetous and ambitious men!

Ver. 1, &c. Him that is weak, &c.] By Aquila and Priscilla, who were come from Rome, and with whom St. Paul was familiar for a considerable time (Acts, xviii. 2, 3.), or by some other hand, the Apostle had a particular account of the state of the Christian church at Rome, and was informed that there was no good agreement between the Jewish and Gentile converts about *meats and days*. The Jewish Christian retaining a veneration for the laws of Moses, abstained from certain meats, and was observant of certain days; while the Gentile, understanding that the Christian religion laid him under no obligations to such ceremonial points, had no regard to either. The Jew censured the Gentile as a latitudinarian, little better than a mere heathen, and likely to relapse into idolatry. The Gentile censured the Jew, as a man of narrow, superstitious principles, and defective in the faith of the Gospel. The Apostle exhorts, that in such things as are not essential to religion, and in which both parties, in their different way of thinking, might have an honest meaning and serious regard to God, difference of sentiments might not hinder Christian fellowship and love; but that they would mutually forbear each other, make candid allowances, and especially not carry any Gospel liberties so far, as to disgust a weak brother or Jewish Christian against the Gospel itself, and tempt him to renounce Christianity. His rules and exhortations are still of great use, and happy would the Christian world be, if they were more generally practised. By *him that is weak in the faith*, is meant the Jew, who the Apostle knew assuredly was in the wrong; yet he uses him very tenderly, and avoids saying any thing of him that was harsh and overbearing, and only represents him as *weak in the faith*. The *reception* here spoken of is, “the receiving into familiar and ordinary conversation,” as is evident from ch. xv. 7. where the Apostle, directing them to *receive one another mutually*, uses the same word *προσλαμβάνετε*. “Live together in a free and friendly manner, the weak with the strong, and the strong with the weak, without any regard to the differences among you about
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“the lawfulness of any indifferent thing.” *Doubtful disputations* imply “debates and distinctions about matters in “doubt between you.” Dr. Whitby explains the word *διακρίσεις* of *discriminating persons*, according to their inward thoughts and reasonings on these heads. Dr. Doddridge, remarking upon this verse the strength of the Apostle’s reasoning in favour of candour and mutual condescension, observes with the true spirit of that *candour* which he has so strongly enforced, “that when it shall please God to “awaken in the governors of established protestant “churches such a spirit of moderation and goodness, “joined with a true zeal for religion, as to leave certain “things in that natural state of indifference, in which “almost all sensible men confess it is best they should “be left, many separations will cease of course, and “the healers of such breaches will do a noble service “to their country, be honoured by all who love Christianity, and amply rewarded by the great Head of the “church.”

Ver. 2. Eateth herbs] Some of the Jews used to eat no flesh at all, and others looked upon it as a very high pitch of virtue to abstain from it in Gentile countries, and to subsist entirely on vegetables, from an apprehension, that the flesh sold in the shambles might have been offered to idols, or at least have contracted some ceremonial pollution. Possibly some of these Jewish converts might have been of the sect of the *Essenes*, who were peculiarly strict on this head, inasmuch that they abstained not only from flesh, but from fruit. See Whitby and Doddridge.

Ver. 3. Let not him that eateth, despise, &c.] By *him that eateth*, St. Paul seems to mean the *Gentiles*, who were less scrupulous in the use of indifferent things; and by *him that eateth not*, the *Jews*, who made great distinction of meats, and days, and placed in them a great and, as they thought, necessary part of the worship of the true God. To the *Gentiles* the Apostle gives this caution, that they should not condemn the Jews as weak, narrow-minded men, who laid so much stress on matters of such small moment, and thought religion so much concerned in those indifferent things. On the other side, he exhorts the *Jews* not to judge that those who neglected the Jewish observances of meats and days, were still heathens, or would soon apostatize to heathenism again; for he reasons, that God had received them into his family, and that they had no authority to judge whether they were of that family, or would continue so, on account of these unessential points: “That,” says he, “belongs only to the master of the “family; but notwithstanding your censure or hard “thoughts of them, God is able and willing to continue “them in his family, if they cleave to him in faith; notwithstanding you suspect, from their free use of things “indifferent, that they incline too much, or approach too “near to Gentilism.” See Locke.

Ver. 4. Standeth or falleth, &c.] *Falleth* is here used in the destructive sense, and signifies being totally cast off. Comp. ch. xi. 11, 12. Dr. Whitby explains the last clause, of God’s
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Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9^m For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

10 Butⁿ why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for^o we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11 For it is written, ^p *As I live, saith the*

Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then^q every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

13^r Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way.

14^s I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing^{*} unclean of itself:

^m Acts, 10. 42. Rev. 1. 18. 2 Cor. 5. 15. Acts, 2. 36. Mat. 28. 18. Phil. 2. 9—11. ⁿ Ver. 3, 4. ^o 2 Cor. 5. 10. Eccl. 12. 14. Mat. 25. 31. John, 5. 22. Rev. 20. 12. ^p If. 45. 23. Phil. 2. 10. Rev. 5. 13. ^q Mat. 12. 36. Luke, 16. 2. Heb. 13. 17. 1 Pet. 4. 5. 1 Cor. 3. 8. & 4. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Gal. 6. 4, 5. ^r Ver. 3, 4. Mat. 7. 1, 2. James, 4. 11. & 3. 1. & 2. 4. ^s 1 Cor. 8. 9. & 10. 32. 2 Cor. 6. 3. Mat. 18. 7—9. Luke, 18. 2. ^t Gen. 1. 31. Mat. 15. 11. 1 Tim. 4. 4. Titus, 1. 15. 1 Cor. 8. 7—10. ^{*} Gr. common.

convincing the Jewish converts in general of the indifference of the Mosaic ritual, by putting a speedy period to the very possibility of observing it, in the destruction at Jerusalem; which would have a peculiar efficacy to wean men's minds from an attachment to it, when considered in connection with Christ's predictions of that event. But a more extensive interpretation of the passage is both more obvious, and less liable to objection.—“Let me tell you, he shall be continued in God's favour, and *established* as a true member of his family, if he continue to cleave to him by faith; for it is not only consistent with the honour of God, but it is his good pleasure, that he should be continued and established, notwithstanding his neglect of the ritual law; if he persevere in walking with him by faith. See Whitby, and Doddridge.

Ver. 5. *One man esteemeth one day, &c.*] The Apostle having, in the foregoing verse, used the phrase *κρινων ελλοτριον οικειτην*, for *judging any one to be or not to be another man's servant*,—seems here to continue the use of the word *κρινειν* in the same signification; that is, for *judging a day to be more particularly God's*. Critics have observed, that the word *πληροφροσισω*, rendered *fully persuaded*, is most properly applied to a *ship*, which is carried on by the wind and tide with all its sails spread to forward it, and nothing to obstruct its course. So that the meaning is, “Let him go on in his own way, without impediment:—let every man enjoy his own sentiments freely in these things.” See Raphelius, Doddridge, and Bennet's Appendix to his *Irenicum*, p. 120, &c.

Ver. 7—9. *For none of us liveth to himself, &c.*] *None of us*, that is, “none of us Christians, *ought to live*,” &c. The Apostle's argument stands thus: “According to the principles of true religion, and of the Christian religion in particular, we are not our own; neither are we to live to ourselves, as if we were our own lords and proprietors, and had no other rule but our own will and pleasure. No; we are all Christ's, we are his disciples and subjects; and *His* will should be the rule of our consciences and conduct. As therefore we should not make our own wills or sentiments a rule to ourselves, much less should we make them a rule to others; as if they were to live to us, or, like servants, pay us obedience. At the time of death we do not fall into our own hands, as if we had power to raise ourselves to life again at the

“last day; but we die into the hands of Christ, and it is he alone, to whom God has given power to bring us to life again.” Consequently, it is the duty of every one of us to approve ourselves to our Lord Jesus Christ; and therefore we may, respecting those things of which we are now treating, safely leave every one to do what he sincerely thinks is most pleasing to him, without endangering our own salvation, or that of a Christian brother. For assuredly all is well, both with him and us, in life and death, if both seriously endeavour to live internally to, and to regulate their actions by, the will of Christ. See Locke.

Ver. 8. *We are the Lord's*] These words give an easy interpretation to the phrases of *eating and living, &c. to the Lord*; for they make them plainly to refer to what the Apostle had said at the latter end of ver. 3. *for God hath received him*; signifying, that God had received all those who professed and possessed the power of the Gospel, and had given their names up to Jesus Christ, into his family, and thus made them his domestics; and therefore we should not judge of or censure one another, for that every Christian was the Lord's domestic, appropriated to him as his servant; so that all he did in that state and in that spirit, was to be looked upon as done to the Lord, and not be accounted for to any one else. See Locke.

Ver. 9. *Might be Lord*] This must be so understood here as to agree with the foregoing verse: there it was, “We, that is, we Christians, whether we live or die, are the Lord's property: for the Lord died, and rose again, that we, whether living or dying, should be his.” See Locke.

Ver. 10. *But why dost thou judge thy brother, &c.*] The superstitious are prone to judge, and those who are not superstitious are prone to despise. Heylin.

Ver. 13. *Let us not therefore judge*] He had before reproved the weak for censuring the strong in the use of their liberty: he comes now to restrain the strong from offending the weak, by a too free use of their liberty, in not forbearing the use of it, where it might give offence to the weak. The word rendered *judge*, has two different senses, and seems to be used in both in this verse. In the first place, it signifies to censure and condemn; in the other, to determine, as a matter of importance. See Hammond, Locke, and Raphelius. Some say that *καυθαλον* signifies

but to him that esteemeth any thing to be *unclean, to him *it is* unclean.

15 But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, now walkest thou ^u not †charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, ^x for whom Christ died.

16 ^v Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

17 ^v For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but ^v righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost.

18 ^b For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 ^c Let us therefore follow after the things

which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

20 ^d For meat, destroy not ^e the work of God. All things indeed *are* pure; but *it is* evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21 ^f *It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

22 Hast thou ^g faith? have *it* to thyself before God. ^h Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23 And he that ⁱ doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin.

^a Gr. *conviction*. ^b 1 Cor. 13. 4. & 8. 11. Ver. 20. ^c Gr. according to charity. ^d 1 Tim. 2. 6. Heb. 2. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 1. 1 John, 2. 2. ^e Ch. 12. 16. 1 Cor. 10. 29, 30. ^f 1 Cor. 4. 20. Luke, 17. 21. 1 Tim. 4. 8. Gal. 5. 6. 1 Cor. 8. 8. Ch. 2. 28, 29. Heb. 15. 9. ^g Mat. 6. 3. 2 Cor. 5. 21. John, 14. 27. & 16. 33. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Rom. 5. 2—5. & 8. 16. & 12. 12, 18. & 15. 13. Gal. 5. 22, 23. Phil. 3. 3. ^h Acts, 24. 16. Phil. 1. 10, 11, 27. & 2. 15, 16. Col. 1. 22. 1 Pet. 2. 5, 12—15, 20. & 3. 13, 16. ⁱ Ch. 12. 18. & 15. 2. Pl. 34. 14. Phil. 3. 16. Heb. 12. 14. 1 Cor. 14. 12, 26. 2 Cor. 12. 19. Eph. 4. 29. 1 Thess. 5. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 3. 11. 2 Cor. 13. 11. ^j Ver. 14, 15. Mat. 15. 11. 1 Cor. 3. 9, 16. & 8. 10. Titus, 1. 15. Ver. 23. ^k Ver. 10, 15. Eph. 2. 10. ^l 1 Cor. 8. 13. Mat. 18. 6—10. Luke, 18. 2. ^m Ver. 2, 5, 14. ⁿ 1 John, 3. 21. Acts, 23. 1. & 24. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 12. ^o Or discerneth and putteth a difference between meats. Titus, 1. 15. Ver. 5, 14. ^p Aggert. Rom. 4. 20. James, 1. 6.

signifies properly “a piece of wood that supports a trap, which falls on its being moved;” and so may with peculiar propriety signify whatever may be the occasion of ensnaring another, and drawing him into sin and mischief.

Ver. 15. *But if thy brother be grieved, &c.*] *If then thy brother be offended with thy meat, thou walkest no longer charitably.* It hence appears, that grieving a person does not signify merely putting him out of humour, but leading him into sin. The *grief* therefore is that which arises from a consciousness of having acted amiss, in conformity to the example of a person considered as superior, whether in rank or genius, knowledge or piety. See Hammond, Locke, and Doddridge.

Ver. 16. *Let not then your good be evil spoken of*] “Let not your liberty, which is a good that you enjoy under the Gospel, be evil spoken of.” See 1 Cor. x. 29, 30.

Ver. 17. *For the kingdom of God is not meat, &c.*] “The kingdom of God neither prohibits nor enjoins such things as these, nor is it taken up with such little matters; but the great design of it is to regulate the temper of its professors, and in the most effectual manner to cultivate and promote righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; that is, a serene temper and a holy joy, supported by a consciousness of strict integrity, established on principles of universal love, and inspired by the blessed Spirit of God.” See Scott’s Christian Life, vol. i. p. 285.

Ver. 20. *The work of God*] That is, a Christian. See 1 Cor. ix. 1., Ephes. ii. 10., Philip. i. 6. *Destroying him* here, and in ver. 15., is causing him to apostatize, or renounce the Christian faith. Some read, *for the sake of* meat, &c. and instead of *pure*,—clean.

Ver. 21. *Is offended, or is made weak*] That is, drawn to

the doing of any thing, of the lawfulness of which not being fully persuaded, it becomes a sin to him. See Locke.

Ver. 22. *Hast thou faith?*] There is no necessity for reading the first clause interrogatively; and it seems more agreeable to the structure of the Greek;—*Thou hast faith:* as if he had said, “I own you have a right persuasion.” Farther, there is an anadiplosis in the words *ἔχεις* and *ἔχει*: the first signifies simply *have*, the latter *hold fast*. “You have a right persuasion concerning your Christian liberty, and I advise you to hold your profession steadfastly, with respect to yourself in the sight of God.” *Ἐχω*, *have*, has frequently this emphatical signification. See Matt. xxv. 29. Instead of *to thyself*, the Greek would be more properly rendered *with respect to*,—*as pertaining to*; that is, “so far as it concerns yourself, hold it in the sight of God.” It is an exhortation,—not to keep it private to himself, not to suppress his sentiments,—but to retain them steadily, and never do or say any thing inconsistent with them: as it follows, “Happy is the man who condemns not himself, by doing or professing any thing inconsistent with what he is assured in his own conscience is right.” The Apostle puts this in, that the Christian Gentile might not mistake his meaning, or imagine that he was persuading him to be indifferent to the truth, to dissemble it, to give it up, or act contrary to it upon some occasions: this was far from the Apostle’s intention, who only exhorts him to think charitably of a weak brother, and to abstain from any indifferent actions which might disgust him, or prove a snare or temptation to him. Without this caution, his discourse would have been imperfect, and not well guarded.

Ver. 23. *And he that doubteth, is damned, &c.*] *Is convicted [of sin] if he eat, because it is not according to his belief:*

CHAP. XV.

The strong must bear with the weak. We may not please ourselves, for Christ did not so; but receive one the other, as Christ did us all, both Jews and Gentiles. Paul excuseth his writing, promiseth to see them, and requesteth their prayers.

[Anno Domini 58.]

WE^a then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

^a Exod. 23. 5. Ch. 14. 1. 1 Cor. 9. 22. Gal. 6. 1, 2. ^b Ch. 14. 19. 1 Cor. 9. 19. & 13. 5. & 10. 24, 33. Phil. 2. 4, 5. ^c If. 53. 4, 5. Mat. 26. 39. John. 5. 30. & 6. 38. Pf. 69. 9, 20. & 89. 50, 51. ^d Ch. 4. 23, 24. 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. 2 Pet. 1. 19, 20. Heb. 13. 5. Acts, 13. 40, 41. 1 Cor. 10. 11. & 9. 10. Ch. 5. 3. & 8. 25.

lief: for whatsoever [a man doeth] not according to his persuasion, is sin. The word rendered *doubteth*, is translated *suggested*, ch. iv. 20. and is there opposed to *strong in the faith*, and *being fully persuaded*, as it follows in the next verse. In reading this verse, the emphasis should be laid upon *is*. Ver. 22. *Happy is he that condemns not himself in that thing which he allows.* Ver. 23. *But he that doubts is condemned;* "He that really in his conscience makes a difference between one sort of food and another, is condemned by God as a sinner, if he eat out of unbridled appetite, vain complaisance, or weak shame. It must be in such a case be criminal, because he eateth not with faith: that is to say, with a full satisfaction in his own mind, that God allows and approves the action:" for it may be laid down as a general maxim in all these cases, that *whatsoever is not of faith is sin*; since the divine authority ought to be so sacred with every man, as to engage him not only to avoid what is plainly and directly contrary to it, but what he apprehends or even suspects to be so, though that apprehension or suspicion should be founded on his own ignorance or mistake. See Locke, Doddridge, Mill, Wetstein, Calmet, and "The Case of a doubting Conscience," p. 169.

Inferences.—How ready should Christians be to hold communion one with another, notwithstanding little differences between them, like those that relate to ceremonial days and meats, which are set aside by the Gospel dispensation, and do not affect the vitals of religion! They should take heed of an uncharitable, disdainful, and censorious spirit; but the sincere believer may comfort himself in this, that God has received him, and is able to make him stand, though others may despise, or judge him. How much better therefore is it to approve ourselves to God and our own consciences, than to be approved of men! For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. And, oh! what awful thoughts should we have of the Lord Jesus, as the great God, as well as Judge of all; who has sworn by himself, that every knee shall bow to him; and to whom every one must give an account of himself! And in the view of an impartial and decisive judgment to come, how tender and condescending should we be to our brethren that are apt to be offended, on every little occasion, for want of better light! It is a high aggravation of guilt to do any thing that, in its own nature,

² Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification.

³ For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

⁴ For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

tends to the discomfort and ruin of the weakest believers, and to the disconcerting or destroying of the work of God in them. The weak believer should not judge the strong, nor the strong despise the weak; each remembering that what is not of faith is sin: nor should either of them behave so imprudently as to give occasion for their good to be evil spoken of; but happy is he, who condemns not himself in that which he allows himself to do. How concerned should Christians of all ranks and denominations be, to act upon principles of faith, and a good conscience in all things, and to promote each other's edification and peace! Oh, how excellent are the blessings of Christ's kingdom, which consists not in external ritual things, like meats and drinks, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost! And how preferable is his service to all others! It is acceptable to God, and approved of all good men; and, in the performance of this, we are called to live and die, not to ourselves, but to Christ, whose we are, and whom we ought to serve, in consideration of his having died and risen, and now living in heaven, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, As many of the Jewish converts still retained a high veneration for the Mosaic institutions, and were scrupulous in observing a distinction of *meats* and *days*, from which the Gentile Christians justly apprehended themselves entirely at liberty; the Apostle therefore recommends a kind condescension towards the Jewish brethren in regard to the prejudices of education; and that there should be no coolness or distance between them on account of these different matters. *Him that is weak in the faith receive ye*, heartily embracing and welcoming him, but not to doubtful disputations, nor perplexing him with useless disputes about things of a trivial nature.

1. Respecting *meats*. *One believeth that he may eat all things*; and, satisfied about the abolition of the ceremonial law, counts nothing any longer common or unclean, eating, without scruple, whatever kind of wholesome food is set before him. *Another who is weak*, through the prejudice of education, or want of light, fearful of using any meat but what is permitted by the law of Moses, and killed according to the manner there prescribed (Lev. xvii. 10—14.), when he is invited to eat with Gentiles, lest he should incur ceremonial defilement, abstains from their victuals, and eateth only herbs. *Let not him that eateth, despise*

5 'Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be 'like-minded one toward another * according to Christ Jesus :

6 That ye may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify God, even the ' Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

' Erod. 34. 6. 2 Cor. 1. 3. Pf. 86. 5. & 103. 8. Eph. 3. 9. Zech. 14. 9.

' 1 Cor. 1. 10. Act. 4. 32. Ch. 12. 16, 6. Phil. 2. 2. & 3. 15, 16. Act. 2. 1. & 4. 32. 2 Cor. 1. 3. Gal. 1. 1. Eph. 1. 3. 1 John, 5. 7.

spise him that eateth not, as weak and superstitious, priding himself on his superior knowledge and clearer views of his Christian liberty: and, on the other hand, let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth; and being prejudiced and narrow in his own conceptions, dare uncharitably to censure his brother as a loose liver, and irreligious professor, because he has no such scruples about indifferent matters; for God hath received him into his favour, and therefore, whom he accepts, none should condemn. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. It is the highest arrogance to usurp God's throne, and sit in judgment on our brother, who is responsible to God alone, and uses only that liberty which he is in conscience satisfied God allows. Yea, and whatever rash censures the weak and superstitious may cast upon him, he shall be holden up; the Lord will strengthen and preserve the faithful soul unto salvation, for God is able to make him stand, is able and willing to preserve the believer that continues to cleave to him, till he appear with boldness in the day of judgment. Note; (1.) Nothing is more contrary to the spirit of charity than rash and hasty censures. (2.) We are to leave every man to the great Judge, nor should pretend to decide upon his everlasting state without the clearest warrant of God's word.

2. Respecting days. *One man esteemeth one day above another, as the Jewish converts did, who paid a particular regard to the passover, pentecost, new-moons, and other feast and fast days of the law, as more sacred than others: another esteemeth every day alike, counting all these Jewish distinctions as abolished. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind; and, being satisfied in his own conscience, be content that others should judge for themselves, allowing them the same liberty that we claim ourselves; charitably concluding, that he that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord, intending therein to glorify the Lord Jesus, who on mount Sinai at first enjoined the ceremonial law; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it, from the same principle, and with a view to the Redeemer's glory, by whose authority he supposes the Mosaical institutions are laid aside. He that eateth, as the converted Gentile, every kind of meat without scruple, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks, and is persuaded that all the creatures of God are good, when sanctified by the word of God, and by prayer: and he that eateth not, supposing that the prohibition of a variety of meats enjoined by Moses is still in force, to the Lord he eateth not, persuaded in conscience that he ought to abstain, and giveth God thanks for the food which he is allowed under the law. In these points, therefore, we should bear and forbear; and not, for such trifles, dispute, and break the bands of Christian love.*

3. Our grand end and aim in these things, and all others, should be the glory of God. *For none of us liveth to himself; we are not our own, and must not live as self-seekers, or self-*

pleasers; we are bought with a price, that we should glorify God in our bodies and in our spirits, which are his: and no man dieth to himself, wishing to get rid of his troubles, or to gain a name; or selfishly desiring his crown before the time when God shall appoint him an end to his warfare; for whether we, who are truly the servants of Jesus, live, we live unto the Lord, desirous to be, and do, and suffer according to his holy will and pleasure; and whether we die a natural, lingering, sudden, or violent death, we die unto the Lord, resigned to his will, committing all our concerns into his hands, and with our departing breath desiring to exalt his great and glorious name, and to commend the goodness of our God: whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's; belong to him as his devoted servants; as his inseparable property depending on him, and singly aiming at his glory. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, having made the great atonement, and being raised in token of God's approbation of his undertaking, and seated on the mediatorial throne, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living, as head over all things to his church; invested with universal dominion; and authority; to rule the living, to revive the dead; and when, in the day of his appearing and glory, the dead shall rise, and the living be changed, he will be the object of the everlasting praises of his saints. Since then we are Christ's, and he alone has dominion over us, it becomes us never to usurp authority over the consciences of our brethren, or to pass censures on the dead or the living. We have one Master only, whose approbation we need be solicitous to secure.

4. We must each, shortly, answer for ourselves before God; and therefore to his judgment all should be referred. *But why dost thou judge thy brother, as lax and latitudinarian, because thou art rigid and scrupulous? or why, on the other hand, dost thou set at naught thy brother, as an ignorant, weak, and despicable bigot, because he thinks that evil, which you know to be innocent? This is to take the matter out of God's hands, and to erect an unhallowed tribunal; for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, and by his sentence, and no other, must stand or fall for ever. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God; owning me the eternal Jehovah, acknowledging my eternal glory and Godhead, and bowing before the sceptre of my judgment, as accountable to me alone, and expecting from my lips the decision of their eternal state for happiness or misery: so then every one of us shall give account of himself to God, to Christ, to whom all judgment is committed, and who is essentially very God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more with any rash and precipitate censures; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way: and whatever knowledge he may have of Christian liberty, let him be careful so to use it, as not willingly to grieve or ensnare his brother,*

7 Wherefore ^b receive ye one another, as Christ also received us ⁱ to the glory of God.

8 Now I say that ^k Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of

^b Ch. 14. 15. Eph. 3. 6. John, 13. 34. & 6. 37. ⁱ Ver. 8, 9. ⁱ Cor. 10. 31. ⁱ Pet. 4. 11. ^k Mat. 15. 24. John, 1. 11. Acts, 3. 25, 26. & 13. 46. Ch. 3. 3. & 9. 4. ² Cor. 1. 20. Acts, 10. 43.

ther, by tempting him to sin, by giving a handle for censure, or emboldening him to do what his conscience may not be satisfied is right. *Note*; Our great concern is, to prepare for a judgment-day, and the best means to be ready for it is, to keep it often in our view, and to bring ourselves thither in self-examination, before the Lord shall cite us to his bar.

2dly, The Apostle had just intimated, that they should desire mutual edification, and not abuse their Christian liberty to the detriment of others.

1. As to his own sense of these ceremonial things, he says, *I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself*; the ceremonial law concerning meats being wholly abrogated, and that these communicate no moral defilement to the conscience: *but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean*, as he would act against his conscience if he should eat; and though his conscience be erroneous, he would do evil.

But, 2. Whatever conviction any man may have of the lawfulness of all kinds of food, yet, *if thy brother be grieved with thy meat*, through the prejudices of education, and you unkindly persist in the use of your liberty, and eat before him what he esteems forbidden, *now walkest thou not charitably*; *destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died*; destroy not the peace of his mind, by giving him unnecessary offence; or, at least, be not the means of stumbling such as, in the judgment of charity, we may reckon among true believers.

3. Another reason why you should abridge yourself of something of your Christian liberty, is this: *Let not your good be evil spoken of*; do not provoke those who are misinformed to speak evil of you, for that which is itself lawful; nor do any thing, as far as is consistent with conscience, which may lessen you in men's esteem, and prevent your usefulness; or give occasion to the enemy, by needless contentions, to speak evil of Christianity itself.

4. As the greatest points of Christianity stand distinct from all these trivial matters, no stress should be laid upon them. *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink*; consists not in using or abstaining from the ceremonial institutions which the law prescribed concerning these things; but it is *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*. These are the grand essential matters: *Righteousness*, genuine holiness, the image of God, or the love of God and man; *peace with God through Jesus Christ*, and the sense of his love kindling ours, and engaging us to live peaceably with all men; and *joy in the Holy Ghost*, which this divine Spirit communicates to our souls, making us happy in God and his holy ways. *For he that in these things serveth Christ*; faithful to his cause, and in simplicity designing his honour, whatever his practice or sentiments may be in unessential matters, *is acceptable to God*; his person and services are accepted in the Beloved, and he is approved of men, as a sincere convert, at least by all those of sound judgment and solid experience.

He therefore exhorts, 5. *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace*, laying aside all uncharitable contentions;—*and things wherewith one may edify another*, not seeking our own pleasure merely, but others' good. For so trivial a consideration as this or that kind of meat, *destroy not the work of God*, nor disturb the peace, and love, and harmony, which should subsist between fellow-Christians, and which it is the great design of God in his Gospel to produce in the hearts of believers. *All things indeed are pure*, I will admit, to those who have knowledge; *but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence*; and the liberty of using any meat, which in itself is lawful, becomes practically criminal, when we choose rather to offend a weak brother, than forego the gratification of our appetite for his sake. In such a case, *it is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak*. It would be right and prudent to abstain from any of these creatures, however good in themselves, and lawful to be used, rather than be a hindrance to the weak, grieve or discourage the less enlightened, or tempt our brother rashly to censure us, or with a doubting conscience to follow our example. *Have thou faith*, and art satisfied concerning the abrogation of the ceremonial institutions; *have it to thyself before God*, and use thy liberty to God's glory on proper occasions. *Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth*, and never exposes himself to the just reproaches of his conscience by warping his better judgment to gratify his covetousness, his pleasure, or his pride. *And*, on the other hand, *he that doubteth about the propriety of what he is going to do, and supposes that there may be a difference between meats lawful and unlawful, and therefore hesitates whether he shall eat or not, is damned if he eat*; his conscience will condemn him, *because he is not sure that he has God's warrant for what he does, and eateth not of faith*; *for whatsoever is not of faith, is sin*. The word of God must be our rule; we must ever from that divine code receive our directions; and, where our minds are not fully satisfied concerning his will, nothing must tempt us to take one step farther. We are safe, though mistaken, when we through jealousy abridge ourselves of our liberty; but where we presumptuously act, though doubts remain, we shew an evident disregard to God's authority, and violate the sacred dictates of conscience.

CHAP. XV.

THE Apostle, in the 7th verse of this chapter, having exhorted the Jewish and Gentile Christians at Rome to a cordial union, from the consideration that Christ had received both into his church, naturally turned his thoughts to an objection which might be made to this doctrine; namely, that if Christ had meant to receive the Gentiles, he would have preached to them himself. To this the Apostle replied, that the Lord Jesus Christ was born among the Jews, and preached to the Jews only; because thereby,

God, to confirm the promises *made* unto the fathers :

9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God

for *his* mercy ; as it is written, " For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

¹ John, 10. 16. Ch. 9. 23, 24. & 11. 22, 30. Eph. i—iii. ^m Pf. 18. 49. ² Sam. 22. 50.

thereby, in the end, he most effectually accomplished God's promises to the fathers, concerning the blessing of the nations in Abraham's seed, ver. 8, 9.—Farther, because the Jews were unwilling to be united with the Gentiles in one church, the Apostle quoted various passages from their own prophets, foretelling that the Gentiles, in future times, would be Messiah's subjects, and join the Jews in worshipping the true God, ver. 9, 10, 11, 12.—Wherefore, God having determined from the beginning to make the Gentiles his people, the Jewish believers were bound to acknowledge such of them as were converted, for their brethren and fellow-heirs of the promises of God, notwithstanding they did not obey the law of Moses. And, having thus established the title of the Gentiles to all the privileges of the people of God under the Gospel dispensation, the Apostle prayed that God would fill them with all joy and peace, through the firm belief of their title to these great blessings, ver. 13.

Both the doctrinal and practical part of this Epistle being now finished, the Apostle makes a very handsome apology to the believing Romans, for writing so long a letter to persons with whom he was not personally acquainted. He told them, that, having a good opinion of their grace and knowledge, ver. 14.—he had, on that account, written to them with the more freedom, to bring things to their remembrance : and that he had done this likewise, because he was both qualified and authorized to reach them by virtue of the apostolical office which God had conferred on him, for the purpose of converting the Gentiles, ver. 15, 16.—Then, to prove his apostleship to the Romans, he told them that he had good reason to boast of his success in converting the Gentiles, and in presenting them to God as an acceptable offering, ver. 17.—But that, in this his boasting, he would speak, not of the things which Christ had wrought by others, to make the Gentiles obedient, but of the success which he himself had had in converting them through divine grace by his own preaching and miracles, ver. 18, 19.—Moreover, to give the Romans a just idea of his character and success as an Apostle, he informed them, that he had always made it a rule, not to preach the Gospel where it had been preached before, lest he might have appeared an inferior workman, who built on a foundation laid by another : but that he had gone to the most ignorant and barbarous nations, that the prophecies concerning the conversion of the Gentiles might be fulfilled, ver. 20, 21.—And that his resolution of not preaching where the Gospel had been preached before, was the reason of his not visiting Rome hitherto, ver. 22.—But now having no more opportunity of that sort in the parts from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and having long had a desire to see the Romans, he would certainly come to them in his way to Spain, ver. 23, 24.—At present he was going to Jerusalem with the collections which he had made for the poor of the brethren in Judea, ver. 25, 26, 27.—But when that service was finished, he would

come to Rome, ver. 28, 29.—In the mean time, he earnestly begged their prayers, that he might be delivered from the disobedient in Judea ; and that the service he was performing to the brethren in Jerusalem might be acceptable to them, ver. 30.—Lastly, because there had been great dissensions among the Romans about the method of justification, and about the obligation of the law of Moses, he wished the God of peace to be with them all, ver. 33 ; thus adapting his apostolical benediction to their particular circumstances.

Ver. 1. We then that are strong, &c.] According to our translation, one would suppose that this verse is an inference from the latter part of the foregoing chapter :—as if it were, *We therefore who are strong, &c.* whereas it is in the Greek, *But we who are strong* : and it stands in immediate connection with the last verse of the former chapter, by way of opposition ; thus : " The weak brother, who puts " a difference between meats, is condemned, if he eateth " without observing a distinction : But we who are strong, " —meaning the Gentile Christians,—are so far from " being condemned, if we bear the infirmities of the " weak, that we are bound in duty to do it." Therefore these two verses cannot be separated without destroying the sense. *To please ourselves,* signifies, to follow our own humours. See Locke, Heylin, and the last note.

Ver. 3. As it is written] In Pf. lxix. 9. That this psalm was undoubtedly spoken of the Messiah, we learn from ver. 22. applied to Christ, John xix. 28, 29. and from the former part of the verse here cited ; namely, *The zeal of thine house hath consumed me,* applied to Christ, John ii. 17. And the Jews themselves confess that the things contained in this psalm shall be accomplished in the days of the Messiah. The passage may be paraphrased respecting our Saviour, " I have placed myself in a world, where I " have been afflicted with the wickedness of mankind ; " which I have continually seen and heard about me, and " which has been, through the whole course of my life, " my continual grief and burden." See Whitby, and on Pf. lxix. 9.

Ver. 5. Grant you to be like-minded] The original properly signifies, " To agree in an harmonious and affectionate " manner ;" and might be read, *Grant you or give you the same mutual affection, according to the example of Jesus Christ.* See Raphelius, and Gal. iv. 28., 1 Pet. i. 15., Ephes. iv. 24.

Ver. 6. That ye may with one mind, &c.] It does not appear how this can be otherwise understood than of public worship ; and it shews, that *glorifying* or praising God for his grace in Christ Jesus, is a principal part of Christian worship, in which all should join *with one mind and one mouth.*

Ver. 7. Wherefore receive ye one another] This cannot mean, " Receive one another into church communion ;" for there is no appearance that the convert Jews and Gentiles separated communion in Rome, on account of differences

10 And again he saith, " Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

11 And again, " Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.

12 And again Esaias saith, " There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

13 Now the " God of hope " fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.

14 " And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

^a Deut. 32. 43. 11. 24. 14, 16. & 42. 11. ^o Ps. 117. 1. & 47. 1. & 66. 1, 4. & 67. 3—5. & 68. 32. & 96. 1. & 97. 1. ^p 11. 1, 10. & 9. 6, 7. & 42. 1, 4, 6. & 49. 6, 22. & 54. 3, 5. & 60. 3, 8. Dan. 2. 44. & 7. 14. Micah, 5. 4. Rev. 5. 5. & 22. 16. ^q Jer. 14. 8. & 17. 7. Ps. 22. 4. 1 Tim. 6. 17. 1 Pet. 1. 3. ^r Phil. 4. 11. 1 Thess. 5, 16, 18. 2 Thess. 2. 16, 17. Ch. 14. 17. Heb. 6. 11, 18, 19. Ch. 12. 12, 18. ^s Heb. 6. 9. & 3. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 12. 1 John, 2. 21. Phil. 1. 7, 11. Col. 1. 10. Eph. 5. 9. Gal. 5. 22, 23. 1 Thess. 5. 14. Heb. 10. 24.

ferences about meats and drinks, and days. We should have heard more of it from St. Paul, if there had been two separate congregations; that is, two churches of Christians in Rome divided about these indifferent things. Besides, directions cannot be given to private Christians to receive one another in that sense; therefore the *receiving* here, must be understood of receiving, as a man does another into his company, converse, and familiarity. He would have them, Jews and Gentiles, lay aside all distinction, coldness, and reserve, in their conversation one with another; and, as domestics of the same family, live friendly and familiar, notwithstanding their different judgments about those ritual observances. Hence, ver. 5. he exhorts them, " Be united in friendship one to another; " that, with one heart and one voice, ye may conjointly " glorify God; and receive one another with the same " good-will that Christ has received *us*, the Jews,—*εἰς* " *δοξάν τῷ Θεῷ*, to the glorifying God for his truth, in " fulfilling the promises he made to the patriarchs;—and " has received *the Gentiles*, to glorify God for his mercy " to them: so that we have reason, both Jews and Gentiles, laying aside these little differences about things " indifferent, to join together heartily in glorifying God." The phrase, *glory of God*, for *glorifying God*, is of the same kind with that used ch. iii. 22, and 26. where he uses *the faith of Jesus*, for *believing in Jesus*. The thing to which St. Paul here exhorts them, is, to the glorifying of God with one accord, as is evident from the words immediately preceding; and what follows, ver. 9, 10, 11. is to the same purpose: so that there is no room to doubt that his meaning in these words is, " Christ received or took us, believing Jews, to himself, that we might magnify the " truth of God; and took the Gentiles that believe, to " himself, that they might magnify his mercy." See Locke.

Ver. 8. Now I say that *Jesus Christ*, &c.] The connection of this and the next verse is evident, by only repeating in our own minds the words, *I say*, at the beginning of the 9th, *Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision, on account of the truth of God, to confirm, or make good the promises given to the fathers: ver. 9. And I say that the Gentiles, on account of mercy, should glorify God; meaning in union with the Christian Jews. The Gentile must allow the Jew a primary and eminent right to all the glory and privileges of the Gospel; because the truth of God was engaged, by the promises to Abraham, &c. to send the*

Messiah to the Jewish nation, to make his appearance, and to exercise his ministry among them for their salvation: therefore the believing Gentile had undeniable reason to own and receive the believing Jew, and to join with him in the divine praise; ver. 5, 6. And as God had extended his mercy in Christ Jesus to the believing Gentiles, how could the Jews refuse the Gentiles a share in solemn thanksgivings to God for so great a favour? Could the Jews stint or deny the mercy of God to the Gentile world? And if he allowed God's mercy to them in the Redeemer, must he not allow them to bear a part in solemn acknowledgments of his goodness; especially, considering that the Scriptures do expressly foretel, that the Gentiles should have their share in this joyful work?—Accordingly, as it would be more difficult to persuade the Jew, he lays before him several quotations from Scripture to that purpose. What it was that Christ *ministered* to the Jews, we may see by the like expression of St. Paul applied to himself, ver. 16. where he calls himself *a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God*. See Matt. xv. 24. What is said, ver. 9, 10, 11. confirms what we have observed upon ver. 6. namely, that praise and thanksgiving to God for his mercy in Jesus Christ is a principal part of Christian worship. See Heb. xiii. 15. Locke.

Ver. 10. And again he saith, *Rejoice*, &c.] It would have been better to have rendered these words impersonally; *Again it is said*: for according to our version, it seems as if the words quoted in this verse were written by the same person as those in the preceding verse; whereas the former are from the book of Psalms, the latter from Deuteronomy.

Ver. 12. In him shall the Gentiles trust] Rather *hope*, says Mr. Locke: not that there is any material difference in the signification of *trust* and *hope*, but the better to express and answer St. Paul's way of writing; with whom it is familiar, when he has been speaking of any virtue or grace, whereof God is the author, to call God thereupon the God of that virtue or grace. So, ver. 13., he calls God *the God of hope*. See also ver. 4. and 5.

Ver. 14. And I myself also am persuaded, &c.] In this part of the chapter, the Apostle, with much complaisance, and to open the way still farther for a candid reception of the sacred truths which he had delivered, apologizes for writing this letter, and for the freedom that he had used, particularly with the Gentile part of the Christians; which freedom he hoped they would place to the account of the Gentiles, ver.

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you, in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,

16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering-up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

17 I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,

19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:

¹ 1 Cor. 2. 3. ² 2 Pet. 1. 12, 13, 15. & 3. 1. Heb. 13. 22. ¹ Tim. 4. 6. ² Tim. 1. 6. & 2. 14. Jude, 3. 5. ³ Ch. 1. 5. & 12. 6. ¹ Pet. 4. 10, 11. ¹ Cor. 15. 10. & 3. 10. Gal. 1. 15. & 2. 9. ⁴ Acts, 9. 15. & 13. 2. & 22. 21. & 25. 17, 18. Ch. 11. 13. ¹ Cor. 3. 5. ² Cor. 3. 6. Gal. 1. 16. & 2. 7, 8. ¹ Tim. 2. 7. ² Tim. 1. 11. Eph. 3. 8. ⁵ If. 66. 19, 20. Phil. 2. 17. Ch. 12. 1, 2. ¹ Pet. 2. 5. Phil. 4. 18. Heb. 13. 16. ⁶ Or *sanctifying*. ⁷ Pf. 115. 1. ¹ Cor. 3. 6, 7. ² Cor. 2. 14—16. with Heb. 5. 1. ⁸ Prov. 25. 14. ² Cor. 10. 15. ⁹ Ch. 1. 5. & 16. 26. ¹ Cor. 4. 15. ² Cor. 10. 4, 5. ¹⁰ Acts, 19. 11, 12. ² Cor. 12. 12. Heb. 2. 4. ¹ Pet. 1. 12. ¹¹ Acts, 9. 22, 29. & 12. 25. & 13. 2, 11. & 14. 10, 26. & 16. 18. & 7. 1, 10, 16. & 18. 9. & 9. 6, 11. & 20. 2, 20, 27. & 21. 19. & 28. 5, 8. Gal. 2. 8. Acts, 20. 20. ² Tim. 4. 7. ¹² 2 Cor. 12. 15, 16. ¹ Cor. 3. 1, 5. Eph. 2. 20.

ver. 14—17. He gives a general idea of the success and course of his ministry, ver. 18—21. signifies his great desire to make them a visit at Rome, ver. 22—24. acquaints them with the journey that he was going to take from Corinth to Jerusalem, to carry a charitable collection made among the Gentile converts for the relief of the poor Christians there; and desires their prayers, that he might be delivered from the malice of the infidel Jews; and that his charitable design might be kindly accepted, and have its intended effect among the Christian Jews, ver. 24—33.

Ver. 15. *In some sort*] *Ἀπὸ μέρους*. The word *μέρος* is a part of any thing, or company of men; and may signify part of or a party among the people to whom the Apostle writes, or of whom he speaks; ch. xi. 25., 2 Cor. i. 14., ii. 5. That it has this sense here, and signifies the Gentile part of the church at Rome, is the more probable, because the Apostle assigns his commission as the Apostle of the Gentiles, for the reason of his boldness in writing. *I have written more boldly unto you, because, or on account of the grace that is given to me of God, that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.* Now this would be an apology only to the Gentile part of the society; and therefore, to preserve the propriety of the Apostle's reasoning, we ought in this view to render *ἄπὸ μέρους* with respect to part of you. See the note on ch. i. 5.

Ver. 16. *That the offering-up of the Gentiles, &c.*] This sentiment seems to be taken from Isai. lxvi. 20. The meaning is, "That the offering of the Gentiles to God, as a holy sacrifice, by my hands, may be acceptable to him; being sanctified and set apart by the Holy Spirit to plentifully communicated to them, in a rich variety of gifts and graces."

Ver. 17. *Things which pertain to God*] We have the same phrase, Heb. v. 1. where it signifies the things that were offered to God in the temple ministrations. St. Paul, by way of allusion, speaks of the Gentiles in the foregoing verse, as an offering to be made to God; and then here he tells them, that he had matter of glorying in this offering; that is, that he had had success in converting the Gen-

tiles, and bringing them to be a living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice to God; an account whereof he gives them in the four following verses. See Locke, and Raphelius.

Ver. 19. *Unto Illyricum*] Though it is evident from this passage, that St. Paul, before the date of this Epistle, which was about the year 58, had preached the Gospel in these regions, it is observable that St. Luke takes no notice hereof in the history of the Acts; where he also omits to mention the journey which the Apostle took to Arabia on his first conversion, and several other remarkable facts referred to in the 11th chapter of the second Epistle to the Corinthians, and elsewhere. And it is very possible, that the visit to Crete, when Titus was left behind to ordain elders, (Titus, i. 5.) might be of this number. See Doddridge, Wall, and Calmet.

Ver. 20. *So have I strived to preach the Gospel, &c.*] *So have I been ambitious, &c.* The Apostle could not mean that he scorned to come after any other Christian minister, especially after what we read of his going to preach the Gospel at Damascus, Antioch, and Jerusalem. It may signify, that, far from declining dangers and oppositions, which might be expected from his first planting the Gospel in any country, he rather felt a sublime ambition, as the Greek word signifies, in making the first proclamation of the Gospel in places where it had before been quite unheard of. And probably he might glance at those false Apostles, who crept into the churches which he had planted, and endeavoured to establish their own reputation and influence by alienating the affections of his own converts, while they built on his grand and noble foundation an edifice of wood, hay, and stubble. This is likewise a proof in favour of the Apostle's own sincerity, and of the miraculousness of his conversion. If his conversion, and the part he acted in consequence of it, was an imposture, it was such an imposture as could not be carried on by one man alone. The faith he professed, and of which he became an Apostle, was not his own invention. With Jesus, who was the author of it, he had never any communication, except when going to Damascus; nor with his Apostles, except

21 But as it is written, 'To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

22 For which cause also 'I have been much hindered from coming to you.

23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having ^b a great desire these many years to come unto you;

24 Wheresoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled ¹ with your *company*.

25 ^k But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

26 ^l For it hath pleased them of Mace-

^a If. 52. 25. & 65. 1. Mark. 16. 15. Mat. 28. 19. Eph. 3. 8. ^b Ch. 1. 17. 1 Theff. 2. 18. Acts, 9. 21. & 23. 11. ^c Or many ways, or oftentimes. ^d Ch. 1. 10, 12. 1 Theff. 3. 10. 2 Tim. 1. 4. Ver. 32. ^e Gr. with you. Ver. 32. ^f Acts, 18. 21. & 19. 21. & 20. 22. & 24. 17. Gal. 2. 10. ^g 1 Cor. 16. 7. 2 Cor. viii. 12. Acts, 11. 27—30. 1 Cor. 9. 31. Gal. 6. 6. Ch. 11. 17. Acts, 1. 4, 5.

as their persecutor. As he took on himself the office of an apostle, it was absolutely necessary for him to have a precise and perfect knowledge of all the facts contained in the Gospels, several of which had only passed between Jesus himself and his twelve Apostles, and others more privately still, so that they could be known to very few: and as the testimony they bore, would have been different in point of fact, and many of their doctrines repugnant to his, either they must have been forced to ruin his credit, or he would have ruined theirs. It was therefore impossible for him to act this part but in confederacy at least with the Apostles. Such a confederacy was still the more necessary for him, as the undertaking to preach the Gospel did not only require an exact and particular knowledge of all that it contained, but an apparent power of working miracles; for to such a power all the Apostles appealed in proof of their mission, and of the doctrines they preached. He was therefore to learn of them by what secret arts they imposed on the senses of men, if this power was a cheat. But how could he gain these men to become his confederates? Was it by furiously persecuting them and their brethren, as we find that he did to the moment of his conversion? Would they venture to trust their capital enemy with all the secrets of their imposture? Would they put in his power to take away not only their lives, but the honour of their sect, which they preferred to their lives, by so ill-timed a confidence? Would men, so secret as not to be drawn by the most severe persecutions to say one word which could tend to prove them impostors, confess themselves such to their prosecutor, in hopes of his being their accomplice? This is still more impossible, than that he should attempt to engage in the fraud without their consent and assistance. Had he not availed himself of a confederacy with the Apostles to get at their secret doctrines, he might have gained a knowledge of them by pretending to preach among such persons as they had already converted: but by going to places where the Gospel was entirely unknown, he lost every opportunity of this kind; and though he lost all these opportunities, we find no one of the Apostles objecting to the doctrine which he planted, as inconsistent with what they had received from Christ, and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. His very success among such people was another proof of the reality of his conversion, and his divine mission. For among the Gentiles, who had not heard of the Gospel, he could find no disposition, no aptness, no bias to aid his imposture. It is evident, that there was not any confede-

racy between him and them, strong enough to impose either his doctrines or his miracles upon them, if they had been false. He was in no combination with their priests or their magistrates; no sect or party among them gave him any help; all eyes were open and watchful to detect his impostures; all hands ready to punish him, as soon as he was detected. Had he remained in Judea, he might at least have had many confederates, all the Apostles, all the disciples of Christ, at that time pretty numerous; but in preaching to the Gentiles he was often alone, seldom or never with more than two or three companions. Was this a confederacy powerful enough to carry on such a cheat in so many different parts of the world, against the united opposition of the magistrates, priests, philosophers, people, all combined to detect and expose their frauds? Let it be also considered, that those to whom the Apostle addressed himself, were not a gross or ignorant people, apt to mistake any uncommon operations of nature, or juggling tricks, for miraculous acts. The churches planted by St. Paul, were in the most enlightened parts of the world, among the Greeks of Asia and Europe, among the Romans, in the midst of science, philosophy, freedom of thought, and in an age more inquisitively curious into the powers of nature, and less inclined to credit religious frauds, than any before it. Nor were they only the lowest of the people whom he converted. Sergius Paulus the proconsul of Paphos, Erastus chamberlain of Corinth, and Dionysius the Areopagite, were his proselytes. Upon the whole, it appears beyond contradiction, that his pretension to miracles was not assisted by the disposition of those whom he designed to convert, nor by any power and confederacy to carry on and abet the cheat: what less, then, than a divine concurrence could have rendered him successful in converting nations, which had not heard of the Gospel till he preached it to them? See Doddridge, and Lyttelton's Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul.

Ver. 24. Into Spain] It hence appears probable, considering the principle by which St. Paul chose to govern himself, of *not building on another man's foundation*, that no Apostle had as yet planted any church in Spain; which very ill agrees with the "Legend of St. James;" for, according to that, he had now been fifteen years in Spain, and had erected several bishopricks there. See Geddes's Miscell. vol. ii. p. 221.

Ver. 25. But now I go unto Jerusalem] He means (as appears from ver. 26, 27.) to carry the money which he had collected among the Gentile Christians in Macedonia and

donia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;

31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea; and that my service, which I have for Jerusalem, may be accepted of the saints;

^a Acts, 1. 4, 8. Ch. 11. 17. 1 Cor. 9. 11. Gal. 6. 6. If. Ev. ix. ^b Phil. 4. 17. ^c Ch. 1. 11. Eph. 3. 8. ^d Phil. 2. 1. Col. 4. 3, 12.
^e 1 Cor. 1. 11. Eph. 6. 19, 20. 1 Thess. 5. 25. 2 Thess. 3. 1. ^f Acts, 20. 3, 23. & 21. 27. 1 Thess. 2. 15, 16. ^g Or disobedient. ^h See
 ver. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 16. 1—5. 2 Cor. 8. 4. & 9. 1.

and Achaia, for the relief of the poor Christians at Jerusalem. This was an affair which lay near his heart, and about which he had taken much pains. See 1 Cor. xvi. 1—4, 2 Cor. viii. and ix. His design in the business is pretty evident from 2 Cor. ix. 12, 13. where he says, *The administration of this service not only supplieth the wants of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God. While by the experience of this ministration, they [the Jews] glorify God for your professed subjection unto the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men.* The Jews were generally treated as objects of contempt and insult throughout the Roman empire. The Apostle was in hopes that this liberal contribution, sent by the Gentile Christians converted by St. Paul's ministry, would engage the affections of the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem, on their part much prejudiced against the reception of the Gentiles into the church and covenant of God, without submitting to their law. Most gladly would he have established a solid coalition between the Jewish and Gentile converts; being sensible that it was of great importance to the spreading of the Gospel. And this was one laudable device to accomplish the good end; namely, to procure a handsome present from the Gentiles to the poor saints at Jerusalem; which was a probable expedient to conciliate their affection and esteem, by affording them a pleasing taste of the good fruits of St. Paul's ministry, and giving them reason to believe, that their nation would be regarded and honoured in proportion as the Gospel spread in the world. I make no doubt, that this is an instance of St. Paul's zeal and prudent endeavours to establish a good harmony between Christian Jews and Gentiles; and this shews, why he so earnestly requests the prayers of the Christians at Rome, that his service, which he had for Jerusalem, might be accepted of the saints, ver. 31, 32. It is no objection to this, that St. James, Peter, and John, had desired St. Paul to remember the poor, or to make a collection among the Gentile converts for the poor brethren at Jerusalem, Gal. ii. 10. for he there tells us, that it was what he had intended to do, before they proposed it: and probably he first mentioned it to the Apostles of the circumcision.

Ver. 28. *When—I have performed this, &c.] Dispatched*

this affair, and have secured to them this collection. See Dodridge.

Ver. 29. *I shall come in the fulness of the blessing]* He may be understood to mean here, that he should be able to satisfy them, that the forgiveness of sins was to be obtained by the Gospel; for that he shews, ch. iv. 6—9. And they had as much title to it by the Gospel, as the Jews themselves; which was the thing that he had been proving to them in this Epistle. See Locke; whose paraphrase is, "I shall bring to you full satisfaction, concerning the blessing which you receive by the Gospel of Christ."

Ver. 30. *And for the love of the Spirit]* "By that love, which is the genuine fruit of the Spirit." Some would explain this of the love which the Spirit of God bears to us, or the affection which we owe to that gracious Person. The words rendered *strive together with me*, signify, "That you join your utmost strength and fervency with mine; as those who fight and struggle together in the public games, or in the field of battle." See *Ellner's Observat.* vol. ii. p. 65.

Ver. 31. *That I may be delivered, &c.]* How extreme their bigotry and rage were, appears from their behaviour to him at the very time here referred to, Acts xxi—xxiv. It was from a sense of the great importance of his life to the cause of Christianity, that he is thus urgent; else we may be assured, that he would gladly have given it up. See Phil. i. 21.

Inferences.—With what tenderness and self-denial should we behave towards our brethren in Christ! We should bear with the infirmities of the weak; study to please every one for his edification; receive into our affection and communion all whom Christ has received, to the glory of God; and unite in glorifying him, as with one heart and voice. What a noble pattern has our Lord set us of this excellent spirit, in denying himself; in the reproaches that he sustained for his Father's honour, and the good of his church; and in his condescending to act the part of a minister, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, that the Gentiles might glorify God, rejoice in him, and praise him, for making them equal heirs of all privileges and blessings with the Jews. What a rich treasure have we

32 'That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

33 Now 'the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

* Ver. 23, 24. Acts, 18. 21. Ch. 1. 10—13. 1 Cor. 1. 9. James, 4. 15. ' Ch. 16. 20. 1 Cor. 14. 33. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Phil. 4. 9. 1 Thess. 5. 23. 2 Thess. 3. 16. Ch. 5. 1. Luke, 2. 14. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. Eph. 2. 14, 15.

in the Holy Scriptures, which were written for our instruction and comfort, patience and hope! And how should we strive together in prayer, that the God of patience and consolation would enable us to make such use of them, according to the mind of Christ, as may fill us with all joy and peace in believing, and cause us to abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost! Blessed be God for his mercy to us *Gentile* Sinners! We, by the Gospel dispensation, are brought under the Messiah's reign; and he is proposed as an object of faith to us, who were utter strangers to him before, that we might trust in him; and that *Gentile* believers, and their services, might be acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, as a pure offering, which is sanctified by the Holy Ghost. And, oh, what an honour does our great Lord confer upon his servants! He puts them into the ministry of the Gospel; and makes them his instruments for the conversion of sinners, and for farther helping them that have believed through grace. And, oh, how delightful and advantageous is it to have the Gospel with the fulness of its blessings! And what a wide and glorious spread does it take; and what wonderful happy effects does it produce, when attended with the power of the Spirit, which resides in Christ, and is exerted by him! This gives the servants of Christ great occasion of glorying in the Lord: they ascribe all honour to him, and would take none to themselves; nor would they boast of any thing that he has not wrought by them; nor invade the province of their brethren: they are desirous to go and work wherever God calls them; and they submit all their own purposes and motions for his service to his will; they cheerfully encourage all sorts of benevolence, by the love of Christ and of his Spirit; they take pleasure in conversing with fellow-Christians, and recommend themselves, and all their labours, to their prayers; and they pour out their own hearts to God, with fervent desire that love and unity may abound among them, and that the God of peace may be with them. *Amen.*

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Apostle infers from what he had advanced in the foregoing chapter,

1. That, *We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves*; having compassion towards them; making every kind allowance for their prejudices and scruples; not provoked by their rash censures, and desirous to prevent them by foregoing our own pleasure for their profit. *Let every one of us therefore please his neighbour for his good to edification*; not complying with him in any thing that is sinful, but in all indifferent matters ready to yield to him, in order to insinuate into his confidence, for the advantage of his soul.

2. He enforces his exhortation by the strongest motive of Christ's example. *For even Christ pleased not himself; when he was under no obligations to us, he freely submit-*

ted to all hardships and sufferings for our sakes; as it is written, *The reproaches of them that reproached thee, fell on me*; he willingly bore the contradiction of sinners against himself. And in this Scripture, as well as others, we are not to suppose that David speaks of himself, but of Christ, and with a view to the edification of his people. *For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning*; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope; animated by the examples there set forth, to shew the same meekness, patience, and forbearance; revived by the views of the great and precious promises, and comforted in the hope of eternal life therein revealed to us. *Note*; (1.) Christ's pattern should be ever in our view. "Would the Lord Jesus in our situation have thus thought, spoke, and acted?" should be our inquiry. (2.) They are the truly wise who are learned in the Scriptures, and know the way to everlasting life. (3.) The Scriptures afford us the most powerful arguments for patience under all our trials and provocations, and furnish us with the most substantial comforts under our discouragements, both in the precious promise of present divine support, and in the prospect of the glory which shall be revealed.

3. He seconds his exhortations with his prayers: we can only speak to the ear; God must make our words effectual to the heart. *Now the God of patience and consolation, who is so long-suffering towards us, and ready to comfort the afflicted, and is the source and author of all patience, and the giver of all consolation, grant you to be like-minded one towards another*; united in sentiment and affection, according to Christ Jesus; copying his example, and obedient to his holy will; that ye may with one mind and one mouth, as if animated by one soul, in your religious assemblies, and in social converse, glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; in spirit and conversation desirous to exalt his great and glorious name, and shew forth his praises. *Note*; (1.) Christians should, as far as possible, be united in one mind, and join in the same worship. (2.) Our prayers must follow our preaching, that God may give the blessing.

2dly, The Apostle returns to enforce his former exhortation, *Wherefore receive ye one another, with brotherly affection, in friendly intercourse, and holy communion, as Christ also received us, whether Jews or Gentiles, notwithstanding all our infirmities, to the glory of God*; as this was the end that he had in view, the same must we propose to ourselves.

1. Christ had received the Jewish converts. *Now I say, that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision*; submitted himself to that bloody rite, and personally ministered to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, for the truth of God, to display his faithfulness to his covenant, and to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. Now as this put a peculiar honour upon the Jews, their *Gentile* brethren should not despise

CHAP. XVI.

Paul willeth the brethren to greet many; and adviseth them to take heed of those who cause dissension and offences; and, after sundry salutations, endeth with praise and thanks.

[Anno Domini 58.]

I COMMEND unto you Phebe our sister, which is a ^a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea :

^a Ver. 1. Luke, 8. 3. ^b Phil. 2. 29. ³ John, 6. Ver. 6. ^c Act, 18. 2, 26. ² Tim. 4. 19. Ver. 9, 21. ^d Hazarded their lives. Act, 18. 6, 17, & 17. 5. & 19. 23, 30.

2 That ye ^b receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you : for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

3 ^c Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus :

4 Who have for my life ^d laid down their

despise them, because of any weak attachment to the ceremonial institutions.

2. Christ had also received the Gentiles to the participation of the same privileges, and therefore this should engage the brotherly regards of their Jewish brethren, since the salvation that Jesus obtained was to extend to them, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy, who now at last looked with peculiar compassion upon them, and had called them into his visible church : as it is written, *For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.* Because thou hast given me the heathen for my inheritance, I will declare thy word among them, and call upon them to offer their thanksgivings for the inestimable blessings of which in the Gospel they are made partakers. And again, in another prophesy, *he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people ;* incorporated with them, sharing their privileges, and therefore happy in the experience of the same Gospel grace. And again, it is said, *Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, and laud him, all ye people ;* joining your voices together in the great congregation, the partition-wall being taken down. And again, *Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, the divine Messiah, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, exalted to the mediatorial throne, and extending his conquests over the souls of sinners to the ends of the earth ; in him shall the Gentiles trust ;* placing their dependence upon him as their only Lord and Saviour. All which prophecies clearly shew, that the time should come, when the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body ; and therefore the Jewish converts should with hearty affection embrace their Gentile brethren, as all one in Christ Jesus.

3. The Apostle adds his affectionate prayer for them both. *Now the God of hope, who in Christ Jesus is the ground and author of our hope of all spiritual and eternal blessings, fill you with all joy and peace in believing ;* enabling you to lay hold of the promises, and giving you the abundance of divine consolations, and of that peace which passeth all understanding ; *that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost ;* possessing both the earnest and foretastes which the Spirit gives, in the light, strength, and comfort which he now communicates. *Note :* (1.) When faith is in exercise, then our souls will be happy, even here below. (2.) The Christian's hope never makes him ashamed. (3.) They who would abound in hope, peace, and joy, should be much in prayer to him who is the giver of every good gift, and whose face none seek in vain.

3dly, St. Paul,

1. Expresses the high estimation in which he held them. *And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, from the gracious testimony borne to you by those who are acquainted with your state, that ye also are full of goodness ;* enriched with every gracious fruit of the Spirit, with tender benevolence and sympathy, willing to bear and forbear, and united in love and peace, notwithstanding any lesser differences of opinion, *filled with all knowledge, in the great essential points of the Gospel revelation ; able also to admonish one another, and to communicate your gifts for mutual edification.*

2. He elegantly apologizes for the freedom that he had taken in reproving, advising, and exhorting them, who were themselves so eminent in gifts and graces. *Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you, in some sort, as putting you in mind ;* rather as your monitor to refresh your memory, than setting up myself for your instructor, as if you were ignorant. The liberty that he used with them, was what his office obliged him to : *because of the grace that is given to me of God ;* honoured by him with the apostleship ; *that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, discharging the office of a Christian minister with unwearied diligence, fidelity, and zeal ; that the offering-up of the Gentiles, their spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, might be acceptable through Jesus Christ, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and thereby infinitely more excellent than any of the oblations that were ever made at the temple.*

4thly, Having mentioned his office as the apostle of the Gentiles, he glories therein. *I have therefore wherewith I may glory through Jesus Christ, by whose grace I have been so supported, and who has given such eminent success to my labours, in those things which pertain to God, wherewithin his glory is so greatly concerned, and in the conversion of the Gentiles so highly exalted. Or the words may be rendered, I have therefore a rejoicing in Christ concerning the things of God ;* that is, the Gentiles, who are offered up to him as living sacrifices, in which he felt the most unfeigned satisfaction. *For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me ;* far be all arrogant boasts from me ; nor would I ascribe the least honour to myself, but only to him whose mighty grace, under my preaching, has wrought powerfully, *to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed ;* shewing forth by an open confession, and a becoming conversation, the reality of their conversion to God, *through mighty signs and wonders, which were*

own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my well-beloved Epe-

* Mat. 18. 20. 1 Cor. 16. 19. Col. 4. 15. Philem. 2.

were wrought in confirmation of my divine mission, by the power of the Spirit of God; whose mighty influence gives energy and demonstration to the word preached; so that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ; diffusing with indefatigable labours the light of truth through Syria, Lesser Asia, and Greece; and keeping back nothing of the whole counsel of God concerning the free and perfect salvation of sinners through the great Redeemer. Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named; but with a holy ambition I went rather to the places where he was wholly unknown; lest I should build upon another man's foundation, and be thought to be inferior to those who went before, and to have borrowed my knowledge from them, and so should have wanted a signal proof of my doctrine and office, as immediately received from Christ himself. But as it is written (Isa. lii. 15.), so has it been fulfilled by my ministry; To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard, shall understand: the Gentiles, who lay in darkness, utterly ignorant of the Messiah and his kingdom, shall see the light of life, and be made wise unto salvation. Note; Whatever success attends our labours, God must have all the glory, who alone giveth the increase.

5thly, St. Paul had travelled far, but he intended still to extend his labours to a wider circle, and visit Rome also, and the regions beyond it.

1. He had long proposed to visit them, but his many avocations had hitherto prevented him. For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you; but now having no more place in these parts, the Gospel being fully preached, and Christian churches planted throughout the country between Jerusalem and Italy, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you, that I might impart to you some spiritual gift, and be comforted by you; whenever I take my journey into Spain, where I purpose, God willing, to erect the Gospel standard, I will come to you, and take you in my way; for I trust to see you in my journey, and, according to the kind reception I have met with in other churches, to be brought on my way thitherward by you, some of you going with me, and giving me such directions and necessaries as may conduce to the success of the expedition; if first I be somewhat, or in part, filled with your company; enjoying the satisfaction of their conversation, rejoicing in their steadfastness, and tasting a little of the sweetness of that communion of saints, which he hoped in the utmost perfection to enjoy with them in heaven. Note; (1.) When duty detains us from those whose company we most delight in, we are ever cheerfully to forego our own pleasure, for the sake of our Master's service. (2.) All our purposes should be formed in subordination to divine Providence. (3.) Christian fellowship is one of the greatest joys on earth, and a little foretaste of what we expect, when we shall join the spirits of the just made perfect.

2. He at present was obliged to return to Jerusalem with the collections of the several churches for their poor

brethren in Judea, who by persecution and the famine were in great distress. But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints, to distribute among them the generous contributions of their Gentile brethren; For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia, to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them verily, thus freely and liberally to contribute of their substance, and afford a noble example of Christian benevolence; and their debtors they are; gratitude as well as charity required this at their hands. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, and have been called to share in those privileges that were long peculiar to the church of Israel, their duty is also, in return, to minister unto them in carnal things, *καταγγέλλειν*, honouring God by a conscientious and liberal supply of their wants.

3. When he had finished this work, he expresses his confidence that he should come to them. When therefore I have performed my present journey and service, and have sealed to them this fruit, careful that it be rendered up to them undiminished, I will come by you into Spain. And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ; as a merchant vessel; richly fraught, bringing with me the inestimable treasures of the Gospel-word for your most abundant edification and comfort. Note; It is a happy meeting between a minister and his people, when he thus comes to them in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ.

6thly, Having declared to them his purpose, he intreats their prayers, that he may be able to accomplish it.

Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, by every powerful argument which can be drawn from the grace which is in Him, whose I am, and whom I serve; and for the love of the Spirit, who visited your souls with his blessed influence; and as a proof of your being possessed of this divine principle, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; fervently and importunately joining me in my earnest cries to God, that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea, those most envied foes, his own infidel and wicked countrymen; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem, may be accepted of the saints; that all their prejudices against him and the Gentile converts might be removed, and this benevolence thankfully and cheerfully received, to the cementing of a nearer union between them. And also that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, having found success in this ministry, if the Lord so pleased; and may with you be refreshed, in the enjoyment of your company, and the communication of our mutual happy experience. And now, may the God of peace be with you all, uniting your hearts in love to his blessed Self, and to one another; and filling you with all peace and prosperity in your souls. Amen. I pray that this may, and trust that it will, be your happy case. Note; (1.) We are bound to desire each other's prayers, and should count these among the greatest obligations which can be conferred upon us. (2.) Our applications to a throne of grace must be fervent and agonizing,

netus, who 'is the first-fruits of Achaia unto Christ.

6 Greet Mary, who 'bestowed much labour on us.

^f 1 Cor. 16. 15. Acts, 18. 20.

^g Luke, 8. 3. 1 Tim. 5. 20.

agonizing, as becomes those who know the inestimable value of the prize for which they wrestle.

CHAP. XVI.

PHEBE, a deaconess of the church of Cenchrea, having occasion to go to Rome about some important affairs, the Apostle earnestly recommended her to the good offices of the Roman brethren, ver. 1, 2.—To this recommendation, he subjoined salutations to a number of persons by name, members of the church at Rome, with whom it seems he was acquainted, ver. 3—16.

The names of the persons saluted, shew them to have been Greeks, or of Greek extraction. We may therefore conjecture, that they had settled themselves in Rome for the sake of commerce, or of exercising their particular trades. But being afterwards banished by the emperor Claudius, under the denomination of Jews, they had retired, some of them into Greece, others into the Lesser Asia, and others into Judea, where it is supposed they became known to the Apostle Paul, in the course of his travels through these countries. Some of the saluted are called by the Apostle his kinsmen, either because they were his relations, or because they were of the same nation with himself; and who, during their banishment from Rome, or perhaps before it, had been converted to Christianity. These, with many others, returned to Rome on the death of Claudius, and re-established the church there in its former lustre.

The Papists affirm, that at the time when the Apostle wrote this letter, St. Peter was in Rome exercising the office of bishop in the church there. But if St. Peter had been in Rome when this Epistle was written, St. Paul would certainly have known it: in which case, he would not have omitted him in the salutations, and have mentioned so many others of inferior note.—The Apostle's saluting so many members of the church at Rome, could not displease the rest who were not personally known to him. By saluting all his acquaintance in Rome, the Apostle proposed to make himself known to the Roman brethren, through the accounts which he knew his acquaintance would give of his apostolical character and gifts, and of his success in converting the Gentiles. The truth is, he wished the Roman brethren to be well informed concerning these matters, because the knowledge of them was necessary to give his letter its full effect with those who might read it.—From the characters which the Apostle has given of the persons whom he saluted, we learn that some of them were remarkable for their station and education, and all of them for their graces and virtues. Wherefore, the accounts which they gave of the Apostle's character and endowment, and success in preaching, must have had great weight in establishing his authority among the brethren at Rome, and in drawing their attention to the things written in this Epistle.

Concerning the salutations in the apostolic Epistles, it is proper to remark, in general, that they were of great benefit to the persons saluted. For being sent to individuals,

in letters addressed to the churches of which they were members, such public testimonies of the Apostle's esteem not only gave the saluted much pleasure, but tended to confirm them in the faith, and to encourage them to bear with patience the evils attending the profession of the Gospel. And to us, these salutations are an example of that love which we owe to the sincere disciples of Christ, on account of their character. Farther, the Apostle, by naming so many persons in his Epistles, has not only transmitted to posterity an honourable character of them, but has furnished an additional proof of the truth and authenticity of his own epistles. For all the persons named in them, were appealed to as witnesses of the things which he has written.

After finishing his salutations, the Apostle gave the Romans a few more practical advices suited to their circumstances, ver. 17—20.—Then sent them salutations from his assistants, ver. 21, 22, 23.—To which he added his own apostolical benedictions ver. 24.—And concluded this letter, in which he had considered the dispensations of God to mankind, from the beginning of the world to the end of time, with a sublime doxology to God the Father, ver. 25, 26, 27.

Ver. 1. I commend unto you, &c.] This chapter consists chiefly of salutations. Throughout the whole Epistle the Apostle has demonstrated his affectionate regards to the whole society of Christians at Rome. But it was still more engaging to take a friendly notice of the principal persons by name, adding to several of them the honourable character which they deserved, or some special mark of his esteem. In the midst of these expressions of his love, the great design of writing the Epistle, and establishing their happiness, recurs to his thoughts. The Jewish converts were exceeding zealous to reduce all professors of Christianity to a submission to the law of Moses; and on this account not only propagated bad principles of religion, but almost every where broke in upon the peace and unity of the Gentile churches. This was the case of the churches in Galatia; but was not yet the unhappy case of the church at Rome. But the Apostle fearing it might, after all that he has done in this Epistle to settle them upon the principles of pure Gospel, throws in here a very pathetic caution against such authors and fomenters of divisions, ver. 17—20. He concludes, after repeated benedictions, (like one who with his whole soul wished their highest felicity,) with a doxology to the only-wise God.

I commend Phebe—whom I commend, &c.] It might be translated, *who is a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea*, a port belonging to the city of Corinth, whence St. Paul wrote this letter. It is agreed that the deacons were officers employed in distributing the church's stock among the necessitous. They were to be persons of an eminent character, 1 Tim. iii. 8—11. and therefore their service in the church might not consist only in relieving the poor, but in visiting the sick, in exhorting, comforting, and teaching, as occasion required. Corinth was a city of Greece, and, according

7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinf-
men, and my ^b fellow prisoners, who are ^a of

note among the apostles, who also were ^b in
Christ before me.

^a Rev. 1. 9. Phil. 4. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 8. & 2. 12. Eph. 3. 1. & 4. 1.
^b 2 Cor. 5. 17. Eph. 2. 19. Gal. 6. 15.

^c Gal. 1. 2, 9. Acts, 1. 15. or Acts, 2. 41. & 4. 4.

^d 1 Cor. 1. 30.

according to the customs of that country, men could not well be allowed to perform those good offices to the women: for men to have visited and conversed with women, would have been counted a very great indecency, and must have brought a scandal upon the Christian profession; as in Greece the women were treated in a manner very different from the usages of the western parts of Europe. This appears from Cornelius Nepos, who observes in his preface, "A great many things in our customs are decent, which are thought scandalous among them: for which of the Romans thinks it a shame to take his spouse to a feast? Or whose wife keeps not in the first room of the house, and converses with company? Which is quite otherwise in Greece, where she is never admitted to a feast, unless of relations, and always keeps in a retired part of the house, which is called *the woman's apartment*, whither nobody comes, unless allied to her by near relation." This being the case, it is not improbable that some women of probity and good understanding might be chosen to attend as *deaconesses* upon their own sex. And this custom of keeping the women in a state of separation might occasion, in Greece, other allowable peculiarities in religious affairs. It is certain that they sometimes exercised their devotions apart from their husbands (1 Cor. vii. 5.); and that they had separate assemblies for religious worship will appear probable, if we consider that the Apostle, when he is giving rules about *prophesying*, absolutely enjoins silence to the women in the *church*, or public assembly; 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35. They were not allowed to speak or prophesy there, by the *commandment of the Lord*, ver. 37. or so much as to ask any question in the public assembly about what was taught, but directed to *consult their husbands at home*: much less were they allowed to *teach* or *usurp authority* over the men, but are expressly ordered to *learn in silence, with all subjection*, 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12. And yet the Apostle supposes, 1 Cor. xi. 3—16. without any mark of disapprobation, that the woman might *pray* and *prophecy*, that is, *speak unto others to edification, exhortation, and comfort*; for that is here the meaning of *prophesying*, as the Apostle informs us, 1 Cor. xiv. 3. therefore *prophesying* is an address to *others*, or to a company of persons. Here then the Apostle gives directions about the woman's praying and prophesying in an *assembly*, or where *others* were present, and yet, in the above-quoted places, he expressly enjoins silence, and forbids her *speaking*, and consequently *prophesying*, in the *churches*.—How shall we bring these things to a consistency?—Thus: the prohibitions and injunctions, 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35., 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12. expressly relate to those assemblies, in which the *whole church*, men and women, met for the worship of God. In such assemblies the women were to be in silence; consequently (unless the Apostle contradicted himself in the same Epistle, and in a matter upon which he discourses largely and expressly) those assemblies in which women are supposed and allowed to pray and prophesy, were *separate meetings*, which consisted of none but women. Of

the decent appearance of women at such meetings, he discourses, 1 Cor. xi. 3—16. where we may observe there is not one word of the *church*;—of praying or prophesying in the *church*;—for he did not consider those assemblies of women as proper *churches*. Then at ver. 17. he begins to correct disorders in their proper assemblies, when they *came together in the church*, men and women (ver. 28.); and discourses upon this subject to the end of ch. xiv. In favour of this opinion, Grotius, on the verse before us, remarks, "that in Greece there were *Πρεσβυτριδες*, *female presbyters*, as well as *deacons*, for the instruction of their own sex; which female *presbyters* were ordained by the laying on of hands, till the *council of Laodicea*;" and for this he appeals to the eleventh canon of that council. This order of priestesses must grow out of the custom of women's holding separate assemblies for their mutual instruction and edification. In those assemblies they supposed that they might lay aside the veil, the token of inferiority and subjection, and perform their religious exercises uncovered, as if they were upon a par with the men. This the Apostle opposes, and gives his reasons, 1 Cor. xi. 3—9. "But,—the women ought not to be the object,—we have no men among us; why should we wear the badge of subjection, when we are among ourselves, and therefore are to be considered only as *to ourselves*?" The Apostle answers, *veils* (that is, a *veil*, the sign of the *power* or *authority*) *upon your head, because or on account of the messengers*; for so the word *ἄγγελος*, which we translate *Angels*, most naturally and properly signifies; and so it is rendered, Matth. xi. 10., Luke, vii. 24, 25., ix. 52., James, ii. 25. This furnishes a hint of what the reason of the case plainly suggests, that the men, upon sundry occasions, especially to inspect their conduct, sent *messengers* to those female assemblies. If we duly reflect upon the general custom of confining and restraining the women, even at home, in their own houses, we need not doubt but those meetings were under particular regulations; and that care would be taken to send proper persons to see how they behaved in them; not to mention that a woman might be wanted at home, and a messenger might be sent to require her attendance. However, it is very probable, that access to messengers was one of the conditions upon which the women held these religious assemblies; and these messengers, coming in the name of their husbands, brought, in a sense, their authority along with them; on which account the women ought to observe a just *decorum*, as if their husbands were present, seeing that they were in effect still under their eye:—*The woman ought to have power upon her head, on account of the messengers*. Mr. Locke, in his note on 1 Cor. xi. 3. supposes women were allowed to prophesy in public assemblies, where men were present; not indeed as ordinary doctors and teachers, but when their "prophesying was a spiritual gift, performed by the immediate and extraordinary motion and impulse of the Holy Ghost." But this great commentator did not observe, that women are expressly and absolutely enjoined silence

8 Greet Amplias my ¹ beloved in the Lord.

9 Salute Urbane, our ^m helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

10 Salute Apelles, ⁿ approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' * *household*.

11 Salute Herodion my ^o kinsman. Greet them that be of the * *household* of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who ^p labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Peris, which laboured much in the Lord.

13 Salute Rufus, ^q chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

14 Salute ^r Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the ^s brethren which are with them.

15 Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all ^t the saints which are with them.

16 ^u Salute one another with an-holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, ^v mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.

18 For ^w they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and

¹ 1 John, 3. 14. & 5. 1. & 4. 21. ^m Ver. 3. 21. ⁿ Ch. 5. 2. 3. ^o 1 Pet. 1. 7. ^p Phil. 2. 22. ^q Or *friends*. ^r Ver. 7. 21. ^s Or *friends*. ^t Ver. 2. 3, 6, 9. ^u Eph. 1. 4. ^v 2 John, 1. ^w Mat. 20. 16. & 22. 14. ^x Mat. 12. 49. ^y John, 19. 27. ^z Heb. 3. 1. ^{aa} Gal. 3. 26. ^{ab} John, 20. 17. ^{ac} Heb. 2. 11, 12. ^{ad} 1 If. 60. 21. & 62. 12. ^{ae} Heb. 3. 1. ^{af} 1 Pet. 1. 2. ^{ag} 1 Cor. 6. 11. ^{ah} Titus, 3. 5. & 2. 11, 12, 14. ^{ai} 1 Cor. 16. 21. ^{aj} 1 Cor. 15. 12. ^{ak} 1 Thess. 5. 26. ^{al} 1 Pet. 1. 22. & 5. 12. ^{am} Mat. 18. 8. ^{an} 17. Acts, 15. 1, 5, 24. ^{ao} 1 Cor. 5. 9, 11. ^{ap} Gal. 1. 9. & 5. 9. ^{aq} Phil. 3. 2. ^{ar} Col. 2. 3. ^{as} 2 Thess. 3. 6, 14. ^{at} 1 Tim. 6. 3—5. ^{au} 2 Tim. 3. 2—5. ^{av} Titus, 3. 10. ^{aw} 2 John, 10, 11. ^{ax} Phil. 3. 19. ^{ay} 11. 56. 10—12. ^{az} Ezek. 13. 18. ^{ba} 1 Cor. 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 11. 23. ^{bb} Col. 2. 4. ^{bc} 1 Thess. 2. 3. ^{bd} 2 Thess. 2. 3. ^{be} 1 Tim. 6. 5. ^{bf} 2 Tim. 2. 17. & 3. 2—6. & 4. 3. ^{bg} Titus, 3. 10. ^{bh} 2 Pet. 2. 3. ^{bi} Jude. ^{bj} 2 Thess. ii. ^{bk} Mat. 24. 11, 24. ^{bl} Prov. 14. 15.

in the churches, by the commandment of the Lord, among the rules relative to speaking in this very kind of prophesying, by *revelation*. See 1 Cor. xiv. 29—37. Whence, particularly from ver. 32, 33. we may conclude, that a revelation given by the Spirit of God was not, at least in general, attended with any such extraordinary *vision* or *impulse*, as constrained the person to speak to whom it was given. With regard to the time of speaking, he might use his discretion;—when he thought proper, he might begin to speak; and when he pleased might hold his speech, as decency and good order would require. Therefore, though the Spirit of prophecy might be poured out upon a Christian woman in the church; or though some truth might be revealed to her, yet she might keep it to herself, and was obliged to keep it to herself, among the Christian men, and to confer only with her husband about it, who, it seems likely, might communicate it to the church, if he thought fit.

Ver. 3. Greet Priscilla and Aquila] This excellent couple appear by this passage to have returned to Rome on the ceasing of that edict against the Jews, which had driven them thence in the reign of Claudius; Acts, xviii. 2. Priscilla seems to have been a woman of great note; and probably of distinguished genius and influence; which appears, not only from the manner in which she is here named, but also from the edification which the eloquent Apollos received from her instructions, in concurrence with those of her husband. See Doddridge, and Calmet.

Ver. 5. Who is the first-fruits of Achaia] It is probable that Epenetus might be converted at the same time with Stephanas, called also the first-fruits of Achaia; 1 Cor. xvi. 15. for there is no manner of necessity to understand by that expression the very first Christian convert. Epenetus possibly might be one of that happy family, to whom this appellation is given.

Ver. 7. Andronicus and Junia] Or, Junias. Diodati VOL. II.

thinks that by *apostles* in this verse are meant the evangelists; and that the meaning is, that these persons were noted messengers of the churches; but it is more probable that they were some early converts, who had been known and much esteemed by the apostles before the dispersion occasioned by the death of Stephen: and if so, St. Paul perhaps might once have been active in persecuting them, and have learned their names at first with an hostile intent of hunting them down to destruction. See Craddock's Apostol. Hist. Diodati, and Doddridge.

Ver. 10. Them—of Aristobulus' household] There is no certain evidence that either *Aristobulus*, or *Narcissus*, ver. 11. were Christians. It seems most probable that they were persons of high rank, who had each a large family of slaves or domestics; some of whom being Christian converts; the Apostle would not forget them, low as their rank was in life, when he was saluting his brethren in so particular a manner. We may observe what a regard the Apostle had for foreign churches, when he informed himself of the names, circumstances, and abode of so many of them in Rome. See Doddridge.

Ver. 11. In the Lord] From this and the following verse we may observe, that when the whole family was converted, the Apostle writes to the church *in such a house*; when not, the salutation is directed to as many as were *in the Lord* in that family.

Ver. 13. And his mother and mine] Hence some have thought, that Rufus was at least half-brother to St. Paul; but perhaps he might in this expression refer to the maternal care which this good woman had taken of him.

Ver. 15. And all the saints, &c.] Dr. Calvin and many others observe, as before hinted, that had St. Peter been now at Rome, he would undoubtedly have been named, since no one in this numerous catalogue was of a dignity and eminence by any means comparable to him;—and yet if he were not there at this time, the whole tradition of the

by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

19 For your obedience is ^z come abroad unto all *men*. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you ^a wise unto that which is good, and ^{*} simple concerning evil.

20 And the ^b God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. ^c The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

21 ^d Timotheus my work-fellow, and Lucius, and ^e Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.

22 ^f I Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, salute you in the Lord.

23 Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus, a brother.

24 ^g The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

25 Now to him that is ^h of power to stablish you ⁱ according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, (according to the revelation of the mystery, ^k which was kept secret since the world began,

26 But ^l now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, ^m according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the ⁿ obedience of faith):

^{*} Ch. 1. 8. 1 Theff. 1. 8. ^a Mat. 10. 16. 1 Cor. 14. 20. 1 Theff. 5. 21. Luke, 10. 3. ^b Or *barrels*. ^c See ch. 15. 33. Heb. 13. 20. with Gen. 3. 15. 1 John, 3. 8. Heb. 2. 14. ^d Ver. 24. Ch. 15. 33. 1 Cor. 16. 23. 2 Cor. 13. 14. Gal. 6. 18. Eph. 6. 24. Phil. 4. 23. Col. 4. 18. 1 Theff. 5. 28. 2 Theff. 3. 18. 1 Tim. 6. 21. 2 Tim. 4. 22. Titus, 3. 15. Heb. 13. 25. Rev. 21. 21. ^e Acts, xvi—xx. Phil. 2. 19. 1 Theff. 3. 2. Heb. 13. 23. Acts, 19. 22. & 20. 4. with 3 John, 8. 1 Cor. 1. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 27. ^f Acts, 17. 5. & 20. 4. ^g Perhaps Silas or Silvanus. Acts, 15. 22, 32—40. & xvi—xviii. 1 Theff. 1. 1. 2 Theff. 1. 1. ^h See ver. 20. ⁱ 2 Tim. 3. 1, 12. Eph. 3. 20. Jude, 24. Heb. 7. 25. 1 Theff. 3. 13. 2 Theff. 2. 17. & 3. 3. 1 Titus, 5. 10. ^j Ch. 2. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. & 2. 2. Eph. 3. 8. ^k 1 Cor. 2. 7. Eph. 3. 5, 9. Col. 1. 26. 2 Tim. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 20. Ch. 3. 21. ^l Ch. 1. 5. Col. 1. 27. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Titus, 1. 3. ^m Mark, 16. 15. Mat. 28. 19. Lf. 11. 9. ⁿ Ch. 1. 5. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. Acts, 6. 7.

the Romish bishops, as that church delivers it, fails in the most fundamental article of all.

Ver. 18. And fair speeches] *Ἐυνοίας, flattering forms of address.* We hence learn what were the weapons which these false apostles opposed to the miracles of the true. See Tit. i. 10, 11.

Ver. 20. Shall bruise Satan, &c.] Satan is here put for *his instruments*;—the troublers of the church's peace. See 2 Cor. xi. 15. "God shall break the force and attempts of Satan upon your peace, by those his instruments, who would engage you in quarrels and discords." See Locke. At the same time, the words may be taken in the most spiritual sense, as implying that all the spiritual enemies of every faithful soul among them should soon be destroyed.

Ver. 22. I Tertius, who wrote this Epistle, &c.] It was the general custom of those times to dictate to an amanuensis;—especially with men of learning and business. An anonymous critic would read this verse, *I Tertius, who wrote this Epistle, for the glory of the Lord, salute you.* It seems that Tertius, who was St. Paul's secretary or amanuensis, was well-known to the Roman brethren. From his name he may be supposed to have been a Roman. Others think that this is Silas, because his name is of the same signification with Tertius.

Ver. 24—27. The grace of our Lord, &c.] All the other epistles of St. Paul end with a similar benediction. When St. Paul says *my Gospel*, ver. 25. he cannot be supposed, says Mr. Locke, to have used such an expression, unless he knew that what he preached had something in it which distinguished it from what was preached by others: which was plainly *the mystery*, as he every where calls it, of God's

purpose of taking in the Gentiles to be his people under the Messiah, and that without subjecting them to circumcision, or the law of Moses. This is that *mystery* which he is so much concerned that the Ephesians should understand and adhere to firmly, and which was revealed to him according to that Gospel whereof he was made the minister, as may be seen at large in that Epistle. The same thing he declares to the Colossians, particularly ch. i. 27—29. and ii. 6—8. For that he preached this doctrine in a fuller manner than any of the other apostles did, may be seen Acts xxi. 18—25. For though the other apostles and elders of the church at Jerusalem had determined that the Gentiles should only keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, &c. &c. yet it is plain enough from what they say, Acts xxi. 20—24. that they taught not fully, what St. Paul openly declares to the Ephesians,—that the law of Moses was abolished by the death of Christ: (Ephes. ii. 15.) so that St. Paul might in an eminent degree be termed the Apostle of the Gentiles. And in all this may be seen the goodness of God both to Jews and Gentiles. See Ephes. ii. 15. A commentator observes, that the Apostle calls it *his Gospel*, because he was the man especially singled out and commissioned to preach it. He might also call it *his Gospel*, to distinguish it from that which was preached by some others, who mixed law and gospel together. But I cannot think, with Mr. Locke, that the Apostle intended to distinguish it from that which St. Peter and St. James taught; who, though they were apostles of the circumcision, do not appear from either of their epistles, to have held any sentiments inconsistent with what St. Paul taught. St. Peter particularly wrote his epistles to Gentile converts; and is

as

27 ° To God ' only wife be glory through
Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

¶ Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent
by Phœbe servant of the Church at Cenchræa.

° Ch. 9. 5. & 11. 36. Gal. 1. 5. Phil. 4. 20. Eph. 3. 20, 21. 1 Tim. 1. 17. & 6. 16. 2 Tim. 4. 18. Heb. 13. 21. 1 Pet. 4. 11. & 5. 11.
1 Pet. 3. 18. Jude, 25. Rev. 1. 6. & 5. 13. P Pf. 147. 5. Dan. 2. 21. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Ch. 11. 33, 34.

as clear in giving them a full place in the church, and all the honours of the people of God, upon their faith in Christ, as St. Paul himself: nor can we form any argument as to his sentiments, from his blameable conduct, Gal. ii. 12. for that was an error of infirmity, not of judgment. By the revelation of the mystery, the Apostle means the calling of the Gentiles, as appears from the next verse; *Now is made known to all nations, or, to all the nations,—for the obedience of faith.* The original, rendered *since the world began*, is *ἡρῶν ἀνωρίως*; that is, *in the secular times, or the times under the law.* Why the times under the law were called *ἡρῶν ἀνωρίως*, we may find a reason in their jubilees, which were *αιῶνες, secula, or ages*; by which all the time under the law was measured; and so *ἡρῶν ἀνωρίως* are used, 2 Tim. i. 9., Titus, i. 2. And *αιῶνες* are put for the times of the law, or the jubilees, Luke, i. 70., Acts, iii. 21., 1 Cor. ii. 7., and x. 11., Ephes. iii. 9., Col. i. 26., Heb. ix. 26. So Exod. xxi. 6. *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*, signifies not as we translate it, *for ever*, but “to the jubilee:” which will appear, if we compare Lev. xxv. 39—41. and Exod. xxi. 2. Now that the times of the law, were the times here spoken of by St. Paul, seems plain from that which he declares to have continued a *mystery* during all those times; namely, God’s purpose of taking in the Gentiles to be his people under the Messiah: for this could not be said to be mystery at any other time than that, when the Jews were separated to be the peculiar people of God: before that time there was no such name or idea of distinction as *Gentiles*; before the *days* of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the calling of the Israelites to be God’s peculiar people was as much a mystery, as the calling of the Gentiles was a mystery afterwards. All that St. Paul insists upon here, and in all the places where he mentions this mystery, is to shew, that, though God had declared this his purpose to the Jews, by the predictions of his prophets among them, yet it lay concealed from their knowledge; it was a mystery to them; they understood no such thing: there was not any where the least suspicion or thought of it; till, the Messiah being come, it was openly declared by St. Paul to the Jews and Gentiles, and made out by the writings of the prophets, which were now understood. See Locke, and Burthogge’s excellent pamphlet, intitled, “Christianity a Revealed Mystery.”

Written to the Romans, &c.] The first verse of this chapter justifies part of this note; but as the most ancient manuscripts have not these notes, and some of them are plainly contrary to passages in the epistles to which they are affixed, they are not to be esteemed of any authority. See Wettstein.

Inferences.—What an advantage is the Christian religion to friendship and good manners! It teaches us to pay civil respect to all ranks and degrees of persons, in such chaste and decent modes of salutation, as are customary in

the age and country in which we live; it obliges us to be grateful for benefits, and to make the best returns of love and kindness that we are capable of; it gives a holy turn to civility and genteel behaviour, and makes us sincere in wishing the spiritual and eternal, as well as temporal prosperity of our friends; and it disposes one Gospel church to receive the members of another, when duly recommended to their holy fellowship. How concerned should Christians, whether men or women, be to excel in piety, to enter into Christian communion, and to be serviceable in their respective spheres, to the whole body! How amiable are those families which resemble a church of Christ in their worship, order, and conversation! And, Oh! what an honour is it to be *first* and *eminent* in the faith and profession of the Gospel! How careful should *private Christians*, as well as others, be, to judge for themselves in matters of religion, according to the doctrine which they have learnt from Christ and his apostles; and to guard against and avoid those who would cause divisions and offences, by broaching errors among them! Whatever may be the plausible pretences, fair shews, and flattering speeches of seducers, they are secretly carrying on some selfish and carnal views to deceive weak, though sincere souls. But it behoves us to be so *wise* as to know the truth, and not to be imposed upon by others; and so *honest* as to act up to our knowledge, and not impose upon them. What a busy adversary is the devil in promoting pernicious principles and practices, to the disturbance and corruption of the church! But it is the comfort and encouragement of all the faithful saints, that the God of peace will entirely subdue him under their feet shortly. How excellent is the Gospel of the grace of God! It is of ancient date, and of divine original; it harmonizes with the Old Testament Scriptures; and is now made known in all its light and glory, according to the commandment of the eternal God: the great subject of this Gospel is Jesus Christ, and salvation through him; it extends its blessings to sinners of all nations; and wherever it is sent by an overruling Providence, it ought to be received with a divine faith, that we may subject our consciences to the authority of God in it, and yield all holy obedience to him, from a principle of faith in Christ, according to it; and that we may ascribe all possible honour to the only-wife God, who is able to establish us in it; to whom be glory, through Jesus Christ, both now and for ever. Amen.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Apostle now takes his leave of them:

1. With commending to them the bearer. *I commend unto you Phœbe our sister in the Lord, which is a servant, or a deaconess, of the church which is at Cenchræa, in the neighbourhood of Corinth.* She was one of those who devoted her time and substance to the service of the cause of Christ: probably her house served for the assemblies of the church,

and she entertained those who came to preach the Gospel among them. Therefore he desires, *That they would receive her in the Lord*, with all holy affection, in the Redeemer's name and for his sake, *as becometh saints*, such as ye profess yourselves to be; *and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you*, shewing her every mark of kindness and respect: *for she hath been a succourer of many*, and has most hospitably received and entertained them; *and of myself also*; and with gratitude therefore I desire to acknowledge her kindness and generosity. *Note*; The least return that we can make for favours, is to testify our gratitude to our kind benefactors.

2. He sends his affectionate salutations to many at Rome.

[1.] To *Priscilla and Aquila*, of whom he speaks with the deepest regard as his *helpers in Christ Jesus*, who had been particularly assistant to him in labours at Corinth, and had for his life laid down their own necks, and, when he was in danger, rescued him at the hazard of their lives, *Acts*, xviii. 12—17. For which noble instance of generous love, says he, *not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles*, who owe the continuance of my ministry to their zeal and interposition. *Likewise greet the church that is in their house*; either their family, who were all professors of the faith; or the saints who usually assembled there for public worship.

[2.] To *Epenetus*, whom he entitles his *well-beloved*. So tenderly affectionate was the Apostle's heart towards his spiritual children, and especially to Epenetus, as being *the first-fruits of his ministry in Achaia unto Christ* and the earnest of that plenteous harvest which followed.

[3.] To *Mary*, whom he distinguishes as having *bestowed much labour on us*, peculiarly assiduous in every kind office of love towards me and my fellow-labourers.

[4.] To *Andronicus and Junia*, whom some suppose to be husband and wife, but others more probably to be brothers. They were Jews, near kinsmen probably to the Apostle, had been endeared to him by confinement in the same prison for Christ, were persons eminent for their gifts, graces, sufferings, and services; and he adds to their honour, *who were in Christ before me*, called among the earliest converts, and preaching the faith while he destroyed it.

[5.] To divers others, the most of whom he mentions with some note of distinction. *Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord*, who bears his image, and is most amiable in the relation wherein he stands to the same divine Master. *Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ*, and fellow-labourer in the glorious Gospel; and *Stachys my beloved*. *Salute Apelles, approved in Christ*, whose constancy and fidelity have appeared in many trials. *Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household*. *Salute Herodion, my kinsman both in the flesh and in the Spirit*. *Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord*, vitally united by faith unto him. *Salute Tryphona and Tryphosa, those excellent women who labour in the Lord*, in their place and station indefatigable to serve the interests of the Gospel. *Salute the beloved Peris, which laboured much in the Lord*, remarkably diligent in her sphere to advance the cause of God. *Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord*, eminent for gifts and graces; *and his mother and mine*, whose kindness to me lays me under such obligations of filial love as if I were by birth

her son. *Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them*, and belong to their families, from the highest to the lowest. *Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them*, of their respective households. *Salute one another with an holy kiss*, loving one another out of a pure heart fervently. *The churches of Christ salute you*, joining me in the most affectionate remembrances, prayers, and good wishes.

2dly, Having testified his own warm affection towards them, and sought to unite them in mutual love, he adds,

1. A solemn caution. *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences*, so opposite to the spirit of vital Christianity, and so contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned. *Mark with holy jealousy those deceivers, who, under plausible pretences of greater purity of worship, rend the peace of the church, and avoid them*, join not with them in communion, and shun, as the greatest evil, whatever would introduce or perpetuate needless divisions.

2. He discovers to them the true character of these pretenders, as the strongest argument to avoid them. *For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ*; whatever plausible pretences and professions they make, they have not really his glory and interest at heart, *but their own belly*, designing some mean, selfish, sinister, worldly advantage; *and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple*, who credulously follow them in their destructive ways. Of you I know better things; *for your obedience is come abroad unto all men*, and, to your honour, mention is made through all the churches of your professed and exemplary subjection to the Gospel of Christ. *I am glad therefore on your behalf*, that you are so well established, and have not been beguiled by these false teachers: *but yet*, knowing the weakness of human nature, and the subtilty of deceivers, I warn you to watch against their first efforts; *for I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil*, cautious to discern truth from error, and joining the wisdom of the serpent to the harmlessness of the dove.

3. He expresses his confidence in the Lord's preservation of them from all their enemies and seducers. *Now the God of peace, to whose blessing and protection I have recommended you, shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly*, and all his instruments, though never so crafty. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you*, to strengthen, stablish, settle you, and make you more than conquerors. *Amen!* *Note*; (1.) None do the devil's work more effectually than those who foment needless divisions among the people of God. (2.) The time is short; if faith and patience hold out, we shall be placed for ever out of the reach of sin and Satan, and reign triumphant with Him who shall make our foes become our footstool.

3dly, As the Apostle had before saluted many of the saints by name, he adds,

1. The affectionate remembrances of some of those who were at present his companions, *Timotheus my work-fellow*, as a son with a father, serving with me in the Gospel, *and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you*. *I Tertius, who wrote this Epistle, as the Apostle's amanuensis, salute you in the Lord*. *Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, whose hospitable doors are ever open to the saints, saluteth*

saluteth you. *Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you ; such had been his high office, and perhaps he still continued in his post, though converted to the faith ; and Quartus a brother in Christ Jesus ; for all who have him for their Saviour, have one Father, even God.*

2. He repeats his fervent prayers for their spiritual prosperity. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. May you experience his pardoning, comforting, strengthening, sanctifying grace below, and come to his complete and eternal glory above. Amen ! I pray that it may be so.*

4thly, Once and again, when he seemed to have closed his Epistle, some new matter arose to his mind ; here he solemnly takes his leave of them.

1. He commends them to God and the word of his grace. *Now I commend you to him that is of power to establish you, according to my Gospel, which, by divine authority commissioned, I here declare unto you, and according to the preaching of Jesus Christ, agreeably to what he himself taught, and I speak in his name, pointing him out as the great sum and substance of the Gospel, the hope and help of his believing people ; according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began,*

wholly hid from the Gentiles, and but obscurely intimated to the Jews in types and dark propheties ; *but now is made manifest* by the ministry of the divinely illuminated servants of Jesus, *and by the Scriptures of the prophets*, which, having received their accomplishment, are unveiled, and clearly understood ; *according to the commandment of the everlasting God*, who has given his ministers an express commission to declare the purposes of his grace, that they might be *made known to all nations*, Gentiles as well as Jews ; *for this glorious end* that they might be brought to *the obedience of faith*, receiving the testimony of his word, and from the divine principle of faith, which worketh by love, engaged to walk before him in righteousness and true holiness.

2. He concludes with a doxology. *To God only wise, essentially wise in himself, and seen especially to be so in the amazing contrivance of the Gospel method of salvation, be glory and honour ascribed, through Jesus Christ the only Mediator, for ever. Amen.* May his saints on earth perpetuate with their latest breath his praises ! and in heaven he shall for ever be to all his hosts the glorious object of their unceasing adorations. Amen and Amen.

THE FIRST EPISTLE
OF
ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE
CORINTHIANS.

P R E F A C E.

AS there was no country in the world, perhaps, where superstition and idolatry were more deeply rooted, or had more able defenders, than in Greece (the centre, as it were, of eloquence and of philosophy), St. Paul, who was particularly destined to the conversion of infidels, thought that he could not better fulfil his duty than by attacking idolatry in its strong-hold. For this purpose, he travelled through all the Asiatic provinces of Greece; and, passing thence into Europe, there was scarcely a city, how small soever, throughout Greece, in which he did not preach the Gospel, and establish churches. The city of Corinth (by its antiquity, greatness, and opulence, become one of the most celebrated and powerful cities in the world, and the capital of Achaia in the Peloponnesus) was not forgotten upon this occasion. St. Paul went thither to preach the Gospel, and remained there a year and a half. Having then quitted it, to follow the duties of his ministry elsewhere, he received at Ephesus a letter which the Corinthians had written to him in order to consult him on some important matters; and this Epistle is in answer to that letter. But, previous to answering their questions, he begins by censuring those contests and divisions which he heard had broken out among them, as to the different ministers of the Gospel; some saying, I am of Paul; others, and I of Apollos; others, and I of Cephas. ch. i. which was extremely culpable, and threatened no less than in a short time to destroy their church entirely. He next reproves their unbounded partiality for eloquence and philosophy, to the prejudice of that simplicity with which the Gospel was preached. And, as this arose from a false delicacy, and too high an opinion of human wisdom, he shows them that the Gospel is not to be grounded in the heart by such methods, but only by the light of the Holy Ghost, and the immediate operation of grace, ch. ii. He continues the same subject in ch. iii. a part of which tends to render God all the glory of the conversion of sinners, while the most excellent ministers of the Gospel are merely instruments in the forwarding of that most blessed work. The rest of the chapter shows that Christ is the only foundation of the church, and that the preachers of the Gospel must never seek for any other. In the ivth chapter the Apostle defends the dignity of his office against those envious persons who laboured to contemn it. In the vth he blames the church of Corinth for not cutting off from their community a man who had committed incest.

In the vith chapter he reproves the Corinthians for having lawsuits among them; and, instead of settling their disputes quietly among themselves, that they carried them into the courts, which at that time were filled with pagans. The rest of the chapter is against impurities of the flesh; and,

and, by some of the strongest reasons that were ever alleged upon the subject, the Apostle endeavours to turn the Corinthians from practising or encouraging such impurities. He then comes to the questions which had been proposed to him by the Corinthians; and for this purpose, in chap. vii. he speaks of marriages, wherein one of the parties professes the Christian religion, while the other remained in error and unbelief. In the viiith he examines the question of meats offered to idols, whether it were lawful for a believer to eat of them or not. The ixth chapter respects the privileges of ministers, and their condescension upon certain occasions. The xth begins with a recital of the most memorable things which happened to the children of Israel in the wilderness; then he speaks of the feasts which idolaters made to their idols, and of the liberty, under the Gospel dispensation, of eating, with a safe conscience, whatsoever is sold in the shambles. The xiith chapter treats, first, of the dignity of the man, and of the subordination of the woman; and afterwards, of the *αγάπη*, or love-feast, and of the sacrament of the Lord's supper. The xiiith chapter contains an enumeration of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, of which the church of Corinth had received a plentiful share. The xiiiith is entirely in praise of charity, or love. The xivth contains a censure of the abuse which some persons made in public of the gift of speaking with tongues. The xvth is very strong against those who denied the resurrection of the body, or who had but a wavering belief on that grand article of the faith. The xviith, and last, begins with some instructions relative to the collections which were making in the churches of Greece for the poor at Jerusalem; and concludes with pressing exhortations to perseverance in the faith, and in the love of Christ. It appears moreover, from the 8th verse of this chapter, that it was from Ephesus, where St. Paul abode three months, Acts, xix. 8. that he wrote this Epistle; and not from Philippi, as some injudicious person has added at the end of it. Lastly, it appears from the first verse of this last chapter, where the collections are spoken of, that this Epistle was written some time before the Epistle to the Romans; since, when St. Paul wrote the latter, the collections were finished, and he was himself on his way to Jerusalem with the money. Rom. xv. 25, 26.

CHAP. I.

After his salutation and thanksgiving, he exhorteth them to unity, and reproveth their dissensions. God destroyeth the wisdom of the wise, by the foolishness of preaching; and calleth not the wise, mighty, and noble, but the foolish, weak, and men of no account.

[Anno Domini 57.]

PAUL^a, called to be^b an apostle of Jesus Christ^c through the will of God, and^d Sosthenes our brother,

2^e Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that^f are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with^g all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

3^h Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

4ⁱ I thank my God always on your behalf,

^a See Rom. 1. 1. Acts, 13. 9. ^b Mat. 10. 2. John, 20. 21. Eph. 4. 11. Ch. 9. 1, 2. ^c 2 Cor. 1. 1. Eph. 1. 1. Col. 1. 1. 2 Tim. 1. 1. Gal. 1. 1. Acts, 13. 2. ^d Acts, 18. 17. ^e Acts, 18. 1—17. ^f John, 17. 19. Acts, 15. 9. Rom. 1. 7. & 8. 28—30. Ver. 30. Eph. 1. 1. Col. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 9. & 2. 21. Jude, 1. 1 Pet. 1. 2. Heb. 3. 1. 1 Thess. 4. 7. 2 Pet. 1. 3, 4. ^g Joel, 2, 32. Rom. 10. 12. Ch. 6. 2 Tim. 2. 12. Zeph. 3. 9. Pf. 45. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 2. ^h 2 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Cor. 1. 2. ⁱ See Rom. 1. 8. 2 Cor. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 3. Phil. 1. 3, 4. Col. 1. 3, 4. 1 Thess. 1. 2, 3. 2 Thess. 1. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 3, 5.

CHAP. I.

THE teacher who came to Corinth after the Apostle's departure, with a view to lessen his authority among the Corinthians, boldly affirmed that he was no apostle. Wherefore, to shew the falsehood of that calumny, St. Paul, after asserting his own apostleship, and giving the Corinthians his apostolical benediction, mentioned a fact well

known to them all, by which his title to the apostleship was established in the clearest manner. Having communicated to the Corinthians a variety of spiritual gifts immediately after their conversion, he thanked God for having enriched them with every spiritual gift, at the time when his preaching concerning Christ was confirmed among them, ver. 4—7. By making the spiritual gifts with which the Corinthians

for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ ;

5 ^k That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and *in* all knowledge ;

^k 2 Cor. 8. 7. Eph. 1. 3. Col. 1. 9. Ch. 4. 8, 10. & 10. 15. & 12. 8. & 14. 26.

Corinthians were enriched immediately on their believing, a subject of thanksgiving to God, the Apostle, in a delicate manner, put them in mind, that they had received these gifts long before the false teacher came among them; consequently, that they had received none of their spiritual gifts from him, but were indebted to the Apostle himself for the whole of them; also that they were much to blame for attaching themselves to a teacher, who had given them no proof at all either of his doctrine or of his mission.

St. Paul, by thus appealing to the spiritual gifts which he had imparted to the Corinthians, having established his authority as an apostle, exhorted them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to live in union and peace, ver. 10.—For he had heard that, after the example of the disciples of the Greek philosophers, each of them claimed peculiar respect, on account of the supposed eminence of the person who had taught him, and attached himself to that teacher, as if he, rather than Christ, had been the author of his faith, ver. 11, 12.—But to make them sensible that Christ was their only master, the Apostle asked them, Whether *Christ*, that is, the church of Christ, was divided into different sects, under different masters, like the Grecian schools of philosophy? and whether any one of their teachers was crucified for them? and whether they had been baptized in the name of any of them? ver. 13.—He then thanked God, since they made such a bad use of the reputation of the persons who baptized them, that he had baptized but a few of them; ver. 14, 15, 16.—And, to shew that they derived no advantage from the dignity of the teachers who baptized them, he told them, that he and his brethren Apostles, who, in respect of their inspiration, were the chief teachers in the church, were sent by Christ, not so much to baptize, as to preach the Gospel, ver. 17.

The false teacher, by introducing the Grecian philosophy and rhetoric into his discourses, had endeavoured to render them acceptable to the Corinthians, and had preferred himself to St. Paul, who, he said, was unskilful in these matters. Lest, therefore, the Corinthians should think meanly of his doctrine and manner of preaching, the Apostle told them, that Christ had *sent him to preach the Gospel, not with wisdom of speech*, that is, with philosophical arguments expressed in flowery harmonious language, such as the Greeks used in their schools; because in that method, the Gospel becoming a subject of philosophical disputation, would have lost its efficacy as a revelation from God, ver. 17.—That, though the preaching of salvation through the cross, appeared mere foolishness to the wilfully-detroyed among the heathen philosophers and Jewish scribes, yet to the saved from heathenism and Judaism, it was found by experience to be the powerful means of their salvation, ver. 18.—That God foretold he would remove both philosophy and Judaism on account of their inefficacy, ver. 19.—and make the Greek philosophers and Jewish scribes ashamed to shew themselves, because they had darkened and corrupted them, rather

than enlightened and reformed the world, ver. 20.—That, having thus experimentally shewn the inefficacy of philosophy, it pleased God by the preaching of doctrines which, to the philosophers, appeared foolishness, to save them who believed, ver. 21.—And therefore, notwithstanding the Jews required a *sign from heaven*, in confirmation of the doctrines proposed to them, and the Greeks expected every doctrine to be conformable to their philosophical principles, the Apostle preached salvation through Christ crucified, which he knew was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, ver. 22, 23.—but to them who were called or persuaded to believe the Gospel, both Jews and Greeks, that doctrine was the powerful and wise means which God made use of for their salvation, ver. 24.—Therefore, said he, it is evident that the foolish doctrines of God have more wisdom in them than the wisest doctrines of men; and the weak instruments used by God for accomplishing his purposes, are more effectual than the greatest exertions of human genius, ver. 25.

Having thus defended both the doctrines of the Gospel, and the manner in which they were preached, the Apostle very properly proceeded to shew the Corinthians the folly of glorying in their teachers on account of their learning, their eloquence, their high birth, or their power. Look, said he, at the persons who have called you to the belief of the Gospel; not many philosophers, not many warriors, not many noble men, have been employed to call you, ver. 26.—But God hath chosen, for that purpose, unlearned persons, to put to shame the learned, ver. 27.—by their success in enlightening and reforming the world, ver. 28.—that no flesh might take any honour to himself in the matter of converting and saving mankind, ver. 29.—the whole glory being due to God, ver. 30, 31. In this light, the mean birth and low station of the first preachers of the Gospel, together with their want of literature and eloquence, instead of being objections to the Gospel, are strong proofs of its divine original.

Ver. 1. Concerning the city of Corinth, see Acts, xviii. 1, 2.—a city no less famous for its luxury and vice, than for its wisdom and elegance: but notwithstanding the luxury of the rich, and the profligacy of the poor, notwithstanding the pride of its wise men, and the prejudices of its priests, St. Paul, without using the charms of eloquence, the advantages of philosophy, the splendour of riches, the favour or concurrence of the great, planted a church among them, and won them to embrace a crucified Saviour. So great was his success, that he abode near two years in this place; but about three years after his departure, the church was overrun with great disorders, and split into various sects and factions. This occasioned the following Epistle, which was written by St. Paul just before his departure from Ephesus, about Easter, (see ch. xvi. 7, 8.) in the year of Christ 57, and the third of the emperor Nero. It was intended partly to correct some corruptions and abuses among the Corinthians, and partly to answer certain questions which they had proposed to him. In the introduction he expresses

6 Even as ' the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you :

7 So that ^m ye come behind in no gift ; ^{*} waiting for the ^{*} coming of our Lord Jesus Christ :

8 Who shall also ^o confirm you unto the

end, *that ye may be* ^p blameless in ^{*} the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 ^{*} God *is* faithful, by whom ye were ^{*} called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

10 Now I ^{*} beseech you, brethren, by the

¹ Ch. 1. 2. ² Acts, 20. 24. ² Tim. 1. 8. ³ Rev. 11. 2. & 19. 10. ⁴ Mat. 24. 14. ⁵ 2 Cor. 1. 20. 21. ⁶ 2 Thess. 1. 10. ⁷ See ver. 5. ⁸ Phil. 3. 20. ⁹ Col. 1. 4. ¹⁰ 1 Thess. 1. 10. ¹¹ Titu, 2. 13. ¹² 2 Tim. 4. 8. ¹³ Heb. 9. 28. & 10. 35. ¹⁴ 1 Pet. 1. 13. ¹⁵ 2 Pet. 3. 12. ¹⁶ Gr. resolution. ¹⁷ Phil. 10. 13. ¹⁸ 1 Thess. 5. 24. ¹⁹ 2 Thess. 3. 3. ²⁰ Heb. 10. 23. ²¹ 2 Cor. 1. 21. ²² Eph. 5. 27. ²³ Phil. 2. 15. ²⁴ Col. 1. 20. ²⁵ 1 Thess. 3. 13. & 5. 21. ²⁶ 2 Pet. 3. 14. ²⁷ Jude, 24. ²⁸ Phil. 1. 10. ²⁹ 1 Thess. 2. 19. & 3. 13. & 4. 15. & 5. 23. ³⁰ 2 Thess. 7. 8. ³¹ 2 Pet. 3. 12. ³² 1 John, 2. 18. ³³ 1 Tim. 6. 14. ³⁴ Ch. 10. 17. ³⁵ 1 Thess. 5. 24. ³⁶ 2 Thess. 3. 3. ³⁷ Heb. 10. 23. & 11. 11. ³⁸ Jer. 32. 30. ³⁹ If. 49. 7. ⁴⁰ Titus, 1. 2. ⁴¹ See ver. 2. ⁴² Col. 1. 13. ⁴³ 1 Pet. 2. 9. ⁴⁴ If. 27. 13. ⁴⁵ Ver. 30. ⁴⁶ 2 Cor. 5. 17—21. ⁴⁷ John, 15. 5. & 17. 21. ⁴⁸ Gal. 2. 20. ⁴⁹ Eph. 3. 6, 8, 9. ⁵⁰ 1 John, 1. 3, 7. & 4. 13. ⁵¹ Rom. 15. 30. ⁵² Phil. 2. 1, 2. ⁵³ 2 Cor. 5. 20. & 10. 1. ⁵⁴ Ch. 5. 4.

presses his satisfaction at all the good that he knew of them, particularly at their having the gift of the Holy Ghost for the confirmation of the Gospel; ch. i. 1—9. After which, he first corrects their corruptions and abuses; *first*, rebuking the sectaries among them, and defending himself against one or more false teachers, who had alienated most of the Corinthians from him; ch. i. 10. to ch. v. *Secondly*, considering the case of a notorious offender, who had married his father's wife, that is, his own step-mother; ordering them to excommunicate this person, and to acknowledge no public fornicator as a brother; ch. v. *Thirdly*, reproving them for their covetous and litigious temper, which caused them to prosecute their Christian brethren before heathen courts of judicature; ch. vi. 1—9. *Fourthly*, cautioning them against fornication, a vice to which they had been extremely addicted before they were converted, (ch. vi. 10. to the end,) and which some of them still reckoned among the things indifferent; or which might be practised or let alone, without breach of morality. And we can scarcely wonder at this inveterate prejudice, when informed that Corinth was so notorious for fornication and lasciviousness, that a Corinthian woman among the ancients, was a synonymous term for "a prostitute." The natives made the increase of prostitutes one part of their prayers to their gods, and the bringing of prostitutes into the city a part of their vows. In the next place, he answers certain questions which they had proposed; and, *first*, he determines some questions relating to the marriage-state, ch. vii. *Secondly*, he instructs them how to act with respect to idol-offerings; ch. viii—ix. 1. It could not be unlawful in itself to eat the meat which had been offered to idols; for the consecration of flesh or wine to an idol did not make it the property of an idol, an idol being nothing, and therefore incapable of property; but some Corinthians thought it lawful to go to a feast in the idol-temples, which at the same time were places of resort for lewdness, and to eat the sacrifices, while praises were sung to the idols: this was publicly joining in idolatry. St. Paul advises to abstain even from such participation as was lawful, rather than give offence to a weak brother; which he enforces by his own example, who had abstained from many lawful things rather than create offence to the Gospel. *Thirdly*, he answers a third question concerning the manner in which women should deliver any thing in public, when called to it by divine impulse: ch. xi. 2—17. And here he censures the unusual dress of both sexes in prophesying, which exposed them to the contempt of the

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Greeks, among whom the men usually went uncovered, and the women veiled. He also takes occasion here to censure the irregularities committed at their *love-feasts*, &c. and in the exercise of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost; ch. xi. 18.—ch. xv. *Fourthly*, he asserts the resurrection of the dead, which some among the Corinthians doubted, and others denied, ch. xv. He then concludes with some directions to the Corinthian church concerning the manner of collecting alms, promises them a visit, and salutes some of the members, ch. xvi. See Michaelis, Locke, Whitby, Lardner, and Calmet.

Ver. 1, 2. Paul, called, &c.] Paul, a called Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, and Stephen the brother, ver. 2. Unto, &c.—to them that have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that invoke the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, in every place both theirs and ours. There is great propriety in every clause of the salutation prefixed to this Epistle, and particularly in St. Paul's asserting his high call to the office of an apostle, as there were those in the church of Corinth who affected to question the authority of his mission. See on Rom. i. 1. Sothenes was a Corinthian minister who attended St. Paul in his travels; compare Acts, xviii. 17. It was both humility and prudence in the Apostle thus to join his name with his own, in an Epistle in which it was necessary to deal so plainly with them, and to remonstrate against so many irregularities. See Locke, Doddridge, and Calmet.

Ver. 2. To them that are sanctified, &c.] Nothing could better suit the candid and catholic views which St. Paul was so much concerned to promote in this Epistle, than the declaration of his good wishes in this verse for every true Christian upon earth, whether Jew or Gentile, learned or unlearned, Greek or barbarian. The original, which we render *call upon the name of Jesus Christ*,—*τοῖς ἐκκαλεμένοις τὸ ὄνομα*, Mr. Locke renders, *all that are called by the name of Jesus Christ*,—the Greek words being a periphrasis for *Christians*, as is plain from the design of this verse, and from a variety of proofs given by Dr. Hammond on the place. See on ch. viii. 6.

Ver. 5. That in every thing ye are enriched] These respectful congratulations and acknowledgments of the things in which they did really excel, had a most happy tendency to soften their minds, and to dispose them the better to receive the plain reproofs that he was going to give them, and which, in their circumstances, faithful love extorted from him.

Ver. 6. Confirmed in you] Among you. Doddridge. As they

name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ^u that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no ^{*} divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which *are of the house* of Chloe, that there are ^x contentions among you.

12 Now this ^y I say, that every one of you

faith, ^z I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.

13 ^a Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

14 I thank God that ^b I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius:

15 ^c Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

16 And ^d I baptized also the household of

^u Rom. 12. 16. & 15. 5, 6. Ch. 11. 18. 2 Cor. 13. 9, 11. Eph. 4. 1—7. Phil. 3. 15, 16. & 2. 2. 1 Pet. 3. 8. ^{*} Gr. *stlisms*. ^x Prov. 13. 10. James, 4. 1. Ch. 3. 3. & 11. 18. ^y Ch. 7. 29. & 15. 20. 2 Cor. 9. 6. Gal. 3. 17. ^z Ch. 3. 4. & 16. 12. Acts, 18. 24. John, 1. 42. Ch. 15. 4. ^a 2 Cor. 11. 4. Gal. 1. 7. Eph. 4. 5. ^b Acts, 18. 8. Rom. 16. 23. ^c Mat. 10. 16. Eph. 5. 15. Ch. 3. 10. ^d Ch. 16. 15, 17. Acts, 16. 15, 33.

they could not but know that they had received these gifts by the hand of St. Paul, this expression suggests a rational and tender argument to reduce them to their former affection to him, as their spiritual father.

Ver. 9. *God is faithful*] That is, “If we continue obedient, God for his part will certainly perform his promise faithfully.”

Ver. 10.] There were great disorders in the church of Corinth, caused chiefly by a faction raised there against St. Paul; the partisans of the faction mightily cried up and gloried in their leader, and did all they could to disparage St. Paul, and to lessen him in the esteem of the Corinthians. The Apostle makes it his business in the first part of this Epistle, to take off the Corinthians from siding with, and glorying in this pretended apostle, whose followers and scholars they professed themselves to be; and to reduce them into one body as the scholars of Christ; united in a belief of the Gospel, which he had preached to them, and in an obedience to it, without any such distinction of masters and leaders, from whom they denominated themselves. He also here and there intermixes a justification of himself against the aspersions which were cast upon him by his opposers. See 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. Many are the arguments used by St. Paul to break the opposite faction, and put an end to all divisions. The first before us, from this to ver. 16. is, that in Christianity they all had but one Master, namely, *Christ*; and therefore were not to fall into parties denominated from distinct teachers, as they did in their schools of philosophy. Locke.

By the name of our Lord Jesus Christ]—Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is, and ought to be named. If any one has thought St. Paul a loose writer, it is only because he was a loose reader. He who takes notice of the Apostle's design will find, that there is scarcely a word or an expression which he uses, but with relation and tendency to his immediate subject:—as here, intending to abolish the names of leaders, by which they distinguished themselves, he beseeches them by the name of *Christ*,—a form which we do not remember that he uses any where else. Instead of *in the same judgment*, some read, *in the same sentiment*. It was morally impossible, considering the diversity of their educations and capacities, that they should all agree in opinion; nor could the Apostle intend this, because he does not use any argument to reduce them to such an

agreement, nor so much as declare what that *one opinion* was, in which he would have them agree. The words must therefore express that peaceful and unanimous temper which Christians of different opinions may and ought to maintain towards each other; which will do a much greater honour to the Gospel and to Christian churches, than the most perfect uniformity that can be imagined. See Locke and Doddridge.

Ver. 11. *Which are of the house of Chloe*] Grotius supposes *Fortunatus* and *Acheicus* mentioned ch. xvi. 17. to have been her sons. We may observe, that St. Paul uses twice, in the compass of this and the preceding verse, the word *brethren*, as a term of union and friendship, in order to put an end to their divisions.

Ver. 12. *Now this I say, &c.*] I mean that one or other of you says, &c. Chryostom and Augustin place a full stop at *Cephas*.—But the next clause may stand in opposition to all the others. “Some or other of you saith, *I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas*:—but *I am of Christ*; ver. 13. *and is Christ divided?*” See Beza and Bengelius.

Ver. 13. *Was Paul crucified for you?*] As if he had said, “Are your obligations to me equal or comparable to those which you are under to our common Master? To him who died for us upon the cross?” He mentions himself, as it was least invidious to do so; though the application was equally just as to every other instance. See ch. iii. 6. the word *eis*, rendered *in*, properly signifies *into*: so the French translate it here. The phrase *επιτιθησεται εις*,—to be baptized into any one's name, or into any one, means, solemnly by that ceremony to enter himself a disciple of him into whose name he was baptized; with profession to receive his doctrine and rules, and submit to his authority: a very good argument here, why they should be called by no one's name but Christ's. See Locke.

Ver. 15. *Lest any should say, &c.*] If any one should object that others might do it for him, it may be answered, that St. Paul's attendants, who seem to have been Timothy and Silas, (Acts, xviii. 5., 2 Cor. i. 19.) were persons of an established character, so as to be above suspicion; and that the Apostle herein, as it were, appealed to the baptized persons themselves; challenging any one of them to say that the ordinance was administered to him in Paul's name. See Doddridge and Calmet.

Ver. 16. *Besides, I know not, &c.*] This expression of uncertainty

Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

17 For Christ sent me ^e not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: ^f not with wisdom of * words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

18 For ^g the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

19 For it is written, ^h I will destroy the

wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20 ⁱ Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

21 ^k For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

^e Joh. 4. 2. Act. 10. 48. Mark. 16. 15. Act. 26. 17, 18. Rom. 15. 20. ^f Ch. 2. 1, 4, 13. 2 Pet. 1. 16. 2 Cor. 4. 2. ^g O: speak.
^h Ver. 23, 24. Act. 17. 18. Rom. 1. 16. 2 Cor. 2. 15, 16. ⁱ Job. 5. 13. If. 29. 14. Jer. 5. 9. ^k Il. 33. 18. & 44. 25. Job, 12. 27. & 10. 24. Rom. 1. 22. ^l Rom. 1. 21, 22, 28. Mat. 11. 25. Luke, 10. 21.

uncertainty as to such a fact, is by no means inconsistent with that inspiration wherewith the Apostles of our Lord were endued; which certainly was neither continual, nor reached to every accident and circumstance in life. The office of baptism was probably in general assigned to inferiors, as requiring no extraordinary abilities. The proper office of an apostle was not so much to perform the ceremony of baptism with his own hands, as to attend constantly to the work of *preaching the Gospel*. See the next verse, and Burnet on the 27th Article.

Ver. 17. *Should be made of none effect*] If the doctrine of the crucifixion of the Son of God for the sins of men be indeed true, it is undoubtedly a truth of the highest importance; and it might reasonably be expected that a person who had been instructed in it by such extraordinary methods, should appear to lay the main stress of his preaching upon it. The design of this wonderful dispensation might therefore have been in a great measure frustrated, if it had been the care of the first preachers of it, and particularly of St. Paul, to study a vain parade of words, and to set off their discourses with those glittering ornaments which the Grecian orators so often sought, and which the Corinthians were so ready to affect. But amidst all the beautiful simplicity which a deep conviction of the Gospel tended to produce, there was room left for the most manly and noble kind of eloquence; which therefore the *Christian preacher* should labour to make habitual to himself, and of which this Apostle himself is a most illustrious example. From this verse to ver. 31. St. Paul uses another argument to stop their followers from glorying in these false apostles; observing, that neither any advantage of extraction, nor skill in the learning of the Jews, nor in the philosophy and eloquence of the Greeks, was that for which God chose men to be preachers of the Gospel. Those whom he had made choice of for overturning the mighty and the learned, were mean, plain, and illiterate men. See Doddridge and Locke.

Ver. 18. *For the preaching of the cross, &c.*] “The doctrine of the cross is a doctrine of such a nature as could not recommend itself by human eloquence to the imaginations of vicious and vain disputants, such as were most of the heathen philosophers; but to those who are saved,—to serious and well-disposed persons, who embrace truth wherever they find evidence of it, and

“who are more pleased with what improves their minds, than with the vain eloquence of the heathen oratory; to such persons the Gospel, in its greatest plainness and original simplicity, is, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, the power of God,—not to amuse men’s understandings with needless speculations, but to convert their wills to righteousness and true holiness.” See Calmet.

Ver. 19, 20. *For it is written, I will destroy, &c.*] See Isai. xxix. 11, &c. and xxxiii. 17, 18. By the words *wise, scribe, disputer*, the Apostle probably meant persons most eminent for their learning and sagacity, whether among Jews or Gentiles. The *sages* of the latter, and the *scribes* of the former, are well known: and the *disputer of the age* may include such of both, as proud of their natural sagacity, were fond of engaging in controversies, and fancied that they could confute every adversary. If, according to Mr. Locke’s supposition, the false apostle, or chief leader of the faction against St. Paul, called himself a *scribe*, there will be a peculiar propriety in the use of the word here. But without that supposition it might easily be understood by the Corinthians, who had so considerable a synagogue of Jews among them: see Doddridge, Locke, and Godwin’s Heb. Antiq. lib. ii. cap. 6.

Ver. 21. *For after that, in the wisdom of God*] There is some difficulty in ascertaining the precise meaning of these words. Some understand it to be, “That since the world, in the wisdom of God, that is to say, by contemplating the works of the creation, had not by wisdom, that is, by the exercise of their reason, arrived to the true knowledge of God, it pleased God to take another method, and by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” It may seem strange, that the preaching of the Gospel should be called the *foolishness of preaching*, by an Apostle of Christ. But the meaning and language of St. Paul will be accounted for, by considering what led him to this kind of expression. The doctrine of the cross, and of the redemption of the world by the death and passion of Christ, was received by the great pretenders to wisdom and reason with scorn and contempt; *The Greeks*, says the Apostle, *seek after wisdom,—and Christ crucified is to the Greeks foolishness*. The pride of learning and philosophy had so possessed the polite parts of the heathen world, that they could not submit to a method of salvation which was above the reach of their philosophy; and which refused to be tried by the disputes

22 For¹ the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom :

23 But we preach^m Christ crucified: ⁿ unto

the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness ; ,

24 But unto them^o which are called, both

¹ Mat. 12. 38. & 16. 1. Luke, 11. 16. John, 2. 18. & 4. 48. ^m Ch. 2. 2. Gal. 3. 1. Acts, 8. 32, 33, 35. Gal. 6. 14. Eph. 3. 8. ⁿ Ch. 2. 14. Mat. 11. 6. & 13. 57. & 24. 10. If. 8. 14. Luke, 2. 34. John, 6. 60, 66. Acts, 17. 18. Rom. 9. 32. Gal. 5. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 7. If. 53. 2, 3. ^o Luke, 7. 35. Rom. 8. 23, 30. & 9. 24. Ver. 2. 9.

disputes and subtilities of the schools. The Apostle says, ver. 17. *Christ sent him to preach the Gospel, not with the wisdom of words.* The wisdom of the world, thus discarded, took its revenge of the Gospel in return, and called it the *foolishness of preaching.* "Be it so (says the Apostle); yet " by this *foolishness of preaching*, God intends to save those " who believe: for this method is of God, and not of " man; and the *foolishness of God is wiser than man.*" Thus we see what led St. Paul to use this expression, and to call the preaching of the Gospel *the foolishness of preaching.* The great and learned so esteemed it, and so called it: the Apostle speaks to them in their own language, and calls upon them in the text to compare their much-boasted wisdom with his foolishness of preaching, and to judge of them by their effects: *The world by wisdom knew not God; but the foolishness of preaching is salvation to every believer.* The religion common to the heathen was idolatry; the knowledge of the Deity taught in the schools of the philosophers was such as deprived him of his noblest attributes, justice and mercy; and these very philosophers themselves ran down with the stream, and not only taught that the deities of their country should be worshipped, but likewise enforced their doctrine by their own examples, by worshipping them themselves. Such was the state of religion before the coming of Christ; philosophy had been tried; but instead of holding out a light to those that were in the gloom, it put out the little glimmering of light which remained. See Sherlock's *Dis.* vol. i. *Disc.* iv. p. 139, &c. and Acts, vii. 18.

Ver. 22—24. *For the Jews, &c.] Whereas the Jews require signs, and the Gentiles seek after wisdom; ver. 23. We, nevertheless, preach Christ crucified,—and unto the Gentiles foolishness: ver. 24. But unto them that are called, both Jews and Gentiles, &c.* When we consider how many miracles were continually wrought by and upon the first preachers and converts of Christianity, it may seem an astonishing demand which the Jews are said here to make. From a memorable passage in Josephus,—in which he speaks of an impostor promising his followers to shew them a *sign* of their being set at liberty from the Roman yoke,—compared with their requiring from Christ, amid the full torrent of his miracles, a *sign from heaven*, it seems probable that the meaning here is, "The Jews demand a " sign from heaven to introduce a Messiah victorious over " all their enemies." See Matth. xii. 38., xvi. 1. The Apostle, ver. 23. says, that *Christ crucified was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness.* Now, I. The Jews were offended at Christ, because he was not received and followed by those of the most learning and authority among them. They were offended at him because he was not a temporal prince, and a conqueror. They were all persuaded that the Messiah would be a great king, under whom they should rule over the Gentiles, and live in

wealth and pleasure. When, therefore, they found Christ was poor and despised, and died an ignominious death, and his kingdom was a spiritual kingdom, the cross of Christ proved a stumbling-block to them, and they were displeased with a doctrine that suited neither with their prejudices nor with their inclinations. It is well known that nothing exposed Christianity more to the contempt of the Jews than the doctrine of the *cross*; they therefore called Christ in derision *Tolvi*,—*the man that was hanged*, that is, on the *cross*; and Christians *Abde Tolvi*, "the disciples of the crucified malefactor;" and by a malignant distortion of the Greek word *Ἐυαγγέλιον*, they called it *Aven Gelon*, or "a revelation of vanity." Yet it is easy to shew that these objections against the person of our Saviour were not sufficient to excuse their unbelief. For though the law promised temporal blessings to the good, yet the Jews knew by long experience, that those promises had not been fulfilled at all times, nor to all persons. Extraordinary interpositions in behalf of the righteous were grown less frequent. They therefore had no reason to judge of the characters of men by their station and circumstances in this life, or to imagine that *fortunate* and *virtuous* were synonymous terms, which implied the same thing. They might have found examples of good men, who had undergone much trouble, and had received here below no recompence of their faith and obedience. They might have learned from the prophets, that the Messiah, to whom so much power, prosperity, and splendour was promised, was also to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; that his soul was to be an offering for sin; and they might have seen, in the sufferings of Christ, and his resurrection, the accomplishment of those otherwise irreconcilable predictions. II. The causes of the unbelief of the *Greeks* and *Gentiles* were some of them the same as those which occasioned the unbelief of the Jews;—a great corruption of manners, the purity of the precepts of the Gospel, the temporal inconveniences which attended the profession of Christianity, and advantages which might be secured by rejecting or opposing it; the poor appearance which Christ had made in the world, and his ignominious death. But yet they ought not to have slighted and rejected the Gospel upon account of the low estate and sufferings of Christ and his apostles. The little light they had, yea, and some of their most approved authors, might have taught them not to value persons according to their greatness and riches; nor to measure the favour of God by temporal happiness, but to love and honour oppressed innocence. They might have remembered, that the best man and the wisest philosopher mentioned in their histories lived all his days in poverty, was exposed to slander and calumny, and at last was accused by false witnesses, and condemned to die by unjust judges. They knew that virtue seldom obtains the respect which it

Jews and Greeks, ' Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

25 ' Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how

that ' not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

1 Prov. 8. 12. Rom. 1. 4, 16. Eph. 1. 19, 20. Col. 2. 3. Ver. 30. 9 1 Kings, 12. 24. 2 Cor. 4. 7. Pf. 147. 5. 1 Sam. 17. 49. Pf. 8. 1. Matt. 11. 22. & 19. 25. Luke, 16. 15. J. ho, 7, 48. Acts, 4. 13. & 6. 9. 10. & 7. 54. & 17. 34. & 13. 16. Rom. 4. 17. Ch. 2. 3, 6. 3 Cor. 4. 7. & 10. 5. Rev. 6. 15. James, 2. 5, 7. Mat. 11. 5. Zeph. 3. 12. Zech. 11. 7, 11. Pf. 68. 10. & 72. 12—14.

it deserves. They knew that virtue, though it be so amiable in itself, has a lustre offensive to the vicious, who will join to obscure and misrepresent it, and to make it contemptible. They knew that he best deserved the name of a wise man, who lived up to the rules of morality which he had prescribed to others; and they ought to have admired the man, who, at the same time that he recommended humility to his followers, was a perfect example of all that he taught. The Gentiles could not conceive how one who seemed forsaken of God, should restore men to the favour of God; and how his sufferings should be serviceable to that end. It is reasonable that the divine mercy should constantly display itself in cases within the reach of compassion, consistently with his moral attributes. Such was the case of mankind: who, though sinful, are weak; though offenders, are within the reach of his almighty grace. It is also reasonable that God should also be displeased at rebellion and transgression, and that he should so grant his pardon, as at the same time to vindicate the honour of his laws. Now this he has accomplished in a most illustrious manner in the death of his Son, shewing thereby his hatred to sin and sinners, in refusing to hear them in their own name, and in bestowing his favours only through the mediation of one who suffered for our offences. The paternal and tutelary deities worshipped by the Gentiles were dead heroes and kings; they were consequently loth to deify one who appeared in the low circumstances of a carpenter's son, and was at last executed like the meanest slave. Yet they should have recollected that the inventors of arts, however low, were worshipped by them as gods; and that the husbandman, the gardener, the vintner, and the lowest mechanic, were enrolled among their deities. The Gentiles thought it strange to ascribe such power and authority to a crucified man. But the greatest power that any one can shew, consists in performing such things as no one else can do, unless God assist him. To destroy the peace of mankind, and carry ruin and desolation through populous countries, is no more than what human strength and policy can affect. Many have done this, who have not possessed one commendable quality. To be honoured, admired, revered, are advantages which may be attained without any supernatural aid; but no man by his riches, or the eminence of his station, can deliver his brother from death. Therefore he who can heal his sicknesses by speaking a word; who can restore the dead to life; who can confer the same power on others; who can deliver himself from the grave; is as much superior to the rulers and heroes of this world, as the heavens are above the earth. And such was our Saviour, though he was

crucified; who was the author of salvation to those who believed his doctrine with the heart unto righteousness, though the Greeks foolishly imagined that the doctrine itself was nothing but foolishness. See Jortin's Discourses, p. 9, &c. Leigh's Critica Sacra, and Archbishop Tillotson's Works, vol. 2.

Ver. 24. Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God] St. Paul in the 21st verse argues thus in general: "Since the world, by their natural parts and improvements, did not attain to a right and saving knowledge of God, God by the preaching of the Gospel, which seems foolishness to the world, was pleased to communicate that knowledge to those who believed." In the three following verses, he repeats the same reasoning, a little more expressly applied to the people whom he had here in view,—namely, Jews and Gentiles: and his sense seems to be this: "Since the Jews, to make any doctrine palatable to them, require extraordinary signs of the power of God to accompany it, and nothing will please the nice palates of the learned Greeks but wisdom; and though our preaching of a crucified Messiah be a scandal to the Jew, and foolishness to the Greek, yet we have what they both seek; for both Jew and Gentile, when they embrace the Gospel, find the Messiah whom we preach, to be the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

Ver. 25. The foolishness of God is wiser than men] As it is absolutely impossible that there should be either folly or weakness in God, so it is certain that the world did not in general believe there was; and consequently these strong phrases must be used in a very peculiar sense, and must mean that scheme which was really his, though the world, for want of understanding it, represented it as weakness and folly, unworthy of God. See Doddridge.

Ver. 26. Are called] Call you: which words I would supply from the first clause of the verse. Our translators have supplied the words are called, for which there are no correspondent words in the original, and which convey a sentiment neither true nor suitable to the Apostle's design. It is not true: for even in Judea among the chief rulers, many believed on him, John, xii. 42. particularly Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. Other Jews likewise of rank and learning were called; such as the nobleman whose sick son Jesus cured, John, iv. 53. and Manaen, Herod's foster-brother, and Cornelius, and Gamaliel, and that great company of priests mentioned Acts, vi. 7. Who were obedient to the faith. At Ephesus, many who used the arts of magic and divination were called, and who were men of learning, as appears from the number and value of their books which they burned after embracing the Gospel, Acts,

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.

² Eph. 2. 9. Rom. 4. 2. & 3. 19, 27. Ver. 31.

21. Eph. 1. 3, 4. John, 3. 16, 17.

* Col. 2. 3.

¹ Eph. 1. 4, 6, 7. & 2. 10. & 3. 17. John, 17. 21—23.

If. 48. 17. & 6. 1—3.

2 Cor. 4. 6.

John, 14. 9, 10. & 1. 18.

^u Rom. 11. 36.

2 Cor. 5. 18—

Col. 1. 15.

Acts, xix. 19. And in such numerous churches as those of Antioch, Thessalonica, Corinth, and Rome, it can hardly be doubted, that there were disciples in the higher ranks of life. There were brethren even in the emperor's family, Philip. iv. 22. In short, the precepts in the Epistles, to masters to treat their slaves with humanity, and to women concerning their not adorning themselves with gold and silver and costly raiment, shew that many wealthy persons had embraced the Gospel.—On the other hand, though it were true, *That not many wise men, &c. were called*, it did not suit the Apostle's argument to mention it here. For surely God's not calling many of the wise, &c. joined with his calling the foolish ones of the world to believe, did not put to shame the wise and strong, &c. Whereas, if the discourse be understood of the preachers of the Gospel, who were employed to convert the world, all is clear and pertinent. God chose not the learned, the mighty, and the noble ones of this world to preach the Gospel, but illiterate and weak men, and men of low birth: and by making them successful in reforming and converting mankind, he put to shame the legislators, statesmen, and philosophers among the heathens, and the learned scribes and doctors among the Jews, who never had done any thing to purpose in that matter. See Macknight.

Ver. 28. *And base things*] *And mean things*. In this and the preceding verse, though the Apostle makes use of the neuter gender, which occasioned our translators to insert the word *things*, yet it is evident from the context, that he means *persons*; and if the word *things* were omitted, the sense would be more plain. By *the things which are not*, may be understood the Gentiles, who *were not* the visible people of God, and were counted as nothing by the Jews. By *the foolish and weak things*, that is, by simple, illiterate, and mean men, God would make ashamed the learned philosophers and great men of the age; and by *the things which are not*, he would *abolish the things that are*, as in effect he did abolish the Jewish church by the Christian; taking in the Gentiles to be his visible people, in the place of the rejected Jews, who till then were his visible people. St. Paul mentions this here, not by chance, but pursuant to his main design, to stop their glorying in their false apostle, who was a Jew; by shewing that whatever that head of the faction might claim under that pretence, as it is plain he did stand upon it, (see 2 Cor. xi. 21, 22.) he had not the least title to any esteem or respect upon that account; since the Jewish nation were laid aside, and God had chosen the Gentiles to take their place, and to be his church and people instead of them. See on ch. ii. 6., Deut. xxxii. 21., Isai. xl. 17. and Whitby.

Ver. 30. *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus*] “For, on the whole, all that we have that is worth mentioning we receive from Christ; and we receive it from him as the gift of God, since it is of him, and his free mercy and

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and

“grace, that *ye are* called to share in the blessings given by Christ Jesus his Son. He exhibits this blessed Saviour to us, and disposes our hearts to accept of him; *Who*, amidst our ignorance and folly, *is made of God unto us* a source of wisdom; and through him, guilty as we are, we receive *righteousness or justification*; polluted as we are, we obtain *sanctification, and*, enslaved as we naturally are, to the power of lusts, and the dominion of Satan, the faithful obtain by him complete *redemption*.” See Doddridge. As the conversion of the Corinthians, to whom this and the following Epistle are addressed, is a fact of a peculiar nature, and one which affords a striking testimony of the truth of our holy religion, we shall here subjoin an *Essay* instead of *Inferences*.

Essay.—A very masterly writer has proved, that the conversion and the apostleship of St. Paul, alone, is of itself a sufficient demonstration to prove Christianity to be a divine revelation. And I cannot but think, that the conversion of the *Corinthians* is another strong proof of the truth of our religion. We have the greatest reason to believe that God did perform the promise which he made to this great Apostle, when he said, *I am with thee*. For if we duly consider the condition of St. Paul, the nature of the doctrine which he taught, and the manner in which he delivered it, we shall be ready to conclude, that the success which he had in preaching the Gospel at Corinth must be ascribed to the divine power.

Without supposing St. Paul to be mad, (a supposition too gross for a man of sense to make) we cannot conceive how he could hope, without God's extraordinary assistance, to convince the people of Corinth that they were in error. He went a stranger thither, unknown to any person there, unless he was before acquainted with Aquila and Priscilla. With these two banished Jews, who were of the same occupation with himself, he worked for his livelihood. His bodily presence was no recommendation of him; for he himself acknowledges, that he was with them *in weakness of body, and in much fear and trembling*. And he has informed us, that the Corinthians did in fact object to him, that *his bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible*. What they said of his person was true, if we may believe the ancients, who inform us that his stature was low, his body crooked, and his head bald. And it is not improbably conjectured by Dr. Whitby, that a stammering in his speech, or a squeaking shrillness in his voice, or some other infirmity in his speech in teaching, rendered him contemptible in the eyes of some of the Corinthians. He was a base and contemptible person, they said, and one who lived by his labour. Nay, some affirmed that he was mad or beside himself. He himself has declared, that he was made a *spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men*; that he was *laughed at for Christ's sake*; that he was *weak, despised*; that he *both hungered and thirsted*, was

righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption :

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

11. 45. 14. 25. & 111. & 54. 17. Jer. 23. 6. Dan. 9. 24. Rom. 3. 22, 24—26. & 5. 19. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Phil. 3. 9. Jer. 33. 16. ² John, 1. 14. 16. & 17. 17, 19. Ch. 6. 11. ^a Rom. 3. 24. & 4. 25. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14. Titus, 2. 14. Rev. 5. 9. Hosea, 13. 14. Gal. 1. 4. & 3. 13. ¹ Sam. 2. 10. II. 65. 16. Jer. 9. 23, 24. 2 Cor. 10. 17.

was naked, buffeted, and had no certain dwelling place; that he worked with his own hands, labouring unto weariness; that he was reviled, persecuted, defamed, made as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things: was a man of St. Paul's character a likely person to convert the richest and most flourishing city in Greece, a city filled with orators, philosophers, and banished Jews; a city above all others infamous for lewdness? Every unprejudiced person, I should think, will grant, that nothing can be more improbable; especially if it be considered what kind of doctrine he taught the Corinthians.

Without having the fullest assurance that God was with him, he could never hope to persuade the proud and vain philosophers, who depended wholly upon human reason, and would admit nothing for truth but what was demonstrable by it, to give their assent to the articles of our most holy faith. He was sure to meet with the utmost opposition when he endeavoured to persuade these wise men to admit for certain truths things above their reason. They were so fully persuaded of the sufficiency of that reason as to think that they could account for every thing. A poor obscure mechanic, therefore, a person who was of a nation which the rest of mankind despised and hated, could never hope to persuade them in a natural way by reasoning and disputation, to embrace for certain truths many points which were above the reach of human understanding,—several things which they had not so much as thought or dreamed of. When this Jewish tent-maker informed them, that when all mankind were concluded under sin, and knew not how to be absolved from the guilt of it, our Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, came down from heaven, for us men, and for our salvation; was miraculously conceived, was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man,—he delivered to them nothing but the truth. But these wise men knew nothing of Jesus Christ, nor of the Holy Ghost; neither could they conceive how a man could be born of a pure virgin. St. Paul, therefore, could not have persuaded them by any human means that all this was true; for these wise men of the world, these *wise men according to the flesh*, (as the Apostle styles them) admitted of no higher principle to judge of things by, but philosophy, and demonstration from the principles of natural reason. And therefore he must needs think it an impossible thing, without God's special assistance, to persuade them to believe him to be God, who was born of a pure virgin; to adore him, whose mother was a poor Jewish woman espoused to a carpenter; to pay divine honour to him who was supposed to be a carpenter by trade; to believe him who died, and was buried, to be *God blessed for ever; by whom all things were created that are in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones and dominions, or principalities and powers*; in a word, to acknowledge him for

their Lord and Master, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate between two thieves. Not only in St. Paul's days, but for a long time after, the doctrine of Christ's crucifixion was foolishness. In the days of Lactantius, Christians were reckoned a silly and contemptible people for following a crucified Master and Leader. Arnobius acquaints us, that the heathens said, the gods were not angry with Christians because they worshipped the Omnipotent Deity, but because in their daily prayers they adored a man that was born, and suffered the infamous death of the cross; and because they contended that he was God, and believed him to be yet alive. In another place he informs us, that they asked these questions: If Christ was God, why did he die as a man? Who was it that was seen hanging upon the cross? Who was it that died?—"The wise men of the world insult over us," says St. Austin, "and ask, where is your understanding, who worship him for a god, who was crucified?" And in the days of Athanasius, when the Gentiles were told by the Christians, that their images were but silver and gold, the work of men's hands; in opposition to this reproach they answered, that the doctrine of the cross was foolishness. "The Greeks laugh at this mystery as foolishness," says Theophylact, "because by faith alone, and not by syllogisms and reasonings, it is found that God was crucified." The same author informs us, that there were some unbelievers at Corinth who made a jest of the cross, and said, Truly it is a folly to preach a crucified God. For had he been God, he would have defended himself at the time of his crucifixion. But how could he rise from the dead, who could not prevent his own death? They accounted the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead as ridiculous and absurd a tenet as was ever held, and made it matter of their sport and jest. To raise a body that was perfectly dead, and restore it to life again, was not in the power of any being in the world, they said. But suppose it was possible, yet they did not account it a thing worthy of God to raise dead bodies to be united to the souls of good men. Their chief objection against the resurrection of the flesh, and of the body, was this; that the body was the prison and sepulchre of the soul, and that it was her punishment to be tied to it; that the body was the great hindrance to the knowledge of the truth, and that we could not be truly happy till by death we were delivered from it. It was therefore judged by them, as Dr. Whitby informs us, not only an impossible, but even an unjust, unworthy thing, for God to raise these bodies, to be united to those souls whose happiness consisted in being delivered from the body, and whose punishment it was to be confined to it; that being, according to their philosophy, not to make them live, but die again. And therefore Celsus says, The hope of the resurrection of the flesh is the hope of worms, a filthy, abominable, and impossible thing, which God neither will nor can do. He.

CHAP. II.

He declareth that his preaching, though it bring not excellency of speech, or of human wisdom; yet consisteth in the power of God; and so far excelleth the wisdom of this world, and human sense, as that the natural man cannot understand it.

[Anno Domini 57.]

AND I, brethren, when I came to you, ^a came not with excellency of speech or

of wisdom, declaring unto you the ^b testimony of God.

2 For I determined ^c not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

3 And I was with you ^d in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

4 ^e And my speech and my preaching was

^a Ch. 1. 17. Ver. 4. 13. 2 Cor. 10. 10. & 11. 6. 2 Pet. 1. 16. ^b 2 Pet. 1. 16. 2 Theff. 1. 10. 2 Tim. 1. 8. Rev. 1. 2, 9. 1f. 8. 20. ^c Ch. 1. 6, 27. & 15. 2, 4. John, 17. 3. Acts, 26. 18. Gal. 6. 11. Phil. 3. 8—10. ^d Acts, 18. 3. & 20. 18, 19. 2 Cor. 10. 10. & 4. 7. & 11. 29, 30. & 12. 9. Gal. 4. 13. Ch. 4. 10—13. 2 Cor. 7. 5. & 6. 4. ^e Rom. 15. 19. 2 Pet. 1. 16. Ch. 1. 17. Ver. 13. Ch. 4. 20. Col. 2. 4. 1 Theff. 1. 5.

He cannot do what is vile, neither will he do what is against nature. And Origen expressly declares, that the doctrine of the resurrection was a mystery which the unbelievers laughed at, and made a jest of. So many, such great and formidable obstacles, the Apostle could not but expect to meet with from the philosophers.

And he was sure to meet with as great opposition from the magistrates, who would suffer no innovation in the theology established by law. Had he contented himself with confuting the Jews only, I believe he would have given no offence to the civil power: but when he attempted to demonstrate the absurdity of the religion of the heathen, he must be very sensible that they would be greatly alarmed. How furiously must they be enraged when he endeavoured to alter their religious rites, the ancient usages, the agreeable and pleasing customs of their country? What an abhorrence must they have of him, when he taught them, that the objects of their worship were not gods; that an idol was nothing in the world but a senseless piece of matter? Could any thing be more shocking to the Corinthians than to hear a poor mechanic affirm, that what they worshipped were no gods, and that they ought to admit Jesus Christ for their Lord and their God? When Plato was in Sicily he brought himself into the greatest danger by endeavouring to render virtue amiable. If a barbarian had not been more humane than the Sicilian tyrant, the philosopher would probably have spent the remainder of his days in servitude in a strange country, only for making some innovations in political affairs. He did not so much as attempt to destroy the gods of Sicily, as St. Paul did those of Corinth. Nay, the Apostle did not only affirm that what they worshipped were no gods, but that his countryman Jesus, who had been crucified as a malefactor, was God blessed for ever. And must not such a doctrine be highly provoking to the Corinthians?

Anaxagoras, who was the first of the Greeks that taught this theology,—that not the sun, but the Creator of it, was God, was accounted an atheist by a people who had made the utmost improvement of their parts, and was in the utmost danger of being stoned to death. The same Athenians expelled Protagoras of Abdera from their city, and caused his works to be burnt, because he spoke, as they thought, disrespectfully of the gods. They likewise banished Diagoras, and promised a talent for a reward to him that should slay him, because he denied that there was

a God, or rather only set at nought the idols and false gods of his time. The great Socrates, prince of the philosophers, being suspected of holding bad opinions of the gods, was condemned to die by drinking a potion of hemlock. And if a bare suspicion of innovation brought the philosophers into so much danger; if persons so greatly renowned for their wisdom and understanding could not effect what they designed; can we account, in a natural way, for the success of our Apostle, who was so far from being held in admiration, as the philosophers whom I have mentioned were, that he was despised upon the account of his nation, his person, his mean occupation, and rudeness of speech?

Plato was greatly admired by his countrymen, and very justly. And yet he himself confessed, that he durst not, consistent with his own security, discover his opinion of God to the folly of the multitude. Was it not as dangerous for St. Paul to discover to the Corinthians his notions, which were far more noble and exalted than those of Plato?

The philosophers and magistrates were not the only powerful adversaries whom St. Paul had to encounter at Corinth. He could not but expect to meet with a very strong opposition from the priests, the augurs, diviners, flatuaries, and many others whose interest it was that the superstitious religion of their ancestors should be continued. All these would undoubtedly be as full of wrath, and raise as great an uproar against St. Paul, as Demetrius the silversmith, and the workmen of like occupation did, when they heard him persuade the people, that they are no gods which are made with hands. In a word, a man of his good sense, great penetration, foresight, and experience, could not but expect to be accounted and treated as one who turned the world upside down, a blasphemer of their gods, and consequently a subverter of the whole frame of their religion.

As the Apostle was sure of the greatest repugnance, when he taught the Corinthians what they were to believe; so he must expect to meet with the utmost opposition, when he endeavoured to persuade them to set about the reformation and amendment of their lives: when he commanded them to flee fornication; when he taught them, that *every other sin that a man doth is without the pollution of the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against and polluteth his own body*; when he forbade them to eat with any brother who is a fornicator, and declared that God would pronounce the sentence of condemnation upon whoremongers and adulterers,

not with *enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

5 ' That your faith should not † stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

* Or *persuasive*. † Ch. i. 17. & 3. 6. & Cor. 4. 7. & 6. 7. & 12. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 5. Acts, 16. 14. & 26. 18. † Gr. *be*.

adulterers,—He could not but foresee that the Corinthians would be averse to his doctrine: For Corinth was above all other cities, even to a proverb, infamous for fornication and lasciviousness. How then was it possible for the Apostle, without the help of God, to convince so debauched and lascivious a people, that *fornication and uncleanness ought not to be named among them*, being crimes of a most destructive nature? Or how could he hope for success when he informed them, that *neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient, were to be named among them*? Or when he acquainted them, that at the day of judgment men were to give an account of every idle word which they had spoken? Or when he declared, that *whosoever is angry with his brother without cause, shall be in danger of the judgment*? Or when he told them, that *whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*? Lastly, how could he in a natural way prevail upon a people who were proud and ambitious, debauched and intemperate, revengeful and envious, contentious and litigious, to embrace a religion which taught humility, sobriety, temperance, the forgiving of injuries, love, charity, moderation, meekness, and universal benevolence? We are all of us very sensible what a difficult matter it is to persuade men to become in love with holiness and virtue, who have been long accustomed to a vicious course of life. Even persons who know the terrors of the Lord, who are fully persuaded and do sincerely believe, that a dreadful day will come when they must give a strict account of all their actions, are, with great difficulty, reclaimed from the error of their way, if their sins have had the growth of many years; (though nothing is too hard for grace, when submitted to :) and if old habitual sinners, who really believe the Gospel in speculation, and consequently expect to be judged for their actions, are seldom, or with great difficulty, reformed; how will an unbeliever account for the Apostle's persuading the Corinthians to lay aside such practices as they thought indifferent and innocent; such practices as were pleasant and agreeable to depraved mankind? How will he account for his convincing them that their most sacred and religious solemnities were the greatest abominations?

Having shown what obstacles St. Paul must necessarily meet with at Corinth from the Gentiles; I shall now inquire what opposition he might expect from the unbelieving Jews, who inhabited this city, when he undertook that glorious work of converting them from darkness to light, of giving knowledge of salvation to them, for the remission of their sins.

When he went to Corinth, the city was full of Jews, whom the emperor Claudius had expelled from Rome. They were as bitter enemies as the Gentiles to the Christian religion, and the preachers of it; and they hated St. Paul much more than the rest of the apostles, because all on a sudden, from being a violent persecutor of the disciples

of the crucified Jesus, and making havoc of his church, he gave a convincing proof of the power of grace, by becoming one of the most zealous propagators of his religion. A people so much prejudiced against him, must be, nay, were in fact greatly incensed, when they heard him persuade men to worship God in a manner different from what their law required. What a hatred must they have of him who abolished circumcision? How could our Apostle hope for success, in a natural way, when he preached such a doctrine to a people, who had read in one of their inspired books, that God had threatened that the soul should be cut off which neglected this rite? How, without the assistance of God, could he, who taught such a doctrine, ever think of making converts of Jews, whose religion was so much corrupted at our Saviour's coming into the world, that they held, "that circumcision was a sufficient virtue to render them accepted of God, and to preserve them from eternal ruin: that no circumcised person goes to hell, God having promised to deliver them from it, for the merit of circumcision, and having told Abraham that when his children fell into transgression and did wicked works, he would remember the merit of their circumcision, and would be satisfied with their piety?" They were prejudiced against several other doctrines that he taught, which they imagined derogated from the perfection and honour of their law. Such was the doctrine of making the visible church universal by receiving the Gentiles to the privileges of the true church without submitting to the ritual law, and not being justified by the works of the law, but by faith in the Messiah. They were prejudiced in favour of their law, as unchangeable and eternal; or as the necessary means of justifying a sinner before God. Without the interposition of God, the Apostle could never hope to persuade them who had been informed in their sacred books that the Messiah was to have an everlasting kingdom, a throne for ever and ever—That he should be great unto the ends of the earth, and was to abide for ever, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel; to have a portion divided him with the great, and to divide the spoil with the strong; to have dominion and glory, and a kingdom; that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; that his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.—Without the divine aid, I say, the Apostle could never hope to persuade the Jews who expected such a triumphant Messiah, in the carnal natural sense of the words, to believe that Jesus was the Christ, who had suffered that death which by the law was counted execrable. The crucifixion of Christ, as the Apostle himself has informed us, was unto the Jews a stumbling-block. And in Justin Martyr, Trypho the Jew says, "Your Jesus having by this fallen under the extremest curse of the law of God, we cannot but sufficiently admire that you should expect any good from God, who place your hopes

6 Howbeit, we speak wisdom among them this world, nor of the princes of this world, that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of that come to nought:

^a Phil. 3. 15. Heb. 5. 14. & 6. 1. Eph. 1. 13, 14. 1 John, 2. 14. Ch. 1. 5. & 14. 20. ^b Ch. 5. 19, 20, 28. James, 3. 15. with Pl. 2. 1—4. Ch. 15. 24.

“ hopes in a man that was crucified; for our law styles every one that is crucified accursed.” And Theophylact informs us, that the Jews objected; “ How can he be God who did eat and drink with publicans and harlots, and was at last crucified with thieves?” See on ver. 22—24.

To all that has been said I may still further add, that the danger which attended the profession of Christianity, might deter both Jew and Gentile from embracing it. A man no sooner became a Christian than he exposed himself to all the miseries that human nature is capable of suffering. Had our Apostle therefore made use of all the eloquence he was master of, yet had not God been with him, he could not have persuaded the Corinthians to become Christians. But he preached the Gospel in the most plain and simple manner, to as wicked and debauched a people as any in the world: he delivered the most pure and heavenly doctrine, the strictest and severest precepts, that had ever been taught mankind; and yet he confounded the mighty and the noble, and gained a victory over their orators and philosophers. I conclude, therefore, that this success must be attributed not to a natural, but divine cause, and, consequently, that the Gospel is the word of truth.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Apostle opens his Epistle,

1. With an assertion of his apostolic character; which some among them affected to traduce and vilify, as if he had assumed an honour to which he was in no wise entitled. He affirms, therefore, the divine authority upon which he acted; not self-constituted, but called of Jesus Christ to the high honour and important charge of apostleship. And Sosthenes, a fellow-minister, joins him in affectionate salutations. *Note*; There are times when, to vindicate our real character and magnify our office is not pride, but a debt that we owe to the church of God.

2. He addresses himself to the church of God at Corinth, as to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, separated by his grace from the world which lieth in wickedness, and incorporated in his name; called to be saints, justly so denominated, and proving by their conduct the propriety of the name they bore; with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's, in whom we have a joint interest, and are all one in him. *Note*; (1.) All who profess the name of Jesus, are called to prove their relation to him by the holiness of their walk. (2.) Since Christ is proposed to us as the object of our worship, he must needs be very God. (3.) The life of a Christian is an habitual course of calling upon God. To live without prayer is the surest mark of a Christless soul.

3. He gives them his apostolical benediction. *Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*—Grace, the source of every blessing, and peace with a reconciled God through Jesus Christ. *Note*; (1.) Every mercy that a sinner enjoys in time, or hopes for in eternity, flows purely from the free and boundless grace

of God in Jesus Christ. (2.) All solid peace of conscience can only arise from a sense of God's favour and reconciliation through the Redeemer.

4. He thanks God on their account for the graces and gifts which were bestowed upon them. *I thank my God* (and blessed and happy are they who can call him so) *always on your behalf*, (so constantly did he feel a tender concern for them upon his heart) *for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ*, as the great Head of his believing people, to whom they are united, and from whom, as the fountain of vital influence, they draw continual supplies of strength and consolation. And as he charitably hoped the generality of them were partakers of the grace of God in truth, he had also another cause for thankfulness, because in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge, endued with clear views of that rich salvation which is in a crucified Jesus, and capable of expressing themselves on the subject with singular fluency of speech and energy of diction, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, the Holy Ghost giving the fullest demonstration to their consciences of the truth of that Gospel which was preached unto them; so that ye come behind in no gift, in nothing inferior to any church which had been planted, in these distinguished gifts of the Spirit; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the declarations of his word, which they had heard and embraced, preparing to meet him, and with patient but joyful expectation, looking for the day of his appearing. *Note*; They who are Christians indeed, cannot but rejoice in the prospect, that, when Christ who is their hope shall appear, then the faithful also shall appear with him in glory.

5. The Apostle professes his confidence in them, that they will not swerve from the hope of the Gospel: *Who shall also confirm you unto the end*, in faith and holiness, enabling you to persevere, if you continue to cleave to him, unshaken amidst all your trials, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, being found complete in him, and then transformed wholly into his image: for, he adds, *God is faithful to all his promises*, and will assuredly do his part, if we do ours: *by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*

2dly, One chief end of St. Paul's writing this Epistle appears to have been, the healing of those divisions of which he had been informed. He therefore,

1. Exhorts them to union among themselves; in sentiment and affection to have their hearts knit together, avoiding, as the most dangerous rock, those disputes and divisions which must be the bane of Christian love, and could not but end in the ruin of the church. And he urges this by the most powerful motive, even by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; not only as one authorized to enjoin this upon them, but suggesting that the very mention of the endearing name of Jesus should silence every jar, and fill their souls with love to him and one another. *Note*; Internal divisions among the members of Christ have

7 But we speak¹ the wisdom of God in a mystery; *even* the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the world unto our glory :

8 ^k Which none of the princes of this world knew : for, ^l had they known *it*, they would not have crucified ^m the Lord of glory.

¹ Eph. 3. 9, 10. Rom. 16. 25, 26. Col. 1. 26, 27. ² Tim. 1. 9, 10. John, 17. 3. ^k Mat. 11. 25. John, 7. 48. Acts, 13. 27. Ver. 6 Ch. 1. 16-18. ^l Luke, 23, 34. John, 8. 19. & 16. 3. Acts, 3. 17. & 13. 27. ² Cor. 3. 14. ¹ Tim. 1. 13. ^m Acts, 7. 2. Pf. 24. 7-9. & 110. 5.

have more wounded his cause than all the external attacks of earth or hell.

2. He informs them whence he received his information of those evils which he so justly condemns; and solemnly remonstrates against their making so ill a use of his name, as well as of his brethren, to range themselves in different parties; while some said, *I am of Paul, and I of Apollon, and I of Cephas*, or Peter, depreciating the one and exalting the other; as if it mattered aught by whose instrumentality they were converted to the faith: whilst others, as if above all means and instruments, boasted, *I am of Christ*, and so immediately under the teachings of his Spirit as to need no other instructor. But how absurd were these pretensions, and how dangerous these discords! *Is Christ divided?* so as to act separately from the means of his own appointment? or can there be the least sort of division between him and those who act by his authority? and with whom he has promised to be to the end of the world? or can his church, which is his body, and one with him, be disjointed, and his members subsist separately from each other, without infinite injury? Surely, no. And as for those ministers, under whose names you range yourselves, let me ask, applying it to myself, *Was Paul crucified for you?* Did I, or my brethren, ever pretend that we were your saviours? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul, by my authority, as my disciples, professing your faith in me, or obedience to my service? God forbid. Neither I, nor my fellow-labourers, ever taught you to hope for any other atonement than in a crucified Jesus, nor baptized you in any other name than his. *I thank God*, since this matter has been so abused by many of you, *that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say, that I had baptized in mine own name*, and sought to set myself at the head of a party. *I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.* Note; A faithful minister of Christ rejects with abhorrence all attempts to set him at the head of a party, solicitous only that his Master should be glorified, and jealous above all things never to rob him of his peculiar honours.

3dly, Having vindicated himself from every insinuation that he designed to form a party by baptizing disciples, he disclaims every attempt to aggrandize himself by the manner in which he preached the Gospel unto them. For, says he, *Christ*, from whom immediately I received my commission, *sent me not to baptize as my principal business, but to preach the Gospel*, according to the revelation made known unto me; and he informs them,

1. Of the manner in which he preached,—*not with wisdom of words*, with affected flourishes of oratory, or to gratify philosophic pride, *lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect*, the simple truth of a crucified Jesus should be obscured, its efficacy defeated, its honour tarnished, and the success be ascribed, not to the divine simplicity and

native force of the truth, but to the art and eloquence of those who preached the Gospel. Note; Though eloquence, without ostentation, is both lawful and laudable, yet, as Luther says, he is the best preacher that can speak the most familiarly, and suits his discourse best to the capacity and understanding of the hearer, more solicitous to be understood than to be admired.

2. Of the effects of his preaching. *For the preaching of the cross*, and the great salvation obtained by the bloodshedding of the Redeemer on the ignominious tree, *is to them that perish, foolishness*. They who are puffed up in pride in their own sufficiency, or ignorant of their guilt and sinfulness, and their need of the redemption which is in Christ, reject the Gospel as nonsense and absurdity, and perish in their impenitence and unbelief. (1.) The doctrine of the cross was *to the Jews a stumbling-block*. They could not bear to receive him for their Messiah, who made so mean an appearance in his life, and died as a malefactor on a tree. Rejecting all the amazing miracles which he wrought, they required a sign from heaven, (Mat. xii. 38.) expecting that he should appear in all worldly pomp and grandeur, as their temporal, instead of a spiritual, Redeemer. (2.) *To the Greeks* this doctrine was *foolishness*. They sought after wisdom, they received nothing but what was demonstrable on what they termed the principles of reason; and since their philosophic minds could perceive no connection between a man who was crucified, and the redemption of sinners; nor esteemed it possible, on their principles, that he who could not, as they conceived, save himself from the cross, should be able to save others from death and hell; they stamped the declaration with folly, and rejected it as absurd. But, (3.) unto us who are saved, however proud Greeks or self-righteous Jews may think of it, *Christ*, and the doctrine of salvation through his cross, appears to be *the power of God, and the wisdom of God*. The power of God is seen to be most gloriously displayed in the Mediator's undertakings and sufferings; in his miracles, resurrection, ascension; and especially in the mighty efficacy with which his Gospel is attended, through the influences of his Spirit, effectually quickening the dead in trespasses and sins, turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. The wisdom of God is astonishingly displayed in the stupendous scheme of man's redemption, wherein the sinner, consistent with the glory of every divine perfection, can be received into the bosom of mercy; and pardon, holiness, and glory, be bestowed on him, without dishonour to God's government or law, and this through the substitution of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, in our stead.

3. He shews the triumph of this doctrine of a crucified Jesus over all the inventions of the wisest sages: their schemes and systems could never relieve a guilty conscience, or lay a solid foundation for the sinner's hope.

9 But, as it is written, " Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

* Pf. 64. 4. Ver. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 12. 1 Kings, 10. 7. Pf. 31. 19. Col. 3. 3.

The Lord therefore, according to his word, (Isai. xxix. 14.) stamps all human wisdom as folly. *Where is the wise philosopher? Where is the learned scribe, deep read in traditions? Where is the disputer of this world, whether Jew or Gentile? Can the one or the other give the least satisfactory account, how a guilty sinner can be reconciled to an offended God? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?* and left philosophers and rabbins to grope for the wall as blind? *For after that, or since, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, but their most learned sages were permitted to become vain in their imaginations, (see Rom. i. 21, 22.) ignorant of God, his worship, and ways; it pleased God, in his infinite grace and love, to make a more transcendent display of his own glory, by the foolishness of preaching, (for so would a wise world call the doctrine of the cross) to save them that believe, making it effectual to their peace, and joy, and holiness. This contrivance of divine wisdom to save lost souls by the incarnation of Jesus, is deemed the greatest folly; but the foolishness of God is wiser than men, infinitely excelling all their boasted researches, and ingenious systems; and the weakness of God is stronger than men, however inadequate the Gospel method in their eyes may appear; and however weak the instruments are, which are chiefly employed in the work, yet it was clear to demonstration, that what all the precepts of philosophy and the power of oratory never produced, the doctrine of the cross effected, destroying the kingdom of sin and Satan in the hearts of men, and causing such an evident change in their tempers and conduct as spoke the finger of God. Note; Wherever the Gospel is truly preached, however weak the instrument may be, God will bear testimony to his own word, that the excellency of the power may appear to be of God and not of us.*

4. He appeals to them for the truth of what he had advanced, as verified by experience. *For ye see your calling, brethren; how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; (see the Annotations;) some few singular instances to the contrary may be observed: but, in general, the proud philosopher, the self-righteous scribes, and the men of high birth and affluence, refuse to submit to the humbling and self-denying doctrines of the cross: and, leaving them to their folly and ruin, God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, that an illiterate Christian should shame the proud philosopher, and shew the surpassing influence of the doctrine of Jesus, above all his learned precepts. And God hath chosen the weak things of the world, men in the meanest outward circumstances, to confound the things which are mighty, to stamp vanity on human grandeur, and to shew that his kingdom stands without any earthly supports, nay, in defiance of all worldly power and influence; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, even the poor Gentiles, whom the self-righteous Jews would scarcely deign to put among the dogs of their flock, these hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, who never had a name or*

place in the church of God before, to bring to nought (*καταργῶν*), to abolish, the things that are, putting a period to the covenant of peculiarity, under which the Jewish people formerly stood, thinking themselves, exclusive of all others, the only favourites of heaven. But now all difference ceases, that no flesh should glory in his presence, on account of any imagined superiority in wisdom, wealth, nobility, or any external privileges; but that, as it is written, *he that glorieth should glory in the Lord*, ascribing the whole of their salvation to his rich and boundless grace, as revealed in the Gospel of Jesus to the miserable and the penitent.

5. He reminds them of the inestimable blessings to which, in virtue of their interest in Christ, they were entitled. They had of themselves nothing to glory in; but of him are ye in Christ Jesus, incorporated into the mystical body of Christ, who of God is made unto us, according to the constitution of the covenant of grace, wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. (1.) *Wisdom*; we are naturally foolish, deceived, and ignorant; but all the treasures of wisdom reside in our exalted Head: and, as the prophet of his church, it is his office to lead us into all truth, for which end he has given us his word, and promises his Spirit, that we may be taught of God, and thereby be made wise unto salvation. (2.) *Righteousness*; as, by his sufferings and obedience unto death, he has satisfied the law and justice of God in our stead; and as this is accepted for us, and placed to our account, through faith in him, for the remission of our sins, and discharging us from condemnation, and for our justification in the sight of God. And since it does not become the holy God to take away the guilt of our sins, and at the same time leave us under their power and dominion, he has also made Christ to be, (3.) *Sanctification*; he is the head of vital influence, and, as a quickening Spirit, works effectually in the hearts of his believing people, mortifying and destroying their corrupt and vile affections, and daily renewing them in the inner man, that their spirits and temper may be brought to a nearer conformity with his own, until his whole mind be established in them. Lastly, God has made Christ to be *Redemption* to all his faithful saints, as he is their great and final Deliverer from all that is contemptible and miserable in this world, as well as in that to come; and as he will raise their dead bodies, and make them like unto his own glorious body, by the working of his mighty power; and, to complete their felicity: and thus Christ will become all in all to his saints; and to him alone shall all the glory be eternally ascribed.

CHAP. II.

BECAUSE the learned Greeks had objected to the Gospel, the foolishness (as they were pleased to call it) of its doctrines, and the weakness of its preachers, the Apostle made answer in the foregoing chapter, that by these foolish doctrines and weak preachers, a reformation had been wrought in the minds and manners of multitudes, which

10 ° But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 ° For what man knoweth the things of

a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? ° even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, ° not the spirit

° Mat. 13. 11. & 16. 17. John, 14. 26. & 16. 13. 2 Cor. 3. 18. 1 John, 2. 20, 27. with John, 1. 18. & 14. 7, 8. Pl. 92. 5. Rom. 11. 33, 34. Jer. 17. 9. Prov. 20. 27. & 27. 19. ° Ver. 10. Matt. 11. 27. & 16. 17. Rom. 11. 33. 1 John, 2. 20, 27. ° Ver. 6. Rom. 8. 5, 6, 15, 16, 26.

which the boasted philosophy of the Greeks, and the eloquence of their orators, had not been able to accomplish. But this being a matter of great importance, and the faction having upbraided St. Paul in particular with his want of eloquence, he now proceeded in this chapter to tell the Corinthians, that Christ having sent him to preach not in the wisdom of words (see chap. i. 17.), he acted agreeably to his commission, when he came to them *not with the excellency of speech, or of wisdom*, declaring the testimony of God, ver. 1.—By thus disclaiming the Grecian philosophy and rhetoric, and by calling the Gospel *the testimony of God*, the Apostle insinuated, that the credibility of the Gospel depended neither on its conformity to the philosophy of the Greeks, nor on the eloquence of its preachers, but on the attestation of God, who confirmed it by miracles and the divine influences of his Spirit.—And therefore, however ridiculous it might appear in their eyes, he determined to make known nothing among the Corinthians, either in his private conversations, or in his public discourses, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified for the sins of men, ver. 2.—At the same time, knowing the opinion which the learned Greeks would form of that doctrine in particular, as well as that his discourses were neither composed nor pronounced according to the rules of the Grecian rhetoric, his first addresses to them were *in weakness, and in fear, and with much trembling*, ver. 3.—Yet they were accompanied with the powerful demonstration of the Spirit, who enabled him to prove the things which he preached, by miracles and by his gracious influences, ver. 4.—that the faith of mankind might be *founded, not in the wisdom of men*, that method of reasoning and speaking, which human wisdom dictates as best calculated to persuade, *but in the power of God*, ver. 5.

However, lest the things which are said in the preceding chapter, concerning the foolishness of the doctrines of the Gospel, and in this chapter concerning its having no relation to any of the schemes of the Greek philosophy, might have led the Corinthians to think meanly of it, the Apostle told them that, in the Gospel, he and his brethren made known a scheme of doctrine, which they who were perfectly instructed knew to be *real wisdom: only it was not the wisdom of this world*; it was none of the mysteries of the idol gods worshipped by the heathens, nor of the religions established by the heathen rulers, who are all to be made nought, ver. 6.—What they preached, was *the wisdom of the true God*; a scheme of religion contrived by the true God, and made known in a real mystery.—The Apostle called the Gospel *a mystery*, not because it contained doctrines absolutely unintelligible, but because being of divine original, and containing the most important discoveries, it was better entitled to the honourable appellation of *a mystery*, than any of those which were so named. This excellent scheme of doctrine hitherto kept

secret, God determined, before the Jewish dispensation began, to publish to the world by the Apostles of his Son, to their great honour; so that they are mystagogues of a mystery infinitely more excellent than the Eleusinian, or any other heathen mystery, ver. 7.—Yet when it was published, none of the rulers of this world knew it to be *the wisdom of God*; for if they had known it to be so, they would not have crucified the Lord, or author of *all the glorious things* discovered in the mystery of God's wisdom, ver. 8.—This ignorance of the rulers, the Apostle observed, was occasioned by the greatness of the things contained in the mystery of God's wisdom. They were what human reason could neither discover, nor fully comprehend; agreeably to Isaiah's description of them; *eye hath not seen, &c.* ver. 9.—These things, however, God hath revealed to us Apostles, by his Spirit: for the Spirit of God who inspires us, searcheth all things, even the deep counsels of God. So that we are well qualified to discover these counsels to the world, ver. 10, 11.—Farther, he told them, that the Apostles had not received the inspiration of evil spirits, by which the heathen priestesses, and prophets, and mystagogues, were guided; but the inspiration that cometh from God, that they might know and publish the glorious things, (see ver. 9.) which are freely bestowed by the true God on them who believe, ver. 12.—Which things, said he, we Apostles effectually make known to the world, not in language taught by human rhetoric, but in words dictated by the Spirit of God; explaining spiritual things in spiritual words, ver. 13.—Nevertheless, *the animal man*, the man who is guided by his animal passions and notions, does not receive the things revealed by the Spirit; because they appear to him foolishness; neither can he understand them, because they must be examined spiritually, that is, they must be examined by the light which divine revelation, and not reason, affords, ver. 14.—But *the spiritual man*, the man who is not guided by his animal passions, and who acknowledges the authority of revelation, and is assisted by the Spirit of God, is able to examine and receive the things revealed by the Spirit. Yet he himself is examined and judged by no animal man: because no animal man can understand the principles upon which the spiritual man's belief is founded, ver. 15.—For what animal man has understood and approved the gracious purposes of the Lord Christ, respecting the salvation of the world? or what animal is able to instruct the spiritual man? But, added he, we Apostles have the gracious purposes of Christ made known to us by the Spirit; so that we are able both to know them, and to communicate them to the world, ver. 16.

Ver. 1. And I, brethren, &c.] As a further argument to keep them from glorying in their leaders, St. Paul tells the Corinthians, that, as the preachers of the Gospel, of God's choosing, were mean and illiterate men, so the

Gospel

of the world, but the Spirit which is of God ;
 ' that we might know the things that are
 freely given to us of God.

13 ' Which things also we speak, not in

the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but
 which the Holy Ghost teacheth ; comparing
 spiritual things with spiritual.

14 " But the natural man receiveth not the

^s 1 John, 2. 20, 27. Rom. 8. 32. 1 Cor. 3. 22. ^t Ch. 1. 17. Ver. 4. 2 Pet. 1. 16. Gen. 40. 8. & 41. 16. Dan. 5. 12. ^u Acts, 17. 18.
 & 26. 24, 25, 28. Rom. 8. 5—8. Ch. 1. 18, 23. Gal. 1. 12. Mat. 16. 23. Jude, 4. 2 Pet. 3. 16. Rev. 3. 17, 18. John, 3. 3, 4, 6.

Gospel was not to be propagated, nor men to be established in the faith, by human learning and eloquence; but by the evidence that it had from the revelation contained in the Old Testament, from the power of God accompanying and confirming it with miracles, and from the influences of the Spirit of God upon the heart, ver. 1—5.

I came not with excellency of speech] *With the pomp of language.* Doddridge. This may allude to the vain affectation of sublimity and subtilty so common among the Greeks of that age, and very remote from the true eloquence in which our Apostle did so remarkably excel. It has been asserted, that the Apostle laboured under a great impediment in his speech, from a stammering or a squeaking shrillness in his voice. Others choose to apply the words to his defect in oratory, and want of experience in the Greek language: both which may be looked upon as wide of the mark, and not the Apostle's meaning in this verse; which can be no other than that assigned in the beginning of the note. It hence appears, that he was far from taking advantage of a higher education, superior learning, and greater use of the world; and by this conduct put himself upon a level with the other Apostles. But an impostor, whose aim had been power, would have acted a contrary part; he would have availed himself of all those advantages; he would have extolled them as highly as possible; he would have set himself up, by virtue of them, as head of the sect to which he acceded, or at least of the profelytes made by himself. This is no more than was done by every philosopher who formed a school; much more was it natural in one who propagated a new religion. But as his conduct was the reverse, he shewed that he acted upon higher principles than any philosopher, and that fame was no motive for his professing himself a Christian, and for endeavouring to make others Christians likewise. By the *testimony of God* is meant, " what God hath revealed and testified in the Old Testament." The Apostle declares, that, when he preached the Gospel to the Corinthians, he made use of no human science, no insinuations of eloquence, no speculations of philosophy, no embellishments of human learning; all his arguments were, as he tells them, ver. 4. from the revelation of the Spirit of God, the predictions of the Old Testament, and the miracles which he himself did among them; that their faith might be owing entirely to the Spirit of God, and not to the abilities and wisdom of man. Instead of μακρύρον, which we render *testimony*, several ancient manuscripts read μυστήριον, *mystery*. There may be something said in favour of this reading; for though the Apostle owns the doctrine of the Gospel, dictated by the Spirit of God, to be contained in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and built upon revelation; yet he every where teaches that it remained in some measure a secret there,

not fully understood till they were led into the hidden evangelical meaning of those passages, by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the assistance of the Spirit, in the times of the Messiah, and then published to the world by the preachers of the Gospel; and therefore he calls it, especially that part of it which relates to the Gentiles, almost every where μυστήριον, *mystery*. See particularly Rom. xvi. 25, 26. Locke, Wetstein, and Lord Lyttelton on St. Paul's Conversion.

Ver. 2. For I determined not to know any thing, &c.] The word rendered to *know*, is used according to the Hebrew idiom, to *cause to know*, or to *teach*. St. Paul, who was himself a learned man, especially in the Jewish knowledge, having told them in the foregoing chapter, that neither the Jewish learning nor Grecian sciences give a man any advantage, as an inspired teacher and minister of the Gospel, he here reminds them that he made no shew or use of either of them, when he planted the Gospel among them; intimating thereby that those were not the things for which their teachers were to be valued or followed. There seems to be a peculiar emphasis in the expression *among you*, as if the Apostle had said, " I did not change my usual method at Corinth; and you know with what glorious success it was attended." The Greek of the last clause is, καὶ τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον,—*even that crucified person*. The Jews and heathens evidently gave our Lord this name by way of contempt; but St. Paul declares, that instead of concealing this as an infamy and scandal, it was the main thing he insisted upon; as indeed all the most important doctrines of the Gospel stand in a close and natural connection with it: and no doubt but he took them in that connection; for he refers, in the course of these Epistles, to several doctrines relating to the Father and the Holy Spirit, as what he had taught them, though not expressly included in the doctrine of the crucifixion. See Locke, Doddridge, and Macknight.

Ver. 3. I was with you in weakness] St. Paul, by thus setting forth his own modest and humble behaviour among them, reflects on the contrary carriage of their false Apostle; which he describes at length, 2 Cor. xi. 20. See also Acts, xviii. 6, 9.

Ver. 4. But in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power] There were two sorts of arguments wherewith the Apostle confirmed the Gospel; the one was, the revelations made concerning our Saviour by types and figures, and prophecies of him under the law; the other, the miracles and miraculous gifts accompanying the first preachers of the Gospel, in the publishing and propagating of it. The latter of these St. Paul here calls *power*, the former he terms *the Spirit*; and so ver. 12 and 14. *The things of the Spirit of God*, and *spiritual things*, are things which are revealed by the Spirit of God, and not discoverable by our natural

things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15. * But he that is spiritual † judgeth all things, yet he himself is † judged of no man.

* Ch. 1. 1. Gal. 6. 1. Phil. 1. 10. John, 3. 6. Rom. 8. 1, 4. 2 Cor. 5. 17. † Or discerneth. † discerned.

† Prov. 27. 19. & 28. 5. John, 7. 17. † Theff. 5. 21. † John,

natural faculties. Locke. The Archbishop of Cambray, instead of *enticing words of man's wisdom*, renders the Greek *Persuasive discourses of human wisdom*.

Ver. 5. *That your faith should not stand, &c.*] Their faith being built wholly on divine revelation and miracles, whereby all human abilities were shut out, there could be no reason for any of them to boast themselves of their teachers, or value themselves upon their being followers of this or that preacher; which St. Paul here obviates. See Locke.

Ver. 6. *Howbeit, we speak wisdom, &c.*] The next argument the Apostle uses, to shew them that they had no reason to glory in their teachers, is, that the knowledge of the Gospel was not attainable by our natural parts, however they were improved by art and philosophy, but was wholly owing to revelation, ver. 6—16. *Perfect*, in this verse, is the same with *spiritual*, ver. 15.—One that is perfectly well apprized of the divine nature and original of the Christian religion, that he sees and acknowledges it to be all a pure revelation from God, and not in the least the product of human discovery, parts, or learning; and so, deriving it wholly from what God hath taught by his Spirit in the sacred Scriptures, allows not the least part of it to be ascribed to the skill or abilities of men. Thus *perfect* is opposed to *carnal*, ch. iii. 1, 3, that is, such babes in Christianity, such weak and mistaken Christians, that they thought the Gospel was to be managed as human arts and sciences among men of the world, and that those were better instructed and more in the right, who followed this master, or teacher, rather than another; and thus, glorying in being the disciples, one of Paul, another of Apollos, fell into divisions and parties about it, and vaunted one over another: whereas, in the school of Christ, all was to be built on the authority of God alone, and the revelation of his Spirit in the sacred Scriptures. Some render the clause, *Howbeit, we teach wisdom in things not excellent*. See Ezra, ii 63. By the *wisdom of this world*, is meant the knowledge, arts, and sciences attainable by man's natural parts and faculties; such as man's wit could find out, cultivate, and improve, and such as the *princes of this world* approve, encourage, and endeavour to propagate.—Though by *ἀρχόντες τῆς αἰῶνος τούτου*, may here be understood the *princes or great men of this world*, in the ordinary sense of these words, says Mr. Locke; yet he that well considers ver. 28. of the foregoing chapter, and ver. 8. of this chapter, may find reason to think, that the Apostle here principally designs the rulers and great men of the Jewish nation. If it be objected, that there is little ground to think that St. Paul, by the *wisdom he disowns*, should mean that of his own nation, which the Greeks of Corinth (whom he was writing to) had little acquaintance with, and had very little esteem for,—I reply, that to understand this right, and the pertinency of it, we must remember, that the great design of

St. Paul in writing to the Corinthians was, to take them off from the respect and esteem that many of them had for a false apostle who was got in among them, and had there raised a faction against St. Paul. This pretended apostle, it is plain from 2 Cor. xi. 22. was a Jew, and, as it seems, 2 Cor. v. 16, 17. valued himself upon that account, and possibly boasted himself to be a man of note, either by birth, or alliance, or place, or learning among the people, who counted themselves the holy and illuminated people of God; and therefore to have a right to sway among those new heathen converts. To obviate this claim of his to any authority, St. Paul here tells the Corinthians, that the wisdom and learning of the Jewish nation led them not into the knowledge of the wisdom of God, that is to say, the Gospel revealed in the Old Testament; evident in this, that it was their rulers and rabbies who, stiffly adhering to the notions and prejudices of their nation, had crucified Jesus the Lord of glory, and were now themselves, with their state and religion, upon the point of being swept away and abolished. It is to the same purpose that, 2 Cor. iv. 16—19. he tells the Corinthians, that he *knows no man after the flesh*; that is to say, that he acknowledges no dignity of birth, or descent, or outward national privileges. “The old things of the Jewish constitution are past and gone; whoever is in *Christ*, and entered into his kingdom, is in a new creation, wherein all things are new, all things are from God; no right, no claim or preference derived to any one from any former institution; but every one's dignity consists solely in this, that God hath reconciled him to himself, not imputing his former trespasses to him.” *Αἰὼν ὅτις*, which we translate *this world*, seems to me to signify commonly, if not constantly, in the New Testament, that state which, during the Mosaic constitution, men, either Jews or Gentiles, were in, as contradistinguished to the evangelical state or constitution; which is commonly called *Ἄϊων μέλλων*, or *ἐρχόμενος*, *The world to come*.—*Who come to nought*, means, *who are vanishing*. If the *wisdom of this world*, and of the *princes of this world*, be to be understood of the wisdom and learning of the world in general, as contradistinguished to the doctrine of the Gospel, then the words are added, to shew what folly it is for them to glory as they do in their teachers, when all that worldly wisdom and learning, and the great men the supporters of it, would quickly be gone; whereas all true and lasting glory came only from *Jesus Christ*, the Lord of glory. But if these words are to be understood of the *Jews*, as seems most consonant both to the main design of the Epistle, and to St. Paul's expressions here, then his telling them that the *princes of the Jewish nation are brought to nought*, is to take them off from glorying in their Judaizing false apostle; since the authority of the rulers of that nation in matters of religion was now at an end, and they, with all their pretences,

and

16 ^z For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he * may instruct him? ^a But we have the mind of Christ.

^z Job, 15. 8. Jer. 23. 18. * Gr. *shall*. ^a Pf. 25. 14. John, 15. 15. & 14. 26. & 16. 13—15.

and their very constitution itself, were upon the point of being abolished and swept away, for having rejected and crucified the Lord of glory. See Locke.

Ver. 7. We speak the wisdom of God] The wisdom of God is used here for the doctrine of the Gospel, coming immediately from God by the revelation of his Spirit; and in this chapter it is set in opposition to all knowledge, discoveries, and improvements whatsoever, attainable by human industry, parts, and study, all which he calls *the wisdom of the world, and man's wisdom*;—thus distinguishing the knowledge of the Gospel, which was derived wholly from revelation, and could be had no other way, from all other knowledge whatsoever. What the Spirit of God had revealed of the Gospel during the times of the law, was so little understood by the Jews, in whose sacred writings it was contained, that it might well be called *the wisdom of God in a mystery*, that is to say, declared in obscure prophecies, and mysterious expressions and types. Though this be undoubtedly so, as appears by what the Jews both thought and did, when Jesus the Messiah, exactly answering what was foretold of him, came among them, yet by *the wisdom of God in a mystery, wherein it was hid, though proposed by God before the settling of the Jewish economy*, St. Paul seems more particularly to mean what the Gentiles, and consequently the Corinthians, were more peculiarly concerned in; viz. God's purpose of calling the Gentiles to be his people under the Messiah; which, though revealed in the Old Testament, yet was not in the least understood till the times of the Gospel, and the preaching of St. Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, which therefore he so frequently calls *a mystery*. The reading and comparing Rom. xvi. 25, 26., Eph. iii. 3—9., ch. vi. 19, 20., Col. i. 26, 27., ii. 1—8. and iv. 3, 4. will give light to this. To which give me leave to observe upon the use of the word *wisdom* here, that St. Paul, speaking of God's calling the Gentiles, cannot, in mentioning it, forbear expressions of his admiration of the great and incomprehensible wisdom of God therein. See Eph. iii. 8, 10., Rom. xi. 33. The term *Πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων*, signifies properly, *before the ages*; and I think it may be doubted whether these words, *before the world*, do exactly render the sense of the place. That *αἶων*, or *αἰώνος*, should not be translated *the world*, as in many places they are, I shall give one convincing instance, among many that might be brought, viz. Eph. iii. 9. compared with Col. i. 26. The words in Colossians are, *τὸ μυστήριον τὸ ἀποκρυφθέν ἀπὸ αἰώνων*, thus rendered in the English translation, *which hath been hidden from ages*; but in Eph. iii. 9. a parallel place, the same words *τὸ μυστήριον τὸ ἀποκρυφθέν ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων*, are translated, *The mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid*; whereas it is plain from Col. i. 26. that *ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων*, does not signify the epoch or commencement of the concealment, but those from whom it was concealed. It is plain that the Apostle, in the verse immediately preceding, and that following this which we have before us, speaks of the Jews; and therefore the phrase *πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων* here, may

be well understood to mean *before the ages of the Jews*; and so *ἀπὸ αἰώνων*, *from the ages of the Jews*, in the other two mentioned texts. Why the word *αἰώνος*, in these and other places, (as Luke, i. 70., Acts, iii. 21. and elsewhere,) should be appropriated to the ages of the Jews, may be owing to their counting by ages, or jubilees. See Mr. Locke, and Dr. Burthogge's judicious treatise, "*Christianity a revealed Mystery*," c. ii. p. 17.

Ver. 8. They would not have crucified] The force of the original is, *They would not by any means*. Compare Luke, xxiii. 34. St. Paul, in the close of the foregoing verse, opposes the true glory of a Christian, to the glorying which was among the Corinthians in the eloquence, learning, or any other quality of their factious leaders: for, in all his expressions, he has an eye on his main purpose; as if he should have said, "Why do you make divisions, by glorying as you do, in your different teachers? The glory to which God hath ordained us Christian teachers and professors, is, to be expounders, preachers, and believers of those revealed truths and purposes of God, which, though contained in the sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament, were not comparatively understood in former ages. This is all the glory that belongs to us, the disciples of Christ, who is the Lord of all power and glory, and herein has given us what far exceeds that, whereof Jews or Gentiles had any expectations from what they gloried in." See the next verse. Thus St. Paul takes away all matter of glorying from the false Apostle, and his factious followers among the Corinthians. See Locke and 2 Cor. iii. 6—11.

Ver. 11. Knoweth no man] *Knoweth no one*. These words must signify the perfect acquaintance with all the divine schemes and purposes which the Holy Spirit had, and which the Apostle's argument directly proves that no creature can have: so that in this passage we have a strong proof of the divinity of the Spirit; and, accordingly it has been urged as such by all who have defended that important doctrine. See Bishop Pearson on the Creed.

Ver. 12. Now we have received] *We*, the true Apostles, or rather *I*; for though he speaks in the plural number to avoid ostentation, as they might interpret it, yet he is here justifying himself, and shewing the Corinthians, that none of them had reason to forsake and slight him, in order to follow and cry up their false apostle. That he speaks of himself, is plain from the next verse, compared with ver. 1. and ch. i. 17.—As he puts "*princes of the world*," ver. 6 and 8. for the rulers of the Jews, so here he puts *spirit of the world* for the nation of the Jews; that worldly spirit wherewith they interpreted the Old Testament, and the prophecies of the Messiah and his kingdom. Locke.

Ver. 13. Comparing spiritual things, &c.] *Explaining, &c.* Wall, Ellner. "Comparing one part of revelation with another." It is plain, says Mr. Locke, that the *spiritual things* which he here speaks of, are uncharitable counsels of God, revealed by his Holy Spirit in the sacred Scriptures.

CHAP. III.

Milk is fit for children. Strife and division, arguments of a feeble mind. He that planteth, and he that watereth, is nothing. The ministers are God's fellow-workmen. Christ the only foundation. Men the temples of God, which must be kept holy. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

[Anno Domini 57.]

AND I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto ^a spiritual, but as unto

^b carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

2 ^c I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

3 ^d For ye are yet carnal: for, whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and ^e divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk ^f as men?

4 ^g For while one saith, I am of Paul;

^a Ch. 2. 6, 15. & 14. 20. Heb. 5. 14. & 6. 1. ^b Rom. 7. 14. Eph. 4. 13, 14. Heb. 5. 11—13. ^c John, 2. 12. ^d John, 16. 12. ^e 1 Thess. 2. 7. Heb. 5. 12, 13. ^f 1 Pet. 2. 2. ^g Ch. 1. 11, 12. & 11. 18. ^h 2 Cor. 12. 20. Gal. 5. 19, 20. James, 3. 16. Ch. 5. 11. ⁱ Or factions. ^j Cf. according to man. ^k Ch. 1. 12. & 4. 6.

tures. This expression may serve to convince us of the great regard which we ought always to maintain for the words of Scripture; and may especially teach ministers, how attentively they should study its beauties, and how careful they should be to make it the support of their discourses. See Wetstein.

Ver. 14, 15. *But the natural man, &c.*] The natural man and the spiritual man are opposed by St. Paul in these verses; the one signifying a man who has no higher principles to build on, than those of natural reason; the other, a man who founds his faith and religion on divine revelation, and experiences the power thereof in his heart. This is what appears to be meant by *natural*, or rather *animal man*,—*ψυχικὸς*,—and *spiritual*, as they stand opposed in these two verses. There are some who suppose that *ψυχικὸς* implies something further; namely, the *sensual man*, who continues under the influences of his appetites and passions, and is a stranger to the noble exercises and principles of the divine life. See James, iii. 15. Jude, ver. 19. Locke, Owen, and the 2d volume of *The Phœnix*, p. 544. Instead of *judgeth all things*, Bos reads *judgeth of every man*.

Ver. 16. *That he may instruct him.*] “*Him*, refers here to *spiritual man* in the former verse, says Mr. Locke; for “St. Paul is shewing, not that a *natural man*, and a mere philosopher, cannot instruct Christ;—this nobody, pretending to be a Christian, could imagine;—but that a man, by his bare natural parts, not knowing the mind of the Lord, could not *instruct*, could not judge, could not correct a preacher of the Gospel, who built upon revelation, as he did.” Many interpreters, however, think it more agreeable to the construction, and its connection with what follows, by *Him* to understand God. This part of the epistle is very artificially conducted: the Apostle is now aiming at the great point of establishing his authority, which had been suspected among them; yet he does not directly propose, but obliquely insinuates, arguments against such suspicions; arguments which might possess their minds, before they were aware of what he intended to effect by them. This important remark will often present itself to the attentive reader of St. Paul’s Epistles. See Doddridge, Guyse, and Pyle.

Inferences.—It should be the resolution of every Christian, and especially the determination of every minister, to *know*
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nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified; (ver. 2.) to esteem this the most important of all knowledge, to cultivate it in their own minds, and endeavour to propagate it to others. Fraught with this divine science, those ministers of the Gospel who know least of the *excellency of speech*, and the *enticing words of man’s wisdom*, will do more important service for the reformation of the world, and the salvation of souls than without it the greatest masters of language, or adepts in philosophy, will ever be able to effect. Let the *princes of this world* boast of the knowledge and refined policy, which is so soon to perish, (ver. 6.) by which so many of their subjects perish, and sometimes themselves before their time:—In how many instances does it leave them to imitate the destructive maxims of those, who, under pretence of public good, but really under the instigation of the basest private passions, *crucify Jesus*, the adorable Saviour,—the *Lord of glory*! ver. 8.

We should continually pray to God to teach us more of that *hidden wisdom*, which they who are truly initiated into real Christianity know, and which opens upon us views and hopes beyond *what eye hath seen, or ear heard, or it hath particularly and fully entered into the heart of man to conceive*, ver. 9. There is no need we should distinctly *conceive it*; it is enough that we know in the general it is *what God hath prepared for them who love him*: a consideration, which may surely teach us to despise that which he so often bestows on those who *hate him*; on those with whom he is angry every day.

Happy will it be, if that *spirit which searcheth all things, even the hidden things of God*, give us more deeply and affectionately to know the *things which are freely given us of God*, and to adore that grace from which we receive them. These things we learn with the highest advantage from the holy Scriptures, where they are delivered in *words* which the Holy Ghost taught, ver. 12, 13. words therefore the most admirably adapted to express those spiritual and sublime ideas which they were intended to communicate; and in which, consequently, we learn to speak of the things of God with the exactest propriety, and the purest edification.

May we be enabled *spiritually to discern them*, with whatever contempt they may be treated by *natural*, that is *animal men*; by those who, though conceited of their rational powers, can relish little or nothing but what relates to this low and sensual life! ver. 14. Conscious of that inward discerning,
B b

and another, I *am* of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

5 ' Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as

' Rom. 10. 15, 17. Ch. 4. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 1. 24. & 4. 5, 7. & 3. 3. & 6. 4. & 10. 4, 5. & 12. 6. Ver. 7. Rom. 12. 3, 6. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11.

discerning, which discovers all things to us in their true light, even things of infinite importance, may we pity that undiscerning rashness of blind arrogance and pride, with which some, who think themselves the wisest, in proportion to the degree in which they are the most wretched of mankind, may treat us; and not only *us*, but that gospel which is our glory and our joy! ver. 15. We have the mind of Christ delivered to us by his holy apostles, who were intimately and miraculously instructed in it. Let us humbly receive the oracles which they deliver; and whilst others are presuming haughtily to censure them, may we think ourselves happy if, with meek submission to their unerring authority, we may sit at the feet of such teachers, and regulate our lives by their instructions!

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The apostle had before declared with what unadorned simplicity he had preached to his Corinthian brethren the doctrines of the gospel; they needed no varnish, and he trusted to their native weight and evidence to recommend them. *And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God;* he used no rhetorical arts, nor affected curious speculations, but plainly declared the message which he had received of the Lord, the truth of which was attested by prophecies and miracles, and sealed to their hearts by the demonstration of the spirit. *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified,* avoiding all shew of Jewish or Grecian literature, and above all things insisting upon that one distinguished point, in which all the lines of our salvation meet as in one centre, from which all the privileges of the gospel flow as from their source, and under the influence of which we can alone be engaged and inclined to all the service to which our Saviour calls us, constrained by his dying love. *And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling,* deeply sensible of his own insufficiency for the arduous work; in his outward circumstances and appearance, poor and despicable; exposed to innumerable difficulties from the enmity of the world without, and the envy of some within, who wanted to make a party against him, and, above all, deeply exercised in his own soul, lest his message should be despised and rejected by them to their eternal ruin. *And my speech, and my preaching, was not with enticing words of man's wisdom;* these he studiously avoided, but he taught with much more effectual evidence, in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, not only by the miracles which he wrought in confirmation of his mission, but by the energy with which the Holy Ghost accompanied his preaching to their consciences: *that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men,* as supported by mere human evidence, or wrought by mere moral persuasion or argument, but in the power of God, arising from a divine conviction of the truth, resting on divine testimony, and produced by the operation of God. *Note;* (1.) Nothing is more contrary to the spirit of the gospel than the affectation of being admired as orators, instead of being useful

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preachers. (2.) Christ, in his person and offices, should be the great subject of all our discourses; nothing so effectually reaches the conscience as the doctrine of the cross. (3.) Faithful ministers have peculiar trials, both from without and within, trembling sometimes for themselves, conscious of their own infirmities; and trembling for the people, lest that which should be to them a favour of life unto life, should, by their unbelief and prejudices, become a favour of death unto death. (4.) The faith of God's people is not the effect of mere human persuasion, but of divine operation.

2dly, The apostle had disclaimed all affectation of human wisdom. *Howbeit,* says he, *we speak wisdom among them that are perfect,* (τῶν τέλει,) and grown up to greater maturity in knowledge, understanding, and grace; demonstrating the infinite wisdom and suitableness of the divine contrivance, in the grand scheme of man's salvation, through faith in a crucified Jesus.—*Yet not the wisdom of this world,* such systems as philosophers have invented or will approve; nor of the princes of this world, such as the proud Rabbis and great men of the earth comprehend, or conceive, who, with all their boasts of science, *come to nought,* and perish in their pride, if they be not humbled to genuine repentance. *But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory.* The divine contrivance for the salvation of lost sinners had been unknown to the Gentile world, and but dimly revealed to the Jews in mysterious types and figures; but now the fulness of time was come, when the mystery of grace should be unfolded. And this design of the divine wisdom *none of the princes of this world knew,* neither the Roman governor, nor the high priest and elders of the Jews; *for had they known it, they would not have crucified him,* who in essential Deity is one with the Father, and justly claims the title of the Lord of Glory. *But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* Low as their apprehensions were of the crucified Redeemer, yet has he brought in a salvation for lost souls, unutterably glorious, by a contrivance far above human conception, and has prepared for those faithful souls, who, sensible of his amazing grace, feel the power of his divine love in their hearts, such inestimable blessings as pass man's understanding. *But these glorious things God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit,* by a divine illumination in the preaching of the gospel; *for the Spirit,* who is the great agent in the conversion of the sinner's soul, illuminating his darkness, and quickening him from his state of death, *searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God;* and who alone, being perfectly acquainted with his counsels, is fully able to reveal them to us. *For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?* None but our own spirit can discover what passes in our secret thoughts; *even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God:* none but that eternal Spirit, who is essentially God, and one with the Father and the Son, (as a man's soul is one with him, and

the Lord gave to every man ?

6 ^c I have planted, Apollos watered ; ^h but

God gave the increase.

7 ⁱ So then neither is he that planteth any

^c Act. 18. 4, 8, 11, 26, 27. Ver. 10. Ch. 4. 15. & 9. 7, 11. & 15. 1, 2. 11. 21. & 16. 14. Ch. 1. 3. 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3.

^h John. 15. 5. Pl. 115

ⁱ Pl. 92. 13. & 65. 10. & 127. 1. Il. 55. 10, 11. & 61. 11. Act. 2 Cor. 3. 5. & 12. 11. Ch. 4. 7. & 1. 28, 30. & 15. 10.

and conscious of all that passes in his breast) can know or reveal these unto us. *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, that we should be guided by its wisdom, or follow its maxims, but the Spirit which is of God, whose office it is, in the œconomy of man's salvation, to enlighten the darkened mind, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God, even all those inestimable blessings and privileges, of which, by grace through faith, we are made partakers. Which things also we speak, declaring, from happy experience, the truths which the Spirit hath revealed to us, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, affecting to set them off with figures of oratory, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, to add to which would be but to gild the brilliant, which shines infinitely brighter in its native lustre ; comparing spiritual things with spiritual, the types with the antitype, the prophecies with their fulfilment, the Old Testament with the New, which serve to cast mutual light and glory on each other, and supply us with expressions, which most forcibly and clearly convey the Spirit's meaning to the heart. But the natural man, who continues under the darkness of his fallen mind, whatever attainments in human wisdom and literature he may have made, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him, because he cannot reconcile them to his corrupted reason and defiled mind ; neither can he know them ; he is as much under a moral incapacity of ever attaining to the true understanding of spiritual things, as the blind man is under a natural incapacity of discovering the brightest objects till the faculty of vision is given him, because they are spiritually discerned, and therefore cannot be comprehended without divine illumination. But he that is spiritual, and taught of God, judgeth all things, discovering the excellency, all-sufficiency, and suitableness of God's method of salvation, and distinguishing truth from error. Yet he himself is judged of no man ; no natural man, however wise or learned, discerns the principles upon which he acts ; or can comprehend the truths which the spiritual man experimentally knows ; or can confute him by any reasonings, when he sees that he has the word of God for his guide, and the Spirit of God has promised to lead him into all truth. For who hath known the mind of the Lord ? What philosopher ever soared so high as to penetrate into the secrets of God's eternal mind, that he may instruct him who is spiritual, in these supernatural truths ? Darkness and folly are evident in all the schemes and notions of the wisest sages ; but we have the mind of Christ, are divinely led into the knowledge of his designs of grace, and therefore can never be moved away from the hope of the gospel, by any pretenders to science, or by the disputations of philosophers, with whatever sounding names or titles they may be dignified. Learn hence, (1.) That the wisest sage and the most illiterate peasant are on a level, respecting the knowledge which maketh wise unto salvation. (2.) If all the wisdom that ever existed in the whole fallen race was centered in one natural man, he would in this state be as incapable of*

communicating one tittle of divine truth to us, as the glow-worm of enlightening the universe. (3.) It is the distinguishing character of genuine Christians, that they are all taught of God, not only by external revelation, but by the Spirit's internal illumination. (4.) The love of God, now shed abroad in our hearts, is the earnest of that inheritance which he hath prepared for the faithful. (5.) We are not to wonder that those, who are most advanced in human literature, are usually most averse to the truths of God. The reason is evident, ver. 14. and they will not humble themselves. (6.) A spiritual understanding of the Scriptures is a better qualification for the ministry than all Roman or Grecian literature.

CHAP. III.

FROM what is said in this chapter, it appears that the false teacher had represented St. Paul, either as ignorant or as unfaithful, because he had not fully instructed the Corinthians before his departure. The same teacher had also boasted concerning himself, that he had given them complete instruction. The confutation of these calumnies the apostle with great propriety introduced, after having in the former chapter discoursed largely concerning the perfect knowledge of the gospel, given to the apostles by the Spirit. Wherefore, having in that chapter observed, that animal men receive not the things of the Spirit of God, he began this chapter with telling the Corinthians, that, though he was an apostle fully instructed, he could not, during his abode with them, speak to them as to spiritual, but as to fleshly or weak persons, even as to babes in Christianity, ver. 1. This was a severe blow to the pride of the Greeks. Notwithstanding their boasted proficiency in the sciences, they were *fleshly* or weak men, and babes in religious matters. It seems their admiration of their own philosophy, their confidence in human reason as the great judge of truth, and the prevalence of their animal passions, had rendered them in a considerable measure incapable of understanding and relishing spiritual things. He had therefore given them *milk* and not *meat*, because they were not then able to bear meat ; neither were they yet able to bear it, ver. 2.—That the Corinthians were still *fleshly*, was evident from the strifes and divisions which were among them, on account of the particular teachers to whom they had attached themselves, ver. 3.—For one said, I am of Paul, and another, I of Apollos, ver. 4. From this we learn, that there were two principal factions in the church at Corinth, the one of which adhered to St. Paul, and the other to a person who is here called *Apollos* figuratively, to avoid giving offence, chap. 4. 6. but who, in all probability, was the false teacher : that this teacher boasted of St. Peter, by whom he was converted and baptized, as an apostle superior to St. Paul ; and he and his followers, being the disciples of St. Peter, pretended that they were much better instructed than the disciples of St. Paul ; and that they possessed superior authority and respect on that account.

B b 2

thing, neither he that watereth ; but God that giveth the increase.

8 * Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one : and every man shall re-

* John. 4. 36—38. Ver. 9. 19. with ch. 4. 6. & 1. 11, 12. 4. & 9. 17. Rev. 2. 23. & 22. 12.

¹ Pf. 62. 12. Jer. 17. 10. & 32. 15. Gal. 6. 5. Mat. 16. 27. Rom. 2. 6. Ch. 4.

count.—But in thus ascribing to one Apostle more honour than to another, and in attaching themselves more to one than to another, the Corinthians were much to blame. For none of their teachers were masters. They were all but servants employed by Christ to convert men. And their success in the work depended, not on themselves, but on the gifts which Christ had bestowed on each of them, and the blessing with which he accompanied their labours, ver. 5.—Farther, he told them, that in converting the world, the ministers of Christ had different parts assigned them. He had planted, and Apollos had watered, but God made what they had planted and watered to grow, ver. 6.—So that the whole depended on the co-operation and blessing of God, ver. 7.—But though the ministers of Christ had different parts allotted to them, he assured them they were all one, in respect of the end for which they laboured ; and that each shall be rewarded, according to the sincerity and diligence with which he has laboured, ver. 8.—The Apostles, therefore, and the other ministers of the word, were joint labourers employed by God ; and the people were God's field, which they were to cultivate, and God's building, which they were to rear, ver. 9. The building of which the Apostle speaks, is the Christian church, called ver. 16. and in other passages, *the Temple of God* ; because the Christian church, consisting of all who believe in Christ, was formed for preserving the knowledge and worship of God in the world, and to be an habitation of the Spirit of God, by the graces and virtues, which were to be exercised in it.

Having mentioned *God's building*, or temple, the Apostle told the Corinthians, that, as a skilful architect, he had laid the foundation of that temple in a proper manner at Corinth ; and that the false teacher had only builded thereon. But he desired every one to take heed to the materials with which he builded, that they might be suitable to the foundation, ver. 10.—Because other foundation of the temple of God, neither Apostle nor inferior teacher could lay, than that which he had laid, namely, that *Jesus is the Christ*, ver. 11.—If, therefore, any teacher built on that foundation sincere converts, metaphorically represented by *gold, silver, and precious stones* ; or if he built hypocritical professors thereon, represented by *wood, hay, and stubble*, he told them, the fire of persecution, which was ready to fall on the temple or church of God, would discover the nature of every teacher's work, ver. 12, 13.—If any teacher's converts remained steadfast in the day of persecution, through the pains he had taken under the grace of God in instructing them, he should be rewarded, ver. 14.—But if any teacher's converts apostatized, they should perish, but the teacher himself would be saved with difficulty ; provided, in making such converts, he had preached the gospel sincerely, ver. 15.—And, that the Corinthians might understand what the building was of which he spake, he told them, they themselves, as a church, were the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelt in them, as a church, ver. 16.

—If, therefore, any teacher wilfully spoils the temple of God, by building wicked men into it, that is, if by knowingly misrepresenting the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, and by flattering wicked men in their sins, he allures them to enter into the Christian church, as the false teacher at Corinth had done, him will God destroy : for the temple of God ought to be composed of holy persons, ver. 17.—And although the teacher, who thus builds wicked men into the church, may think himself wise in so doing, he but deceives himself ; and to become truly wise, it behoves him to follow the course which the world esteems foolish : he must preach the gospel sincerely, whatever inconveniences it may occasion to himself or to others, ver. 18.—For the wisdom of the world is folly in the sight of God : according to what is written, *He catcheth the wise, &c.*, ver. 19, 20.—The work of the false teacher, in building the temple of God at Corinth, being of the sort here described and condemned, this passage was a severe rebuke, both to him and to his adherents. Wherefore, to lead them to apply it to themselves, the Apostle exhorted them, not to boast in any teacher, as if he belonged to them in particular. All the teachers, and all the blessings of the Gospel, belong to believers in general ; and believers belong all to Christ as his disciples ; which is a real ground of boasting, because Christ belongs to God, ver. 21, 22, 23. Having therefore Christ for their common Master, and being all equally entitled to the benefit of the labours of the ministers of Christ, and to the privileges of the Gospel, it was wrong to contend one with another, either about their teachers, or their privileges.

Ver. 1. And I, brethren, &c.] The next matter of boasting, which the faction made use of to give the pre-eminence and preference to their leader above St. Paul, seems to have been this, That their new teacher had led them farther, and given them a deeper insight into the mysteries of the Gospel than St. Paul had done. To take away their glorying on this account, St. Paul tells them, that they were carnal, and not capable of those more advanced truths, or any thing beyond the first principles of Christianity which he had taught them ; and though another had come and watered what he had planted, yet neither planter nor waterer could assume to himself any glory thence, because it was God alone that gave the increase. But whatever new doctrines they might pretend to receive from their magnified new Apostle, yet no man could lay any other foundation in a Christian church, but what he (St. Paul) had laid ; viz. that *Jesus is the Christ* ; and therefore there was no reason to glory in their teachers, because upon this foundation they possibly might build false or unfound doctrines, for which they should receive no thanks from God, though, continuing in the faith, they might be saved. Some of the *hay and stubble* which this leader brought into the church at Corinth, he seems particularly to point at, ch. iii. 16, 17. viz. their defiling the church by retaining, and as it may be supposed patronizing, the fornicator, who should have

been

ceive his own reward according to his own labour.

1 Cor. 6. 1. & 1. 5, 6. 3 John, 8. Mark, 16. 20. Mat. 28. 20. 14. & 21. 33. Pl. 72. 16. John, 15. 1-6.

9 For we are ^m labourers together with God: ye are God's * ⁿ husbandry, ye are

* Or tillage. [2 Pl. 80. 8, 9. If. 5. 1. & 61. 3. & 58. 11. Mat. 20.

been turned out; ch. v. 7-13. He further adds, that these extolled heads of their parties were at best but men, and none of the church ought to glory in men; for even Paul, and Apollos, and Peter, and all the other preachers of the Gospel, were for the use, and benefit, and glory of the church, as the church was for the glory of Christ. Moreover, he shews them, that they ought not to be puffed up on account of these their new teachers, to the undervaluing of him, though it should be true, that they had learned more from them, than from himself,—for these reasons: 1. Because all the preachers of the Gospel are but stewards of the mysteries of God; and therefore they ought not to be some of them magnified and extolled, and others depressed and blamed by their hearers here, till Christ their Lord come; and then he, knowing how they have behaved themselves in their ministry, will give them their reward. Besides, these stewards have nothing but what they have received, and therefore no glory belongs to them for it. 2. Because if these leaders were (as was pretended) Apostles, honour and outward affluence here would not have been their portion, the Apostles being appointed to want, contempt, and persecution. 3. They ought not to be honoured, followed, and gloried in, as Apostles, because they had not the power of miracles, which he intended shortly to come and shew they had not, ch. iii. 1.—iv. 20. See Locke.

As unto spiritual] According to some great commentators, *spiritual* is here opposed to *carnal*, as in ch. ii. 14. it is to *natural* or *animal*; so that, according to them, we have here three sorts of men: 1. *Carnal*; that is to say, such as are swayed by fleshly passions and interests: 2. *Animal*; i. e. such as seek wisdom, or a way to happiness, only by the strength and guidance of their own natural parts, without any supernatural light coming from the Spirit of God;—by reason, without revelation;—by philosophy, without Scripture: 3. *Spiritual*; i. e. such as seek their direction to happiness, not in the dictates of natural reason and philosophy, but in the revelations of the Spirit of God in the Holy Scriptures. By *babes in Christ*, are meant such as had not their understandings yet fully opened to the true grounds of the Christian religion, but retained a great many childish thoughts about it, as appeared by their divisions,—one being for the doctrine of his master Paul; another for that of his master Apollos; which, if they had been *spiritual*, that is, had looked upon the doctrine of the Gospel to have come solely from the Spirit of God, and to be had only from revelation, they could not have done: for then all human mixtures of any thing derived either from Paul or Apollos, or any other man, would have been wholly excluded. But they, in these divisions, professed to hold their religion, one from one man, and another from another; and were thereupon divided into parties. This, he tells them, was to be *carnal*, and to *walk as men*,—to be led by principles purely human; i. e. to found their religion upon men's natural parts and discoveries; whereas the

Gospel was wholly built upon divine revelation, and the application of it by the Spirit of God, and nothing else; and thence alone those who were *spiritual* took it. See Locke.

Ver. 2. I have fed you with milk] “You being such *babes*, such mere beginners in the divine life, I could not go so far as I desired in the great doctrines of the Christian religion; but was obliged to content myself with instructing you in the first principles, the more obvious and easy doctrines of it. I could not apply myself to you, as to spiritual men, who could compare *spiritual things with spiritual*,—one part of Scripture with another.” See Heb. v. 12. 14. Locke and Blackwall's Sacred Classics, vol. i. p. 72.

Ver. 3. And walk as men?] *Speaking according to man*, signifies, speaking according to the principles of natural reason, in contradistinction to revelation. See ch. ix. 8. Gal. i. 11. and so *walking according to man* must here be understood. See on ver. 1.

Ver. 4. I am of Apollos] From this verse, compared with ch. iv. 6. it may be no improbable conjecture, says Mr. Locke, that the division into his church was owing to two opposite parties, whereof the one adhered to St. Paul, the other stood up for their head, a false Apostle, who opposed St. Paul. For the Apollos whom St. Paul mentions here was one, as he tells us, ver. 6. who came in, and watered what he had planted; that is, when St. Paul had planted a church at Corinth, this Apostle got into it, and pretended to instruct them further, and boasted of his performances among them, of which St. Paul takes notice again, 2 Cor. x. 15, 16. Now the Apollos whom he here speaks of, he himself tells us, ch. iv. 6. was another man, under that borrowed name. It is true, St. Paul in his Epistles to the Corinthians, generally speaks of these his opposers in the plural number; but it is to be remembered, that he speaks thus of himself also; which, as it was the less invidious way, with regard to himself, so it was the softer way towards his opposer; though he seems to intimate plainly, that it was *one* leader, who was set up against him. Others, differing in sentiment from Mr. Locke, think it much more probable from ch. iv. 6. that St. Paul chose to make use of the name of Apollos, that he might give no offence, and to shew that he should lament and condemn any division among them, though it were in favour of himself, or the dearest friend he had in the world;—and they cannot think that St. Paul would have described this supposed false Apostle as *watering his plantation* which he rather *wasted*; or have spoken of himself, and that messenger of Satan as one. See ver. 8.

Ver. 5. Who then is Paul, &c.] Some would read this and the following verse thus: *Who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed?—And as the Lord gave to every man, I planted, Apollos watered, &c.* See Markland on Lyfias, p. 560.

Ver. 8. Are one] This is another cogent argument against division,

God's ° building.

10 ^p According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as ^q a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 ^r For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now, if any man ^s build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 ^t Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it

* shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 ^u If any man's work abide, which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 ^v If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.

16 ^w Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.

17 ^x If any man † defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for ^y the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.

° Eph. 2. 15, 20—22. Col. 2. 7. Heb. 3. 3, 4. 1 Pet. 2. 5. 1 Tim. 3. 15. ^p Rom. 1. 5. Ch. 15. 10. 1 Pet. 4. 11. ^q Rom. 15. 20. Acts. 18. 4, 8. Ch. 1. 6. & 4. 15. & 9. 1, 2. & 15. 1—4. 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3. Gal. 2. 7, 9. Eph. 2. 20. 1 Pet. 4. 11. Rev. 21. 14. Ver. 11. Ch. 2. 2. ^r Acts. 4. 12. If. 28. 16. Mat. 16. 18. Eph. 2. 20. Ch. 1. 13. Gal. 1. 7—9. ^s 2 Cor. 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 11. 13. & 13. 5. ^t Ch. 4. 5. 2 Pet. 1. 19. If. 8. 20. Jer. 23. 29. If. 27. 9. & 48. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 7. & 4. 12. 2 Theff. 1. 7. 2 Pet. 3. 7. ^u Ch. 4. 5. Mat. 24. 21, 23. 1 Theff. 2. 19. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 5. 4. Dan. 12. 3. Mat. 19. 28. ^v 2 John. 8. Amos. 4. 11. Zech. 3. 2. Jude, 23. 1 Pet. 4. 18. ^w Eph. 2. 20—22. Heb. 3. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 5. Ch. 6. 19. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Rom. 8. 9. John. 14. 16, 17. 2 Tim. 1. 14. Ezek. 36. 27. ^x Rom. 8. 13. 2 Pet. 2. 1—3. If. 3. 11. ^y † Or *destroy*. ^z Pl. 93. 5. Ezek. 43. 12. Heb. 3. 1. & 12. 14—16.

division,—that though their labours were different, and their rewards proportionable, yet they had in the general one office, and were employed as *workers-together* by God, to plant the seeds of grace and holiness in the souls of men, and to bring them to perfection. St. Paul here introduces an excellent discourse of the happy *consequences* of *faithfulness* in the ministerial-work, and the awful account of it to be given up to God:—a subject familiar to his own mind; and so proper for their teachers, that if it render the epistle something less regular, it balances the account, by rendering it so much more useful. See Craddock's *Apostol. Hist.* p. 156.

Ver. 9. For we are labourers together with God] *For we are the fellow-labourers of God.* Doddridge.

Ver. 12—15. Now if any man build, &c.] “Though no man who pretends to be a preacher of the Gospel can build upon any other foundation than that of Jesus Christ, yet you ought not to cry up your new instructor, who has come and built upon the foundation that I laid, for the doctrines that he builds thereon, as if there were no other minister of the Gospel but he; for it is possible that a man may build upon that true foundation *wood, hay, and stubble*, things which will not bear the test, when the trial by fire at the last day shall come; (ch. iv. 5.) at that day every man's work shall be tried and discovered, of what sort it is. If what he taught be found and good, and will stand the trial,—as *silver*, and *gold*, and *precious stones* abide in the fire; he shall be rewarded for his labour in the gospel: but if he has introduced false or unsound doctrines into Christianity, he shall be like a man, whose building being of *wood, hay, and stubble*, is consumed by the fire; all his pains in building are lost, and his works destroyed and gone, though he himself should escape and be saved.” Instead of *as by fire*, the Greek might be rendered more properly *as through the fire*. To be a *brand plucked out of the burning*, is well known as a proverbial expression, to signify

a narrow escape from extreme danger. See Zech. iii. 2. Amos, iv. 11. and especially Isai. xxxiii. 11, 12, to which some have thought the Apostle here alludes. The phrase $\Delta\iota\alpha\ \tau\omega\upsilon\sigma\ \sigma\upsilon\phi\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma$ is put for *passing through the fire*, as $\delta\iota\ \sigma\delta\alpha\tau\omega\varsigma$, 1 Pet. iii. 20. signifies to be *saved from the water by passing through it*, as the ark did. See Jude, 23.—The most approved heathen writers use the phrase in this sense. Many divines have well shewn how far this text is from giving any support to a *papist* purgatory. See Locke, Whitby, Stillington, and Elsner.

Ver. 16. Know ye not that ye are the temple, &c.] “I told you that ye are God's building, ver. 9. I now observe more than that;—*Ye are the temple of God*, in which his Spirit dwells.” Many of the first ancient writers represent a holy mind as the temple of God, and speak in the highest and strongest terms of the obligations men are under to keep his temples inviolate and unpolluted. Indeed, we cannot conceive a more forcible argument for internal purity, than this, which leads us to consider our bodies as the temple of God, inhabited by his ever-blessed and most holy Spirit. The word rendered *defile*, in the next verse, more properly signifies *destroy*, and should be so read, to keep up the contrast. See Elsner, Wettstein, Calmet, and Ostervald's useful treatise “on Uncleanness.”

Ver. 17. If any man] It is not unreasonable to think, that, by *any man*, St. Paul designs *one* particular man;—namely, the false Apostle, who, it is probable, by the strength of his party, supporting and retaining the fornicator mentioned, ch. v. in the church, had *defiled* it. We may look upon most of the disorders in this church as owing to the false Apostle; which is the reason why St. Paul sets himself so much against him in both these Epistles, and makes it a principal business of them to draw the Corinthians off from this leader; judging, as is probable, that the church could not be reformed, so long as that person was in credit and had a party among them. See Locke.

Ver. 18.

18 ^b Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

19 ^c For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

20 And again, ^d The Lord knoweth the

thoughts of the wife, that they are vain.

21 Therefore let no man ^e glory in men: for ^f all things are your's;

22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

23 And ^g ye are Christ's, ^h and Christ is God's.

^a Gal. 6. 3, 7. Prov. 3. 5, 7. If. 5. 21. Mat. 16. 21. Ch. 4. 10. & 1. 23, 24. Col. 2. 3. ^b Job, 5. 13. Ch. 1. 19, 20. Pf. 7. 15, 16. & 9. 15, 16. & 35. 7, 8. & 141. 10. & 17. 13. If. 29. 14, 16. Rom. 1. 21, 22. If. 44. 25. ^c Pf. 94. 11. & 2. 1. Job, 11. 11, 12. ^d Ch. 1. 12. ^e Rom. 8. 28. ^f 2 Cor. 4. 5, 15. Gal. 2. 7. Rev. 21. 7. Phil. 2. 21. ^g Ch. 6. 19, 20. Mat. 23. 8, 10. Rom. 14. 8. ^h Eph. 1. 3, 17. 1 Pt. 1. 3. Ch. 8. 6. & 11. 3. Heb. 1. 3. & 5. 8. Phil. 2. 8. John, 17. 4. & 6. 38. Mat. 26. 39. Eph. 1. 12. Ch. 15. 28.

Ver. 18. Let no man deceive himself.] It was not necessary for St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, who knew the matter of fact, to particularize what it was wherein the craftiness of the person here mentioned had appeared: therefore it was left us to guess; and possibly we shall not be much out, if we take it to be the keeping the fornicator from censure, so much insisted on by St. Paul, ch. v. That by *wise*, or *wise*, [*seemeth to be wise in this world*] the Apostle means a cunning man in business, is plain from his quotation in the next verse, where the *wise* spoken of are *the crafty*. "If any man seemeth to himself or others wise in worldly wisdom, so as to pride himself in his parts and dexterity in compassing his purpose, let him renounce all this wisdom, that he may become truly wise in embracing and owning no other knowledge than the simplicity of the Gospel." See Locke. Some would render the latter part of this verse, *If any one be wise among you, let him be a fool in this world, that he may become wise.* See Bengelius, and 1 Tim. vi. 17.

Ver. 21—23. All things are yours, &c.] How magnificently are the happy privileges of Christians, through Christ, set forth in this noble exultation! First, here is a full and vehement enumeration of particulars; and then a noble gradation, which rises up to Heaven, and terminates in God himself! See Blackwall's Sacred Classics, and Bengelius.

Inferences.—Who, that wishes for the welfare of the church of Christ, must not lament those sad remains of carnality, (ver. 1.) which are often to be found among them who have the greatest advantages for becoming *spiritual*, while the same contentious principles, fermented, no doubt, by the same malignant enemy of the whole body, breathe in so many of its members, and diffuse a kind of poison which at once swells and torments it? What envyings, and strife, and factions among those, who ought to join as brethren, and to know but one interest! ver. 3. What a desire, in many instances, to increase the burdens of each other, instead of bearing them with friendly sympathy!

May Christians be cured of this dishonourable and fatal attachment to distinguished parties, and human names! May ministers feel more of that generous and noble spirit, which this great Apostle expresses, ver. 4.—His reasoning has the same force still. Ministers are still intended to be only the instruments of producing and establishing faith in

their hearers, and still depend as intirely as ever upon the blessing of God, to give the increase to their labours, ver. 5—7. To that may they daily look; sensible that they are nothing without it; and that with it their part is so small, that they hardly deserve to be mentioned. May their hands and hearts be more united; and, retaining a due sense of the honour which God does them, in employing them in his vineyard, and in his building, (ver. 8, 9.) May they faithfully labour, not as for themselves, but for the great Proprietor; till the day come, when he will remember them in full proportion to their fidelity and diligence.

With what delight may the Christian survey this grand inventory, ver. 21—23. and, conscious that he is *Christ's*, call all things his own! With what pleasure survey the various gifts and graces of ministers, and consider them as given by God for his edification! With what complacency look round on things present, and forward on things to come, in this connection, and call the world his own; and count not only life, but death itself among his treasures! Both, in their different aspects, are made subservient to the happy purpose of glorifying God; and surely when by death we may do it more effectually, death should be more welcome than life. And welcome must it indeed be to every believer, as the appointed means of transmitting him to the sight and enjoyment of God, and the possession of better blessings than Paul or Apollos could ever describe, or any thing present, or any thing to come, in this world, could ever afford.

How should these sublime views elevate the Christian above those occasions of contention, which, for want of ascending to such noble contemplations, are often the source of innumerable evils! Nor let us fail to add that other consideration, ver. 16, 17. If we are the temples of the Holy Ghost; if Christians indeed, we are inhabited by God,—even by his Spirit. Let this engage us to take the strictest care, neither to defile ourselves, nor to injure our brethren; lest, in either view, it should be repented and punished by the Holy God, as a sacrilegious profanation.

What cause have we to over-value the wisdom of this world, when we find it so little regarded by the all-wise God? (ver. 19.) Let us not be greatly concerned, if fools account our wisdom folly, and our life madness. So censured they the prophets and Apostles before us; nor did our Master himself escape the like calumny and outrage.

Happy,

CHAP. IV.

In what account ministers ought to be had. We have nothing which we have not received. The Apostles are spectacles to the world, angels, and men; the filth and off-scouring of the world; yet are they our fathers in Christ, whom we ought to follow.

[Anno Domini 57.]

LET a man so account of us, as of ^a the ministers of Christ, and ^b stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover, it is required in stewards that ^c a man be found faithful.

3 But with me ^d it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's * judgment: ^e yea, I judge not mine own self.

4 For ^f I know nothing by myself; ^g yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

5 ^h Therefore judge nothing before the

^a See ch. 3. 5. 2 Cor. 4. 5. & 6. 4. Col. 1. 25. Tit. 1. 7. 1 Pet. 4. 10. ^b Mat. 24. 45. & 18. 19. Ch. 9. 7. 11. 22. 21. ^c Luke, 12. 42. ^d Tim. 2. 2. Mat. 25. 21. Luke, 16. 7, 10. Ch. 7. 25. 2 Cor. 1. 12. & 2. 17. & 4. 2. Col. 1. 7. & 4. 7, 17. Acts, 20. 20, 27. 1 Pet. 5. 3. Mark, 10. 43. 2 Pet. 1. 16. ^e 1 Sam. 16. 17. 2 Cor. 10. 10. * Gr. day. ^f 1 John, 3. 20, 21. ^g 1 John, 3. 20, 21. Ch. 15. 10. Rom. 15. 19. 2 Cor. 11. 23. Job, 27. 6. Acts, 23. 1. & 24. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 12. ^h Job, 9. 2. & 40. 4. 11. 150. 3. & 143. 2. & 19. 12. Rom. 3. 19, 20. & 4. 2. Prov. 21. 2. ⁱ Mat. 7. 1. Rom. 2. 1, 16. & 14. 4, 10, 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Eccl. 12. 14. Ch. 3. 13. Rev. 20. 12. Acts, 17. 31. Dan. 7. 10. Job, 12. 22. Mat. 25. 34. Rom. 2. 29.

Happy, sufficiently happy shall we be, if we approve our fidelity to Him,—if we build a wise superstructure on Christ, (ver. 11.) as the great, *the only foundation*.

His ministers especially should be solicitous, that they lose not the labour of their lives, by choosing unhappily to employ them in that which will turn to no account in the great day of his appearing. Let such carefully examine their materials: ver. 10. Surely if they have senses spiritually exercised, it cannot be hard to distinguish between the substantial and undoubted doctrines of Christianity, which are as *gold, silver, and precious stones*,—and those fictitious, or at best dubious and intricate points, which in comparison with the former, are but *wood, hay, and stubble*: ver. 12—15. And if, in urging these, they passionately inveigh against their brethren, and endeavour to bring them into contempt or suspicion, what do they, but cement these combustible materials with sulphur?

O let the frequent views of that last searching fire, that *grand period of all*, be much in our thoughts; that day, (ver. 13.) when not only the works of ministers, but of every private person, must, as it were, pass through the flames. May we then be *saved*, not with difficulty, but with praise and honour! May our works, of what kind soever they are, abide, so as to be found worthy of applause, and through divine grace receive a distinguished reward.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Apostle proceeds,

1. To rebuke the carnality, and contentions which reigned among the members of the Corinthian church. *I, brethren*, (for as such I regard you, notwithstanding the many imperfections which I perceive among you) *could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ*; for, greatly as many of you are enriched in gifts, (see chap. i. 5.) yet in grace your attainments are very low, and your affections too much grovelling still on earth: and therefore as babes *I have fed you with milk*, with the simplest and plainest truths of the Gospel, *and not with meat*, the more sublime points of revelation and the deep things of God; *for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able*; you would not have been edified by them, but have abused them, and made them minister to your pride

and disputatious humour. *For ye are yet carnal*, and shew too much of an unrenewed spirit; *for whereas, or since there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* Whilst under the power of such evil tempers, wherein do you differ from the world that lieth in wickedness? *For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?* Does not such a spirit of party prove the deep, unmortified remainders of carnality in your hearts? Affuredly. *Note*; (1.) Ministers must be faithful to the souls of the people, and never flatter. (2.) There may be great attainments in knowledge, and yet little grace in the heart; and this wisdom puffeth up. (3.) Among real Christians, there are great differences to be observed; some are weak as babes; others, strong as men grown to maturity. Our wisdom, as ministers, is therefore to give to every man his portion in due season. (4.) Nothing is more contrary to the spirit of Christianity than angry disputes, and schismatical divisions.

2. The Apostle ascribes to the rich grace of God all the success which the Gospel had met with among them. It became effectual, not through human instruments, but by divine energy. *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?* The men were mere instruments; it was the Lord alone who made their ministry effectual. *I have planted*, by first preaching the Gospel to you; *Apollos watered*, succeeding me in labouring among you: *but God gave the increase*, without whose operation and mighty influence, however great the natural abilities of either may have been, I must have planted and Apollos watered in vain. *So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase*, to whom the whole glory must be ascribed, exclusive of all the instruments that he may have been pleased to employ. And therefore they are not to be set up either as the authors of the Gospel, or the causes of its efficacy. *Note*; Ministers should ever be careful to ascribe to God the glory of all the success they meet with; we are nothing; he is all in all.

2dly, All faithful ministers are engaged in the same blessed cause, and have but one end in view, to glorify Christ and save immortal souls; and they shall not lose their reward. *Now he that planteth, by first preaching the Gospel*

time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will

make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

Gospel word, and he that watereth the seed . . . by coming after him, are one in affection and intention: and therefore those who are converted under their preaching should be united also, nor think of setting up one against another: and every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour; when the great Master comes, he will give to every man according as his work is; to secure his approbation must therefore be our great design, and not the empty honour which cometh from man only, which some of you affect. For we are labourers together with God, united in the same service, and honoured abundantly by the very work committed to us: while ye are God's husbandry, your hearts the field wherein he sows the seed of spiritual life; ye are God's building, the spiritual temple which he erects, and where he is well pleased to take up his abode; for ye are the habitation of God through the Spirit. Of this building we may observe,

1. The foundation is Jesus Christ. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, who hath appointed me to the office, and qualified me for the service, as a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation of your faith and hope in a crucified Jesus; and another buildeth therein, succeeding ministers have carried on the blessed work begun in your hearts: but, it is a needful and important caution, let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ, the rock of ages, the only hope of the miserable, and out of whom there is no salvation.

2. The superstructure must correspond with the foundation. Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, inculcating the holy doctrines of the Gospel, and exhorting men to a heavenly conversation which may adorn them, such labourer's work will bear the severest scrutiny, and shine gloriously; but if they build wood, hay, stubble, urging their own conceits and fancies, and zealous about things insignificant and unessential, while the weightier matters are neglected, every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day of judgment shall shortly declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and, as the refiner tries the metal in the furnace, the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is; the exact scrutiny of that day shall prove whether men's opinions and practices corresponded with the Scripture standard or not; and the consequence of the trial will be awful. (1.) If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, and it appears before the great Judge that he has followed his plan, and corresponded with his designs, in building up men's souls in the doctrines of grace and holiness, he shall receive a reward, eminent and distinguished, according to his labours and fidelity. (2.) If any man's work shall be burnt, and his opinions and practices be found unscriptural and erroneous, however highly he may have valued himself upon his abilities, he shall suffer loss, and see his fine-spun conceits all destroyed: but, if he has himself been founded upon Christ, and, though weak or mistaken, yet was not allowedly wicked or licentious, he himself shall be saved from the wrath to come, yet so as by fire, with such difficulty as a man escapes naked from his

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house when in flames. Note; (1.) Before the great trying day comes, we should be often examining ourselves by that word of God whereby we must at last be justified or condemned. (2.) We must not be liberal of rash censures concerning the eternal states of men; but, while we condemn their opinions, must leave their hearts to the great Judge.

3dly, The Apostle,

1. Presses the argument of holiness upon them from the consideration suggested, ver. 9. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, designed in a more peculiar manner for his abode than that house which Solomon built; and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you, in his gracious presence and mighty operations? If any man defile the temple of God, and seek, by broaching his corrupt opinions, to subvert the foundation, or by evil practices to seduce and draw men away from the truth of the Gospel, him shall God destroy with more fearful judgment than was threatened against the defilers of the material temple: for the temple of God is holy, set apart for himself; which temple ye are, and therefore are bound to be holy in all manner of conversation.

2. He warns them against the danger of vain conceit in their gifts and attainments. Let no man deceive himself with high imaginations of his own superior excellence, and in consequence propagate as truth his own erroneous opinions. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, and values himself upon his attainments in philosophy and human literature, let him become a fool, that he may be wise, renouncing it all so far as it would beget perverse reasonings against the humbling truths of revelation, and content simply to embrace the doctrine of the cross, which the wise world counts foolishness; for thus only can any man become wise unto salvation: for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, all their systems of theology, and their learned disquisitions on religion, are mere folly compared with his glorious scheme of salvation through a dying Redeemer: for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness, their fine-spun reasonings are the nets wherein they entangle and ruin themselves: and again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are but vain; all their projects and designs, however deeply concealed, are open to his eye; and compared with his thoughts, weakness, folly, and vanity, and stamped upon them. Note; (1.) No man can become truly wise, till, sensible of his spiritual ignorance, like a little child he comes to God's word to learn the first elements of truth. (2.) How amazingly foolish will all the wisdom of this world shortly appear, when those who trusted on the powers of their fallen reason to lead them to happiness, will find it to have been like the deceitful meteor, a light only to delude them into eternal darkness.

3. He warns them against exalting men, even the best and wisest, or following any minister implicitly, when their faith ought to stand, not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Therefore let no man glory in men, as being this or that man's disciples, despising others and undervaluing their ministry: for all things are yours, appointed

C c

for

6 And¹ these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us² not to think of *men* above that which is written, that

¹ Ch. 1. 12. & 3. 4, 6—8, 22.

² Prov. 3. 7. Rom. 12. 3. Ch. 5. 2, 6. 2 C. r. 12. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 8. Jude, 16.

for your blessing and advantage; *whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas*; their gifts are bestowed on them for the edification of the body of Christ; *or the world*; the administration of it is in the hands of Jesus, and he will give his people such a portion of it as shall be most for their good; *or life*; he will preserve his faithful people so long, and in such circumstances, as shall be most for his glory and their eternal happiness; *or death*; he will disarm it of its sting, and, in whatever manner it may come upon the righteous, will cause it to prove their greatest gain; *or things present*; the saints shall be watched over through their pilgrimage by his gracious providence; *or things to come*; an eternity of glory is before his saints; *all are yours*, every thing is made a blessing to holy souls, and all things work together for their good: *and ye are Christ's*, the objects of his love, the purchase of his blood, the members of his body; *and Christ is God's*, the appointed Mediator, the great Covenant-head, who has all things in his hands, and ever lives to perfect the salvation of his faithful saints, and to bring them to reign with him in Heaven, to the eternal praise of the glory of the grace of God.

CHAP. IV.

LEST, from what was said in the preceding chapters, concerning the inspiration of the Apostles by the Spirit, the Corinthians might have imagined that St. Paul claimed to himself and to his brethren, an authority not derived from Christ, he began this chapter with telling them that they were to consider the Apostles only as servants of Christ, and as stewards of the mysteries of God, ver. 1.—And, that the thing required of every such steward is, that he be faithful in the dispensing of these mysteries according as his disciples are able to receive them, ver. 2.—Therefore, although the false teacher accused St. Paul of unfaithfulness, because he had taught the Corinthians the first principles only, and not the deepest and most spiritual doctrines of the Gospel, he told them, it was a very small matter in his eyes, to be condemned as unfaithful by them, or by any man's judgment, seeing he did not condemn himself, ver. 3.—For he was conscious to himself of no unfaithfulness; yet by this he was not justified; he meant in the eyes of the faction, who could not see his heart. At the same time he told them, that the only person who had a right to condemn him, at least in respect to his heart, if he proved unfaithful, was the Lord his Master, ver. 4.—This being the case, he desired the faction not to condemn him, till the Lord should come to judgment, who will bring to light every thing most secret, and lay open the designs of the heart, of which they were no judges, ver. 5.

Next, to prevent the Corinthians from mistaking what he had said, concerning their boasting in himself and Apollos, as the heads of the factions, (chap. i. 12. iii. 4.) he declared, that he had applied these things to himself and Apollos figuratively only, for their sakes, that by disclaiming all pretensions to be the heads of parties, the Corinthians

might learn in them, not to esteem any teacher above what he had written, chap. iii. 5. namely, that Paul and Apollos were only servants of Christ, by whose ministry the Corinthians had believed; and that none of them, on account of any teacher, should be puffed up with envy and anger against another, ver. 6.

In what follows, the Apostle, turning his discourse to the false teacher, says, without naming him, Who maketh thee to differ in gifts from others? Or what spiritual gift hast thou, which thou didst not receive from some Apostle? And if thou hast received all thy gifts from the Apostles, why dost thou set thyself above them, as if thou hadst not received thy gifts from them, but wert independent of, and superior to them? ver. 7.—Then to shew the Corinthians the difference between the false teacher and the true Apostles of Christ, he contrasted the ease and opulence in which that impostor and the other leaders of the faction were living at Corinth, and their imperious conduct towards the church, with the afflicted and persecuted state of the Apostles, ver. 8—13.—And assured them, that he wrote not these things to shame them, for having increased his sufferings by their calumnious speeches, and disrespectful behaviour. But his design was, affectionately to instruct them, that they might not be seduced by teachers, whose character and relation to them were so different from his, ver. 14.—For he told them, though they had ten thousand instructors in the Christian doctrine, yet they had not many fathers. He was their spiritual father, ver. 15.—And therefore he besought them to imitate him, ver. 16—17. To conclude, because the false teacher had boasted, that Paul, being afraid to encounter such learned and eloquent opposers, durst not return to Corinth, he assured the Corinthians that he would come soon, and make trial, not of the speech of that insolent person, but of his supernatural power, ver. 18, 19.—For, said he, the Gospel is not established by the boasting speeches of its preachers, but by the miraculous powers which they exercise for its confirmation, and by the Spirit of God, ver. 20.—Then, to strike terror into the faction, he asked them, whether they chose that he should come and exercise his supernatural power in punishing them; or come in the spirit of peace on account of their amendment? ver. 21.

Ver. 1. *Let a man so account of us, &c.*] The Apostle intimates, that he was so far from arrogating the title assumed by the founders of the different sects of philosophy, and from wishing to have scholars denominated from him, that he would have no man think higher of him than that he was a *servant of Christ*; and that the *mysteries* he revealed were no more *his*, than the money which a *steward* is employed to distribute in alms could be called *his* property. He was no master, no proprietor; but a servant, and a steward. See Locke and Doddridge.

Ver. 3. *I judge not mine own self*] That is, “not so as if my case were to be finally determined by my own apprehensions concerning it.”

Ver. 4. *For I know nothing by myself*] “For, though I bless God

no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

7 For *¹ who maketh thee to differ *from another?* and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now, if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it*?

8 ² Now ye are full, now ye are rich; ye have reigned as kings without us; and ³ I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

9 For I think that ⁴ God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were, appointed to death:

for we are made a † spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

10 ⁵ We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised.

11 ⁶ Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place;

12 ⁷ And labour, working with our own hands: ⁸ being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:

13 Being defamed, we entreat: ⁹ we are

* *Gr. dikngzjebhthe.* ¹ John, 1. 27. Rom. 12. 6. & 9. 16, 13. Jern. 1. 17. 2 Pet. 4. 10. Ch. 7. 7. & 12. 11. Tit. 3. 5. ^m Rev. 3. 17. Ch. 1. 5. ⁿ 1 Thes. 2. 19, 20. Rom. 12. 15. ^o 1 Thes. 3. 2. 2 Cor. 1. 18. & 4. 11. Heb. 10. 33. Ch. 15. 30. Eph. 4. 12. Rom. 3. 26. ^p *Gr. theatre.* ^q Acts, 17. 18. & 6. 21. Ch. 1. 19—20, 26—8. & 3. 13. & 2. 3. 2 Kin. 9. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 12. & 10. 10. & 11. 9. ^r 2 Cor. 4. 8—10. & 11. 23, 27. & 6. 4. & 7. 5. Acts, 20. 23. 2 Tim. 3. 11. ^s Acts, 20. 34. & 13. 3. 1 Thes. 2. 6. 2 Thes. 3. 3. Ch. 9. 6. ^t Mat. 5. 17, 44. Luke, 23. 34. Acts, 7. 60. Rom. 12. 14. 1 Tim. 4. 10. 1 Pet. 2. 23. & 3. 9. ^u Lam. 3. 45. Acts, 11. 22.

“God that I am not conscious to myself of any designed neglect of my office, or unfaithfulness in my trust, yet am *not hereby justified.*” This seems a gentle, but a very affecting insinuation, that his opponents, confident as they might seem in their own integrity and safety, would do well to take greater heed that they were not imposed upon by the deceitfulness of their own hearts. See Locke and Doddridge.

Ver. 5. Will bring to light, &c.] This is a lively and just insinuation, that under specious forms his enemies concealed very dark designs, which would not bear the discoveries of that awful day. The next passage also suggests a very solid argument against magnifying one minister above another; namely, that the secret principles of men's actions are unknown; and it is enlarged upon to very good practical purposes: while the Apostle, at the same time, takes an opportunity of making a very solemn profession of his own faithfulness, and shewing the boldness which he had towards God, and his modesty and candour to men; all which were extremely suitable to the general purposes that he had in view. See Doddridge and Calmer.

Ver. 6. I have in a figure transferred, &c.] Mr. Locke and some others [see on ch. iii. 4.] have hence inferred, that not Paul and Apollos, but some other persons were set up among the Corinthians for heads of parties, for whose names the Apostle substituted his own, and that of his most intimate friend. But Witsius observes, that it is probable their names were used, among some others omitted, and the *figure* was only this, that the names of St. Paul and Apollos were used to signify themselves, or any others so exalted; and when the Apostle would s. y, how little ministers were in themselves, he chose, out of humility and prudence, rather to take such freedom with himself, and his most particular friend, than with any others. See Witsius's Meltem. p. 104. and Elser.

Ver. 8. Now—ye have reigned, &c.] This is a proverbial expression, used to signify the most splendid and affluent

circumstances; and some think, that when the Apostle adds *I would to God ye did reign*, he means, “I wish you had the authority of princes, that you might shelter and accommodate us, amidst all our distresses and afflictions.” But we can hardly conceive that he did wish each of them a prince, or that the civil power were in their hands. It seems much more probable, that as spiritual objects were familiar to his mind, he changes the idea, and alludes to the terms in the Jewish œconomy; in reference to which Christians are called *priests* and kings, and a *royal priesthood*. See 1 Pet. ii. 9. Rev. i. 6. and Doddridge.

Ver. 9. That God hath set forth us the Apostles last, &c.] The Apostle seems here to refer to the Roman custom of bringing forth on the theatre, in the latter part of the day, either to fight with each other, or with wild beasts, those persons who were appointed unto certain death, and who had not that chance of escaping, which those brought forth in the morning had. Such kind of *spectacles* were so common in all the provinces, that it is no wonder we should find an allusion to them here. The word *ἀπέδειξεν*, *set forth*, or *exhibited*, and *θεάτρον*, a *spectacle on the theatre*, have in this connection a beautiful propriety. The whole representation is indeed wonderfully pathetic and sublime: while they considered evil angels and men, as beholding them with all the malignant,—and good angels and men, with all the benevolent passions, it might have a great tendency to inspire their minds with the most heroic sentiments. See Seneca's Epistles, ch. vii. Reeves's Apology, vol. i. p. 237. Locke and Elser.

Ver. 10. We are weak] “In an infirm and suffering state.” See 2 Cor. xii. 10. Surely we cannot imagine any more glorious triumph of the truth, than what was gained in these circumstances; when St. Paul, with an impediment in his *speech*, and a *person* rather contemptible than graceful, appeared in a mean dress, before persons of the highest rank, and yet commanded such attention, and made such impressions. See Doddridge and Poole.

made as the filth of the world, *and are* the off-scouring of all things unto this day.

14 ^u I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.

15 For, though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers: ^x for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

16 Wherefore, I beseech you, ^y be ye followers of me.

17 For this cause have I sent unto you ^z Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you

into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

18 Now some ^a are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.

19 ^b But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.

20 ^c For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

21 What will ye? shall I come unto you ^d with a rod, or in love, and *in* the spirit of meekness?

^u 2 Cor. 7. 3. & 12. 15. ^v 1 Thef. 2. 11. ver. 15. ^x Acts, 18. 4, 11. Rom. 15. 20. Ch. 3. 6. & 9. 1. 2. 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3. & 10. 14. Gal. 4. 19. Phil. 10. Jam. 1. 18. ^y 1 Pet. 1. 23. ^z Ch. 11. 1. Phil. 3. 17. ^a 1 Thef. 1. 6. 2 Thef. 3. 9. Heb. 13. 7. ^b Ch. 16. 20. Phil. 2. 19. ^c 1 Thef. 3. 2. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 2. ^d Ver. 6. Ch. 5. 2. ^e Acts, 18. 21. & 19. 21. Rom. 15. 32. Ch. 16. 5, 7. 2 Cor. 1. 15. Heb. 6. 3. Jam. 4. 15. ^f Rom. 15. 19. Ch. 2. 4. 1 Thef. 1. 5. 2 Pet. 1. 16. Rom. 14. 17. Luke, 17. 20, 21. Gal. 6. 15. ^g 2 Cor. 10. 2. & 13. 10.

Ver. 13. As the filth of the world] The word *πρωμαθ'ερα*, rendered *filth*, has a force and meaning, which no one word in our language can express. It was applied to those poor wretches, who were offered up as expiatory sacrifices, in times of any plague or public calamity, to the infernal deities. They were brought to the place of execution with cheese, dried figs, and a cake in their hands; and after being beaten with rods, they were burned, and their ashes were cast into the sea with the following sentence: "Be thou an expiation; be thou a *refuse* or *off-scouring*." It should be observed, that the word rendered *expiation* in that sentence, is the same which is here rendered *filth* by our translators. See on Lev. xvi. 24. Henry More's Theolog. Works, p. 63. Ridley's Christian Passover, p. 22. Servius in *Æneid*. iii. lin. 75. Hammond, Whitby, and Bos.

Ver. 14. I write not these things to shame you] See 2 Cor. xi. 20. St. Paul here (from ver. 8. to 17.), by giving an account of his own conduct, gently rebukes them for following men of a different character, and exhorts them to be followers of himself.

Ver. 16. Be ye followers of me.] This he presses again, ch. xi. 1. and it is not likely that he would have proposed himself over and again to them to be followed by them, had the question and contest among them been only whose name they should have borne, his, or their new teacher's. His proposing himself therefore thus to be followed, must be understood in direct opposition to the false Apostle who misled them, and who was not to be suffered to have any credit or followers among them. See Locke.

Ver. 17. For this cause have I sent—Timotheus] This he does to shew that what he taught and pressed them to, was not in a pique against his opposer; but to convince them that all he did at Corinth was the very same, and no other than what he did every where, as a faithful steward and minister of the Gospel. See Locke and Witfius.

Ver. 21. Shall I come unto you with a rod?] "Using my apostolic power for your chastisement?" That the Apo-

stles had often a miraculous power of inflicting death and other temporal judgments, in case of aggravated offence, appears from other passages of Scripture, and is more than once referred to in these Epistles to the Corinthians. See ch. v. 5. 2 Cor. i. 23. x. 6, 8. xiii. 2, 3, 10. We cannot but admire the wisdom of Providence in permitting such opposition to rise against St. Paul, particularly at Corinth. It gave him an opportunity of making the strongest appeals to what they are supposed to know of his miraculous power; and had not these appeals been founded on the most certain and evident truth, instead of restoring him to their regard, as we find in fact they did, they must have been sufficient of themselves utterly to have ruined all his reputation and interest among them, had it before been ever so great. See Doddridge, Hammond, Locke, and the note on ver. 1. of the next chapter.

Inferences.—Nothing can be more conducive to the advantage of Christianity,—and by consequence, of the world, whose happiness is so much concerned in its support and success, than that its preachers should consider, and their hearers remember, the nature of their office. They are not lords over God's household and heritage, but ministers of Christ, whose business it is to promote their Master's honour; (ver. 1, 2.) stewards of his mysteries, who are to endeavour both to keep and to dispense them with all good fidelity. From their Master therefore may they take all their instructions, and to him let them refer all their administrations. Various judgments will be passed upon them; and they who will oppose the attempts of some of their brethren to introduce corruption and confusion into his family, will have many an unkind reflection thrown upon them, and experience the severity of censure, for a conduct which merits the justest approbation. Let them, however, learn by this excellent Apostle, (ver. 3.) to be above the judgment of men, and to keep the judgment of the Lord in view; that they may not only be supported under that petulance of their fellow-servants, but may learn to

CHAP. V.

The incestuous person should be a cause of shame unto them, and not of rejoicing. The old leaven is to be purged out. Heinous offenders are to be shunned and avoided.

[Anno Domini 57.]

IT is reported commonly *that there is* fornication among you, and ² such fornication

as is not so much as named amongst the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

2 ^b And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.

3 ^c For I verily, as absent in body but present in spirit, have * judged already as though

^a Eph. 5. 3. Lev. 18. 8. Deut. 22. 30. & 27. 20. ^b Ch. 4. 8, 18. Lev. 20. 11. 2 Cor. 7. 10. & 12. 21. Gal. 5. 10, 12. ^c Col. 2. 5. ver. 5. 1 Kin. 5. 26. ^{*} Or determined.

to guard against, what is much more dangerous,—the treachery of their own hearts, and the flattery of self-love; lest they fondly mistake the voice of prejudice, for that of conscience; or, in other words, the voice of an erroneous conscience, for that of a conscience well informed, ver. 4.

May we often recollect the narrow limits of our own knowledge, that so we may learn modesty in our censures of each other, ver. 5. &c. *He only can judge who knoweth the heart*;—and there is a day approaching which will *manifest all its secrets*. While others therefore, with a pitiable mixture of arrogance and ignorance, *judge one another, and judge us*: let us rather be concerned to seek that praise of God, which will be held and felt by the soul with the highest rapture, and will silence every echo of human censure, or human applause.

If it has pleased God in any respect *to distinguish us* from others, by the gifts and graces which he has bestowed upon us, let us humbly trace these distinctions to their true source; and instead of indulging the least degree of pride on their account, let us rather be the more humble: for surely the more we receive from God, the more we are indebted and obliged; and the more we are obliged to the divine goodness, the greater ought our shame and confusion to be, that we have not answered those obligations by more faithful care, and more constant gratitude.

How adorable is the efficacy of divine grace, which bore the zealous and faithful servants of Christ through all their labours and fatigues, when they were made *a spectacle to the world, to angels and men!* ver. 9. How glorious a spectacle! worthy surely, as any thing since that wonderful scene on Calvary, of the eye of God himself.

How little are we to judge of the divine favour by external circumstances, when those best of men were *of all others the most miserable*, farther than as their heavenly hope supported and animated them!—But when that is taken into the account, who would not almost envy their lot, though *hungry and thirsty, though naked and destitute, without habitation, without protection, without friends?* ver. 11—13.—When we consider their share in the divine friendship; when we contemplate the blessed effects of their labours, and the glorious crown which awaits them after all their sufferings, surely they must appear happy in proportion to the degree in which they seemed miserable, and glorious in proportion to the degree in which the world held them infamous!

That illustrious person, whose Epistles are now before us, knew not the pleasures of domestic life in many of its most endearing relations: but God made him a *spiritual*

father to multitudes; and no doubt, as he urges the consideration upon his children in Christ, he felt the joy arising from it strong in his own soul, when he said, (ver. 15.) *I have begotten you in Christ Jesus through the Gospel*. Surely it ought never to have been forgotten by them; and if, through the artifice of ill-designing men, and the remaining infirmities of their own character, it was sometimes or in some degree forgotten; yet, undoubtedly, it will be remembered by those of them who are saved, in the heavenly world for ever. And if there be any remembrance there that they once grieved him, it will be an engagement to all those offices of eternal friendship, which the exaltation of the heavenly state shall allow.

In the mean time, his paternal affection for them, wrought not in a foolish fondness of indulgence, which, in the language of divine wisdom, is *hating a son*; but in the character of a prudent and faithful parent, who, desirous that his children may be as wise and good as possible, will rather use the *rod* than suffer them to be undone, ver. 21. Yet when he speaks of using it, he speaks with regret, as one who would rather choose to act in the *spirit of gentleness*, and without any mixture of severity. The whole of his subsequent conduct to the *Corinthians*, as far as it may be learned from this or the following Epistle, bears a perfect consistency with these expressions, and illustrates the sincerity of them.

May God give to his *ministers* more of this truly apostolical spirit, more of those overflowings of holy love, attempering and attempered by that ardent zeal against sin, that firm resolution in the discharge of duty, which shone so brightly in the Apostle, and in which he so freely and justly *recommends himself* to the imitation of his children and brethren!

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Apostle,

1. States the true character of Gospel ministers, and the esteem in which they should be held. *Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, (υπηρέται,) servants, under-rowers of the vessel where Christ is the pilot, and labouring with all their might to bring it to the haven of eternal rest; and stewards of the mysteries of God, dispensing to the household of faith the rich provision made in the Gospel-word for their nourishment and growth in grace. Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful, true to the trust committed to them, and zealous for their Master's interest and honour.*

2. Whatever they might think of him, he could appeal to God for his own simplicity and godly sincerity. *But,* though

I were present, *concerning* him that hath so done t: is deed;

4^d In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit,

^d Mat. 16. 19. & 18. 18. & 28. 18. John, 20. 23. 2 Cor. 2. 10.

though some among you in the spirit of party are crying up one minister and censuring another, *with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment*; though I am desirous, for the honour of Christ and the success of my ministry, to vindicate my integrity before men, yet their censures are comparatively insignificant: the approbation of the Lord, in the great day, is my important concern. *Yea, I judge not mine own self; for though I know nothing by myself, nor am at all conscious of allowed guile or unfaithfulness, yet am I not hereby justified, I would not on any consideration rest my justification before God on the footing of my own sincere obedience: but, living upon his grace, and enabled to appeal to him for my simplicity, I wait the great decisive day, knowing that he that judgeth me is the Lord, to whose Blood I have fled for acceptance, and by whose grace I am what I am.* *Note*; (1.) It is a comfort to us, that men, even the best of men, are not our judges. (2.) Though we maintain a becoming care about our character before men, our great concern must be to approve ourselves to God; and where we are conscious that this is our desire and labour, then we may sit loose to every malevolent censure. (3.) The fidelity of a steward, and the diligent labours of a servant, characterize the real minister of the Gospel.

3. He warns them against hasty judgment. *Therefore judge nothing before the time, suspend every rash censure until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts,* when every man's principles, as well as practices, will be laid naked and open: *and then shall every man, who shall be found faithful, have praise of God, and be acknowledged and commended by the great Judge of all.* *Note*; (1.) The prospect of a judgment-day should make us careful how we dare judge others. They shall then have judgment without mercy, who shewed no mercy. (2.) However sin be now concealed, and false principles put on the most specious appearances, the cheat cannot be long undiscovered: the day is near, when the secrets of all hearts shall be made known. (3.) They who can now approve themselves to their Lord, however reviled or maligned, shall shortly, if faithful, be owned by the eternal Judge.

4. To avoid every offence, he tells them, *These things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes, choosing to make use of his own name, and that of Apollos, rather than to apply the matter to any of those who headed parties among them, which might but exasperate.* And I do this *that ye might learn in us, who, though chief in labours among you, disclaim all authority over your consciences, not to think of men above that which is written, setting them up as the lords of your faith, and implicitly following their opinions; and that no one of you be puffed up for one against another, exalting the character of one minister upon the ruins of another; but giving God the glory of the various gifts which he has bestowed on different men, and thankful for the benefit of their ministry.*

2dly, As they were puffed up with a high conceit of themselves; and their unreasonable partiality for one minister above another arose from an opinion of their own superior taste and judgment, the Apostle rebukes this unchristian spirit.

1. He reminds them that all they possessed was of God's mere grace. *For who maketh thee to differ from another, admitting your attainments may be singular? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive from above as a matter of favour? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* and as if it was not owing to his grace, but to your own desert? a claim how insolent, ungrateful, nay, impious! *Note*; All good cometh from above, and God must have the glory of his own work: it is the worst of sacrilege to plume ourselves on, and be proud of, the gifts or graces which he bestows.

2. He ironically reproves their vain imaginations of their own excellence. *Now ye are full, now ye are rich, abounding in worldly wealth, high in spiritual gifts, and flattering yourselves with the apprehension of your exalted attainments in grace; ye have reigned as kings without us, priding yourselves as if you had attained the summit of prosperity, without any obligations to us, or any assistance of ours who first preached the Gospel unto you: and I would to God ye did reign; far from envying you, I should be happy in your advancement, and with for nothing more earnestly than that you really were as great and excellent as the glafs of self-deceit represents you to be; that we also might reign with you, rejoicing in your attainments, and partaking of your glory as the instruments who contributed so greatly to your conversion and edification; whom you would then honour and respect, instead of adding to our troubles by your unbecoming conduct and ingratitude.* *For I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles, who were last called to the ministry of the word, (see the Annotations) as it were appointed to death, ordained to suffer peculiar afflictions, and every day exposed to danger and death: for we are, as public criminals who are exposed to beasts in the theatres, and devoted to destruction, made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men, exposed to every ignominy, reproach, and suffering from the world which lieth in wickedness; whilst angels and good men admire our constancy, and pity our sufferings, and devils and wicked men insult, revile, and persecute us.* But while we are counted *fools for Christ's sake*, thus to expose ourselves for the sake of our crucified Master, and for our preaching the doctrines of the Cross, which the world counts foolishness; *ye are wise in Christ*, and, varnishing over the offensive truths of the Gospel, value yourselves on your wisdom and prudence in escaping that cross under which we groan: *we are weak*, oppressed with sorrows and sufferings till our strength is ready to fail; *but ye are strong*, and know none of our tribulations to harass you: *ye are honourable*, and maintain a respectable character in the world, and with lukewarm professors of Christianity; *but we are despised* for our fidelity, which draws upon us the reproaches

with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,
5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for

the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may
be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus.

Tim. 1. 20. 2 Cor. 2. 7. & 10. 6, 8. & 13. 9. ver. 7, 13.

reproaches and persecutions under which we appear so contemptible. While you enjoy ease and affluence, *even unto this present hour, we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place, like our Master, without a settled abode to lay our head; and labour, working with our own hands, for that maintenance, which, for the Gospel's sake, we rather choose to earn with the sweat of our brow, than demand of you: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it patiently; being defamed, we intreat, return no opprobrious language, but mildly remonstrate, and humbly beg a hearing: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day, treated as the vilest milcreants, and as wretches chosen from the dregs of the people, who, being regarded by the heathen as the authors of all their public calamities, are offered in sacrifice to appease the wrath of their supposed offended deities.* Note: (1.) Many dangerously mistake, who judge of themselves by their gifts. It is not great knowledge, but great grace, which constitutes the eminent Christian. (2.) They who will be faithful in the ministry, should count the cost, and go forth with a readiness to suffer, if need be, the loss of all things. (3.) Nothing can serve to shew the character of the blessed Paul in a more distinguished light, than the account which he here gives of himself. May we learn to copy his disinterested zeal, and bear our sufferings with the like meekness and unshaken fidelity!

3dly, The Apostle, with singular address,

1. Insinuates the kind intentions that he had in this discourse. *I write not these things to shame or upbraid you, but as a father, tenderly concerned for my beloved sons, I warn you to beware of a conduct that is so unbecoming you, which must in the issue prove so much to your dishonour, and which it is highly incumbent on you to observe, lament, and amend. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, who help to build you up in the faith, yet have ye not many fathers, to whose ministry ye were indebted for being called to the knowledge of the truth: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel; he using my instrumentality, and sending me first among you to preach his great salvation; and the most of you, through his grace, by my ministry, have been called to the knowledge of the truth, and faith in him; and therefore I have a peculiar title to your esteem and regard. Wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me as dear children, not led away by those who would pervert you from the simplicity of the Gospel, and steal your affections from me that you might idolize them. Remember my example, and, as far as I appeared to imitate my divine Master, copy after the pattern.* Note: (1.) Those rebukes will be most effectual, where kindness gives weight to the admonition. (2.) They who have been our spiritual fathers, have a title to our peculiar affection. (3.) Every minister, by his example, should adorn the doctrine which he preaches, that he may with some humble confidence be able to say, "Be ye followers of me."

2. He tells them what were his kind intentions in sending the bearer of this Epistle. *For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, to second this letter by his exhortations and ministry, who is my beloved son, begotten in the Gospel, and dear to me as a child; and faithful in the Lord, proved to be so by long experience; who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church, preaching the same doctrine, and walking in the same steps.* Note: (1.) The great doctrines of the Gospel can admit of no change: like their Author, they are the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. (2.) All faithful ministers of Christ bring the same message, walk after the same rule, and mind the same things. Novelty is a proof of error.

3. He assures them of his intention to visit them himself, notwithstanding the insinuations of some of their false teachers. *Now some are puffed up as though I would not come to you, as if I was ashamed or afraid personally to meet them; and perhaps may make the sending of Timothy an argument to support their suggestions: but I will come to you shortly, it is my firm determination so to do, if the Lord will, in whose hands are all our ways; and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power, examining into their credentials, and not to be deluded by the glare of their eloquence or learning; but inquiring what power accompanies their ministrations, and what efficacy their discourses have on the hearts of the hearers. For the kingdom of God is not in word; the church of the Redeemer is neither erected nor supported by human wisdom, nor does mere profession constitute the Christian character; but it stands in the power of God: not by man's eloquence, but through the preaching of the Cross, made effectual through the Spirit's energy, is this kingdom set up and maintained in the hearts of believers.*

4. He concludes with an authoritative question: *What will ye? How would you choose I should visit you? Shall I come unto you with a rod, according to my apostolic power, severely to chastise those offenders and disturbers of your peace? This would be my grief as well as yours; or shall I come to you, as I desire to do, in love, and in the spirit of meekness? Rejoicing to find a thorough reformation of whatever has been amiss, forgetting what is past, and affectionately embracing you as my dear children.* Note: (1.) Obstinate offenders call for the rod; and though it be painful, parents, masters, ministers, must not spare. (2.) Love and meekness are the ornaments of the Christian character, and in these the preachers of the Gospel should excel.

CHAP. V.

THE messengers from Corinth, as well as the members of the family of Chloe, had informed the Apostle, that one of the brethren was cohabiting with his father's wife, in his father's lifetime. In this chapter therefore, St. Paul reproved the whole Corinthian church, for tolerating a species of fornication, which was abhorred even by the heathens,

6 ^f Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that ^g a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

7 ^h Purge out therefore the old leaven, that

^f Ch. 3. 21. & 4. 18, 19. Jam. 4. 16. 15. & 13. 6, 7.

^g Gal. 5. 9. Ch. 15. 33. 2 Tim. 2. 17.

^h Ver. 5, 13. Eph. 4. 22 Col. 3. 5, 9, 10. Exod. 12.

heathens, ver. 1.—And this scandal was the greater, that they were puffed up with pride, on account of the knowledge and learning of the teacher by whose influence it was tolerated, ver. 2.—But to make the Corinthians sensible, that their boasting of a teacher who had patronized such an enormity, was criminal, as well as to correct the enormity itself, the Apostle ordered them forthwith, in a public assembly of the church called for the purpose, to deliver the offender to Satan, for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit being reformed, he might be saved in the day of the Lord, ver. 3, 4, 5.—Then he shewed them the necessity of cutting off the incestuous person, by comparing vice unpunished to leaven, on account of its contagious nature in corrupting a whole society, ver. 6.—And because this was written a little before the passover, when the Jews put away all leaven out of their houses as the symbol of corruption or wickedness, the Apostle desired the Corinthians to cleanse out the old leaven of lewdness, by casting the incestuous person out of the church: for, said he, Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. Also he exhorted them to keep the feast of the Lord's supper, which was instituted in commemoration of Christ's being sacrificed for us, and which was to be celebrated by them, not with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, ver. 7, 8.

Left however the Corinthians might have understood the Apostle's command to excommunicate the incestuous person, and to cleanse out the old leaven, as an order not to have any communication with the unconverted heathens, he told them, that was not his meaning; since in that case they must have gone out of the world, ver. 9, 10.—And to make his meaning plain, he now wrote more explicitly, that if any person who professed himself a christian, was a known fornicator, &c. they were to punish him by keeping no company with him, ver. 11.—This distinction in the treatment of heathen and Christian sinners, the Apostle shewed them was reasonable, from the consideration, that church censures are not to be inflicted on persons who are without, but on them who are within the church, ver. 12.—And therefore, while they left it to God to judge and punish the wicked heathens, it was their duty to put away the incestuous person from among themselves, and to leave the woman with whom he lived, to the judgment of God, because she was a heathen, ver. 13.

The Apostle's order to the Corinthians, to keep no company with wicked persons, though seemingly severe, was in the true spirit of the gospel. For the laws of Christ do not, like the laws of men, correct offenders by fines and imprisonments, and corporal punishments, or outward violence of any kind, but by earnest and affectionate representations, admonitions, and reproofs, addressed to their reason and conscience, to make them through grace sensible of their fault, and to induce them to amend. If this remedy proves ineffectual, their fellow-christians are to shew their disapprobation of their evil courses, by carefully

avoiding their company. So Christ has ordered, Matt. xviii. 15, 16, 17. *Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.—16. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.—17. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican.* Earnest representation, therefore, from the injured party, followed by grave admonition and reproof from the ministers of religion, when the injured party's representation is ineffectual, are means which Christ has appointed for reclaiming an offender. But if these moral and religious means prove ineffectual, Christ has ordered the society of which the offender is a member, to shun his company and conversation, that he may be ashamed, and that others may be preserved from the contagion of his example. This last remedy will be used with the greatest effect, if the resolution of the society, to have no intercourse with the offender, especially in religious matters, is openly declared by a sentence deliberately and solemnly pronounced in a public assembly, (as in the case of the incestuous Corinthian,) and is steadily carried into execution.

The wholesome discipline which Christ instituted in his church at the beginning, was rigorously and impartially exercised by the primitive christians, towards their offending brethren, and with the happiest success, in preserving purity of manners among themselves. In modern times, however, this salutary discipline has been much neglected in the church; but it has been taken up by gaming clubs, who exclude from their society all who refuse to pay their game debts, and shun their company on all occasions, as persons absolutely infamous. By this sort of excommunication, and by giving to game debts the appellation of *debts of honour*, the winners on the one hand, without the help of law, and even in contradiction to it, have rendered their unjust claims effectual; while the losers, on the other, are reduced to the necessity, either of paying, or of being shunned by their companions as infamous.—I mention this as an example, to shew what a powerful influence the approbation or disapprobation of those with whom mankind associate, have upon their conduct; and from that consideration, to excite the friends of religion to support her against the attempts of the wicked, by testifying on every fit occasion, their disapprobation of vice, and their contempt of its abettors; and more especially by shunning the company and conversation of the openly profane, however dignified their station in life, or however great their fortune may be.

Another means which St. Paul makes use of to bring off the Corinthians from their false apostle, and to stop their veneration of him and their glorying in him, is by representing to them the fault and disorder which was committed in that church, by not judging and expelling the fornicator; which

ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover * is sacrificed for us: 8 Therefore let us keep † the feast, † not

with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

* Exod. 11. 5, 6. Deut. 16. 2. 1f. 53. 7, 10. John, 1. 29, 35. Acts, 8. 12, 35. Ch. 15. 3, 4. 1 Pet. 1. 19, 20. Rev. 5. 6, 9. † Or *loſt-day*. † Exod. xii. Deut. xvi. Lev. 23. 6. Jam. 1. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 3, 2.

which neglect, as may be guessed, was owing to that faction. 1. Because it is natural for a faction to support and protect an offender that is of their side. 2. From the great fear St. Paul was in, whether they would obey him in censuring the offender, as appears by the second Epistle; which he could not fear but from the opposite faction, they who had preserved their respect to him being sure to follow his orders. 3. From what he says, ch. iv. 16. after he had told them, ver. 6. of that chapter, that they should not be puffed up for any other against him, for so the whole scope of his discourse here imports, he beseeches them to be his followers, that is to say, leaving their other guides, to follow him in punishing the offender. For that, we may conclude, from his immediately insisting on it so earnestly, he had in his view, when he besought them to be followers of him: and consequently, that they might join with him, and take him for their leader, ch. v. 3, 4. he makes himself by his spirit, as his proxy, the president of their assembly, to be convened for the punishing of that criminal. 4. It may further be suspected from what St. Paul says, ch. vi. 1. that the opposite party, to stop the church censure, pretended that this was a matter to be judged by the civil magistrate: nay, possibly, from what is said ver. 6. of that chapter, it may be gathered, that they had got it brought before the heathen judge, or at least from ver. 12. that they pleaded that what he had done was lawful, and might be justified before the magistrate: for the judging spoken of ch. vi. must be understood to relate to the same matter which it does ch. v., it being a continuation of the same discourse and argument; as is easy to be observed by any one who will read it without regarding the divisions into chapters and verses, whereby unlearned people (not to say others) are often disturbed in reading the Holy Scripture, and hindered from observing the true sense and coherence of it; though it must be granted that these divisions are of considerable use. The whole 6th chapter is spent in prosecuting the business of the fornicator, begun in the 5th. That this is so, is evident from the latter end, as well as beginning of the 6th chapter: and therefore, what St. Paul says of *lawful*, ch. vi. 12. may without any violence be supposed to be said in answer to some, who might have alleged in favour of the fornicator, that what he had done was *lawful*, and might be justified by the laws of the country which he was under: why else should St. Paul subjoin so many arguments (wherewith he concludes the 6th chapter, and the subject) to prove the fornication in question to be, by the laws of the Gospel, an enormous sin? See ch. v. 1. to vi. 20. and Locke.

Ver. 1. *It is reported commonly*] Whoever reads attentively 2 Cor. i. 20.—ii. 11. will easily perceive that the last verse of the preceding chapter is an introduction to the just act of discipline which St. Paul was going to exercise among them, though absent, as if he had been present; and therefore that verse ought properly to begin the

present chapter. The writers of the New Testament seem to use the Greek word *πορνεία*, which we translate *fornication*, in the same sense that the Hebrews do *זבנות*, *zabut*, which we also translate by the same word; though it is certain both these words in Sacred Scripture have a larger sense; for *zabut* among the Hebrews, signified *unclean-ness*, or any flagitious scandalous crime. That the intermarrying of a son-in-law and a mother-in-law was not prohibited by the laws of the Roman empire, may be seen in Tully; but yet it was looked on as so scandalous and infamous, that it had never any countenance from practice. Tully's words in his oration, *Pro Cluentio*, are strikingly agreeable to the present case, "Nubit genero focrus nullis hospitiis, nullis auctoribus, O scelus incredibile, et præter hanc unam, in omni vita inauditum!" Dr. Whitby thinks that the scandalous stories which were generally told among the heathens of the incestuous practices of the primitive Christians, had their original from the misrepresentation of the fact mentioned in this verse. So fatal is the allowance of open sin in any church which pleads for experimental religion. See Acts, xv. 19, &c. Locke, Hammond, Whitby, and Grotius *de Jure B. et P.* lib. ii. c. 5.

Ver. 2. *And ye are puffed up, &c.*] *And yet ye are elated, instead of mourning, as ye ought to do, in order to the expulsion of him who hath committed this.* At that time the church used public humiliations, with fasting and tears, when they passed a sentence of excommunication. Heylin.

Ver. 3. *But present in spirit*] Some think this refers to an extraordinary gift which St. Paul had of discerning clearly and circumstantially what was done at a distance. Comp. Coloss. ii. 5. 2. Kings, v. 26. and Dr. Benson's Hist. vol. ii. p. 16.

Ver. 4, 5. *In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*] *That ye, being gathered together in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, ver. 5. do deliver such a one to Satan, &c.* Some think, that as Satan is considered as the head of all who are not under Christ, as their head, (that is, in the church of Christ) every one who was cut off from the church must of course be *delivered over to Satan*; but it seems much more reasonable to believe, that this refers to the infliction of some *bodily pains* or diseases, in which Satan might act as the instrument of divine justice. Comp. 1 Tim. i. 20. And this was *for the destruction of the flesh*; probably for the emaciating and enfeebling of the powers of animal nature;—"That his body may be afflicted and brought down, and thus through divine grace the man led to true repentance and humiliation, that so his soul may be saved in the last day." See Doddridge, Locke, and Erasmus.

Ver. 6. *Your glorying is not good*] Some would read this interrogatively,—*Have you not a fine subject for boasting?*—*Glorying* or *boasting* is throughout the beginning of this Epistle spoken of the preference they gave to their new leader,

D d

leader,

9 I wrote unto you in an epistle¹ not to company with fornicators :

10^m Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters ; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

11 But now I have written unto youⁿ not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or

an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner ; with such an one no not to eat.

12 For what have I to do to judge^o them also that are without ? do not ye judge^p them that are within ?

13 But them that are without^q God judgeth. Therefore^r put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

¹ Rom. 16. 27. Eph. 5. 7, 11. ² Thes. 3. 6. 12. ³ Cor. 6. 14. ver. 2. 7, 13. Pl. 1. 1. ^m Ch. 10. 27, & 12. 2. Eph. 2. 3. & 4. 17. ¹ Pet. 4. 7. ² John, c. 19. John, 17. 15. ⁿ Pl. 10. 5. Mat. 18. 17. Rom. 10. 17. ² Thes. 3. 6, 14. ² John, 10. ^o Mark, 4. 11. ¹ Thes. 4. 12. ¹ Tim. 3. 7. Col. 4. 5. ^p Ch. 6. 2—4. Heb. 3. 1. ^q Ex. d. 20. 7. Heb. 13. 4. ^r Deut. 15. 7. & 17. 7. & 21. 21. & 22. 21—24. Num. 5. 2.

leader, in opposition to St. Paul. See Locke, and 2 Cor. xii.

Ver. 7. Purge out therefore the old leaven] The Apostle continues the figure from unleavened bread, ver. 6. with a particular view to the Jewish passover, in which it was forbidden. “As therefore it was the manner of the Jews “at their passover, especially on the day of preparation, to “search diligently if the least morsel of leavened bread “were left in their houses, and carefully to remove it all, “—in like manner do you also put away this incestuous “person, and every other contagious evil ; commencing a “people pure and incorrupt, in order to your due celebration of the Christian passover ;—for even Christ our “passover is sacrificed for us. We have a festival to keep, “as well as the Jews ; a paschal Lamb was slain and sacrificed for our redemption, of which the lamb offered “under the law for the deliverance from Egypt was but “a type ; and their flight out of that house of bondage “was but a typical representation of our hastening out of “the more cruel bondage of sin.” It is probable that this Epistle was written near the festival of Easter : see ch. xvi. 8. where the Apostle says he shall stay at Ephesus, where he then was, till Pentecost. See Bp. Lavington’s Sermon, “On the nature and use of a type,” Ridley’s Sermons on the Christian Passover, and Heylin.

Ver. 9. I wrote, &c.] I have written unto you in an [this] Epistle. Instead of *fornicators*, in this and the following verses, some very properly render the original word *πορνῶν*, by *lewd persons*, as it is plain the Apostle intended the word should be taken in that extent ; his argument concluding yet more strongly against some other species of lewdness, than against what is called simple fornication, detestable as that is. See on ver. 1.

Ver. 12. For what have I to do, &c.] Have I any thing to do to judge those which are without ? No, judge ye them that are within ; ver. 13. (But those that are without God judgeth) and ye shall take away THE EVIL from among you. See Deut. xiii. 5. xvii. 7. In the words *those that are without*, Dr. Whitby thinks there is an oblique reference to the *mother-in-law* of the incestuous person, who was a *heathen* ; which, from the Apostle’s giving no direction concerning her, is not improbable. However, the views of the Apostle in this clause, if they took in this particular, seem to have been still more extensive. “Those who are without the pale of “the Christian church, God judgeth ; and he will find a

“way sooner or later, to testify his awful displeasure “against them, for crimes which they have committed “against the law of nature, (or rather the law of grace) “and that acquaintance with it, which he knows they “actually had or might have attained through the secret “influences of the Spirit of God.”

Inferences.—This chapter contains a very important doctrine,—the necessity of discipline in the church, and especially that part of discipline which consists of excommunication. St. Paul reproveth the Corinthians for not removing the incestuous person from among them ; which teaches us, that when persons who call themselves *Christians*, fall into sins which dishonour the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, the whole church ought to mourn for it, and should not suffer those persons to remain in her communion, but chase from it such as are its reproach and scandal.

St. Paul most expressly declares, that we ought not to acknowledge for brethren, for Christians, the unclean, unjust, slanderous, drunkards, or other scandalous or avowed sinners ; nor to have any familiar dealings with them. This is the law of Christ ; this is what the Apostles have commanded in his name ; this is the rule appointed by them in all churches, for the honour of the Christian religion, and the saving of the sinners themselves, as well as to prevent their evil examples from corrupting other members of the church ; and this is what the first Christians religiously practised : on which account, we are forced to own that the church is not now governed as it ought to be, since this kind of excommunication is exercised hardly any where, except in some peculiar societies. Nevertheless, the duty of all true Christians is, to avoid as far as possible all correspondence with wicked men, and to distinguish themselves from them by a holy and exemplary life ; nor should we ever vainly imagine, that being joined in communion with a Christian church, can excuse the guilt of immoral and scandalous practices, for which the wrath of God comes even upon the children of disobedience among the heathen.

God will have his time to judge them that are without ; and not only “Christians at large,” as some may fondly, and perhaps profanely, be ready to call themselves, but Mahometans and Pagans too will find articles like these sitting upon their souls with a dreadful weight ; and, if sincere repentance do not make way for pardon, plunging them

CHAP. VI.

The Corinthians must not vex their brethren, in going to law with them, especially before infidels. The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Our bodies are the members of Christ, and temples of the Holy Ghost: they must not therefore be defiled.

[Anno Domini 57.]

DARE any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and, if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life.

4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, let them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

* Neh. 5. 9. ver. 6. * Pf. 49. 14. Dan. 7. 18. Mat. 19. 28. Luke, 22. 30. Rev. 2. 26. & 5. 10. & 20. 4. * 2 Pet. 2. 4. Jude, 6. Ret. 20. 10.

them into the lowest abyss of misery;—into a state of everlasting separation from the blessed God, and all his holy and acceptable servants.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Apostle, after reproving their party disputes, passes on to other gross offences which subsisted among them.

1. A most gross and scandalous crime had been committed by one of the members of the church; that he should have his father's wife, (see the Annotations;) a species of fornication abominable even in the eyes of civilized heathens, and bringing the greatest reproach on their profession as Christians.

2. What had been one man's sin in the commission, had become the sin of the whole by their connivance. *Ye are puffed up.* Perhaps, their outward prosperity made them negligent of inward purity among the members of the church; and therefore, without mourning over such a scandalous offender, and casting him out of the church, as they ought to have done, he still continued to assemble with them, and they countenanced him in his wickedness. *Note;* (1.) In the most flourishing churches corruptions have crept in. (2.) A Christian's heart mourns over the offences of his brethren, and cannot but sensibly feel the wounds given thereby to the Redeemer's cause.

3. The Apostle pronounces sentence upon this incestuous Corinthian, and enjoins them to put it in force against him by an immediate excommunication. *I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, having my heart ever solicitous for your welfare, and knowing by revelation the true state of this case, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, that he be without delay cast out from among you. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together to consult on this affair; and my Spirit is among you with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has left this authority to his church for the maintenance of holy discipline among the professing members of it; I have determined that you are in duty bound to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, expelling him from the society of the faithful, and delivering him back into the world that lieth under the dominion of the wicked one. And perhaps some signal mark of wrath was suffered to be inflicted upon his body, that, thus exposed to shame and suffering, he might yet perhaps be brought to repentance, and that the spirit*

may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Note; It is as necessary for the backslider as it is for the glory of God, that he should smart for his unfaithfulness: such chastisement is for his salvation, not destruction.

4. He exhorts them to purge out the leaven of wickedness from among them. *Your glorying is not good, it is peculiarly unseasonable and strange, when such offences are committed among you with impunity: know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?* And that in like manner corrupt principles and practices, connived at in the least measure, may soon spread, and communicate universal infection to the church. *Purge out therefore the old leaven, search out and remove all scandalous persons from among you, as carefully as the Jews examine their houses before the passover, that ye may be in reality a new lump as ye are in profession unleavened, in simplicity and truth devoted to the Lord Jesus as his peculiar people, and departing from all iniquity as the evidence that you belong to him. Note;* (1.) The beginnings of evil are to be watched against and checked, lest, like the spreading mortification, the whole body become infected. (2.) They who are Christ's are new creatures. If we say we abide in him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.

5. He urges his exhortation by the strongest argument. *For even Christ our passover, who was signified by the paschal Lamb, is sacrificed for us, that he might cleanse us from all iniquity, this being one great end of his death. Therefore let us keep the feast which he hath instituted instead of the paschal supper, not with old leaven, admitting profane and scandalous offenders to the table of the Lord; neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, not harbouring allowed sin, or living under the power of corruption, defiled in body, or soured with pride and party disputes; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, with real attachment of heart to the Saviour, and unfeigned love to the brethren. Note;* (1.) The sacrifice of Christ, which we commemorate, should be a rich feast to our souls; since thereby every blessing in time and eternity is prepared for the faithful. (2.) They who approach the Lord's table, should examine themselves, whether their old leaven be purged out, and their hearts in simplicity brought to the spirit and temper of the Gospel.

2dly, Some conceive that the Apostle refers in ver. 9. to a former Epistle which he had written, to the Corinthians; others, to one he was writing when he heard from

5 I speak to your shame. Is it so that there that shall be able to judge between his brethren? no, not one

them, and began a new letter in answer to them; though perhaps what he speaks, may have only respect to what he had said before in this same Epistle. *I wrote unto you in an Epistle, not to company with fornicators; to be separate from all familiar intercourse with those who bring such reproach on the Christian name. Yet my intention is not that you should be altogether secluded from the world, and refuse all civil intercourse with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world, so few would be left with whom to have any commerce in such an evil world as this is. But now I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one, no not to eat; not only he should be excluded from eating bread with you at the Lord's table, but even all intercourse and connection with him should be cut off, and he should be shunned and avoided by you more than even the heathen themselves; that, being put to shame, he may yet be brought to repentance, and restored to the bosom of the church. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? As they make no profession of Christianity, they lie under none of our censures; and in civil affairs, as duty calls, may lawfully be conversed with: but do not ye judge them that are within? The professing members of the church come under your jurisdiction, and are, when they answer any of the before-mentioned characters, to be treated with this peculiar distance. But them that are without, who are open offenders, and live carelessly after the fashion of the world, God judgeth; to whose judgment they must be left. Therefore, since your power extends over your own community, put away from yourselves that wicked person.*

C H A P. VI.

THE Corinthians since their conversion had sued each other, as formcry, in the heathen courts of judicature about worldly matters, often of small importance. This practice was the more blameable, as the Christians, who in the first age were not distinguished from the Jews, might as Jews, according to the law of the empire, have held courts of judicature of their own, for determining most of the controversies about worldly matters which arose among themselves. Wherefore, by declining the decisions of their brethren, and by bringing their causes into the heathen courts, they shewed that they had but a mean opinion of the knowledge and integrity of their brethren. Besides, the frequency of their suits led the heathens, before whom they were brought, to think the Christians not only litigious, but disposed to injure one another. These things, of which the Apostle was informed, bringing great dishonour on the Christian name, he rebuked the Corinthians severely, for daring to go to law with one another before the heathens, and not before the saints, ver. 1.—Know ye not, said he, that *the saints shall judge the world, yea, angels? And why may they not judge in things pertaining to this life? ver. 2—4.—I speak it to your shame, that in your opinion, there is not so much as one wise man among you,*

who is fit to judge between his brethren; but brother carrieth his brother into the heathen courts, as if he expected more justice from heathens than from Christians, ver. 5, 6.—Now it is utterly wrong in you to have any law-suits at all in the heathen courts. Ye had much better suffer yourselves to be injured and defrauded, in small matters, than go to law before unbelievers, since the seeking of redress in that manner will be attended with more trouble and loss than if ye bear the injury patiently, ver. 7.—Next, because many of the other parties, by suffering themselves to be sued in the heathen courts, had shewn a disposition to defraud their brethren, the Apostle denounced the judgment of God against all unrighteous persons whatever: and mentioned particularly, fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, pathics, sodomites, thieves, and others, solemnly declaring that they shall be excluded from the kingdom of God, ver. 8, 9, 10.—And such, said he, were some of you before your conversion to Christianity, ver. 11.

The false teacher, it seems, with a view to gain the favour of the Greeks, had taught that luxury and fornication were allowed under the Gospel; and had supported that doctrine by the common arguments with which sensualists in all ages and countries defend their debauched manners. Wherefore, to prevent the unthinking from being seduced by these arguments, the Apostle, with great propriety, confuted them in his Epistle to the Corinthians, because, of all the Greeks, the inhabitants of Corinth were the most debauched; and because many of them who had embraced Christianity, had not yet acquired a just sense of the obligations to purity, laid on them by the Gospel. It is true, the Apostle, according to his manner, has not stated these arguments explicitly. Nevertheless, from the things which he has written in confutation of them, we learn that they related to the pleasures of the table, and the other pleasures of sense.—To the argument, concerning the luxuries of the table, the Apostle replied, that although all meats and drinks are made for men's use, and are in themselves lawful, the luxurious use of them is criminal. Many kinds of nice meats and drinks, even when used in moderation, may be prejudicial to a man's health; and may not be suitable to his income and station. Besides, the love of the pleasures of the table always creates habits injurious to the luxurious themselves in soul and body, and troublesome to the persons with whom they are connected, ver. 12.—To the argument implied, that the belly is made for eating and drinking, the Apostle answered, that both the belly, and the meats by which it is gratified, are to be destroyed: they are to have no place in the future life of the body. From which it follows, that to place our happiness in enjoyments which are confined to the present short state of our existence, while we neglect pleasures which may be enjoyed through eternity, is extremely foolish, ver. 13.—To the implied argument, whereby the licentious justify their indulgence in the other criminal pleasures of sense, the Apostle answered, by flatly denying it. The body was not made for fornication, but for the service of the Lord Christ, who will raise up,

6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.

7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong?

why do ye not rather *suffer yourselves* to be defrauded?

8 Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that *your* brethren.

9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall

⁴ Prov. 20. 12. Mat. 5. 39. Luke, 6. 26. Rom. 12. 17, 19. 1 Thes. 4. 6. & 5. 13. 1 Pet. 3. 9. ⁶ Ch. 5. 11. Gal. 5. 19—21. Eph. 5. 3—5. Col. 3. 5, 6. 1 Thes. 4. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 9, 10. Heb. 12. 14. & 13. 4. Rev. 21. 8. & 22. 15. 11. 3. 11. Mat. 23. 33.

up the bodies of the faithful at the last day fitly formed for his own service, ver. 14.—To another argument implied, that the lusts of the flesh may be gratified without injury to others, the Apostle replied, first, that great injury is done to Christ, when the members of our body, which are his members, are made the members of a harlot, ver. 15.—Secondly, by fornication, a man injures his own soul. For he becomes one person with his whore; he acquires the same vicious inclinations, and the same vicious manners with her: Nay, he makes himself her slave, ver. 16.—Whereas he who is joined to the Lord, *is one spirit*. He acquires the dispositions and manners of Christ, and is directed by him, ver. 17.—In the third place, he who commits fornication, sins against his own body, as well as against his soul, ver. 18.—Lastly, by gluttony, drunkenness, and fornication, great injury is done to the Spirit of God, whose temple our body is, or should be; we injure that ever-blessed God, to whom we belong, not only by the right of creation, but the right of redemption. We should therefore glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are his, by making that holy and honourable use of our body, which he has prescribed, ver. 19, 20.

Ver. 1. *Before the unjust, and not before the saints*] The heathen judges, as St. Paul here in effect declares, were generally unjust; Christians at that time were generally good, righteous, and holy men: there might be exceptions on each side; but the Apostle's argument turns on what might commonly be supposed: the *saints* who are to judge angels, and not merely professing Christians. See Locke, Doddridge, and Whitby.

Ver. 3. *Knew ye not that we shall judge angels?*] “Even the fallen angels themselves, who, notwithstanding all their malignity and pride, shall be brought to that tribunal, at which you, having gloriously passed your own trial, shall be seated with Christ, your victorious Lord; when by his righteous sentence he shall send these rebellious spirits to that flaming prison, which divine justice hath prepared for them?” Had the Apostle, as Dr. Whitby and others suppose, referred to the power which many Christians had of driving out demons from those who were possessed by them, he would not have spoken of this as a future thing; nor can we suppose it to have been common to all Christians; nor would it have afforded an argument equally forcible with that which the interpretation that we have given suggests. There seems a peculiar dignity and propriety in this determination of the great God, that when the devils, who are expressly said to be reserved in chains of darkness, to the judgment of the great day, shall be condemned; the saints, being raised to the seats of glory which these wicked spirits have forfeited and lost, should assist in that sentence, which shall display the victory of

Christ over them in these his servants, once their captives; and will, no doubt, render the sentence itself yet more intolerable to creatures of such malignity and pride. See Locke, Whitby, Doddridge, and Reynolds, “of angels,” p. 183.

Ver. 4. *If then ye have judgments*] *If therefore you have controversies relating to affairs of this life, do you set them to judge, who are of no esteem in the church*;—that is to say, the heathen magistrates? Some critics say that the word *δικασταρις*, rendered *judgements*, like *κριταρις*, signifies *judicial courts*, not *causes*; and they would render the passage thus: *Appoint secular judicatories, if you have in the church this contemptible sort of men, who are so ready to go to law*, ver. 7. But the first interpretation seems preferable. See Bp. Overall, Camerarius, Knatchbull, Limborch, and Ellner. Mr. Locke observes, that there was among the Jews *Concessus triumviralis authenticus*, an authentic court of judicature governed by three judges, who had authority, and could hear and determine causes, *ex officio*,—by virtue of their office: and there was also another *Concessus triumviralis*, chosen by the parties. The latter court, though not authentic, in the before-mentioned sense, could judge and determine the causes referred to it; and the members of this court were they whom St. Paul calls here *τῶ ἐξεδουλεύουσιν*, *judices non authenticos*; that is, “Referees chosen by the parties.” That he does not mean by the original *those who are least esteemed*, is plain from the next verse.

Ver. 5. *A wise man*] If St. Paul uses this word in the sense of the *synagogue*, it signifies a *rabbi*, or one ordained, and so capacitated to be a judge; for such were called *wise men*. If in the sense of the *Greek schools*, then it signifies a man of learning, study, and parts. If it be taken in the latter sense, it may seem to be used with some reflection on their pretences to wisdom. See Locke.

Ver. 6. *Brother goeth to law with brother*] Josephus observes, that the Romans, who were now masters of Corinth, permitted the Jews in foreign countries to decide private affairs, where nothing capital was in question, among themselves; and hence may be argued the justice of this rebuke of St. Paul, as there is no room to doubt but Christians might have had the same privilege, as they were looked upon as a Jewish sect. Exclusive of that, however, they might doubtless, by mutual consent, have chosen their brethren as referees. See Lardner's *Credibil.* vol. i. p. 165. and on ver. 4.

Ver. 8. *Nay, ye do wrong*] That the wrong here spoken of was the fornicator's taking and keeping his father's wife, the words of St. Paul, 2 Cor. vii. 12. instancing this very *wrong*, are a sufficient evidence; and it is not wholly improbable that there had been some hearing of this matter before a hea-

not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11 ^f And such were some of you: but ye ^g are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

12 ^h All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not ^{*} expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

13 ⁱ Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. ^k Now the body *is* not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.

14 And ^l God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own

power.

15 Know ye not that ^m your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make *them* the members of an harlot? God forbid.

16 What! know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for ⁿ two, faith he, shall be one flesh.

17 ^o But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

18 ^p Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

19 What! ^q know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 For ^r ye are bought with a price: therefore ^s glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

^f Ch. 12. 2. Rom. 6. 19. & 7. 5. Eph. 2. 1—3, 11, 12. & 5. 8. Col. 3. 7. 26. 17, 18. 11. 1. 18. ^g Ch. 10. 23. Col. 2. 21. ^h Or profitable. ⁱ Rom. 6. 13, 19. & 7. 4. Ch. 3. 15, 16. & 6. 19, 20. 2 Cor. 11. 2. Eph. 5. 23. 2 Cor. 4. 14. Eph. 1. 19, 20. Phil. 3. 10, 11. ^k Rom. 12. 5. Ch. 11. 3. & 12. 27. Eph. 1. 22. & 4. 12, 15, 16. & 5. 23, 30. Gen. 3. 9. Mark, 10. 8. ^l Gen. 2. 24. Mat. 19. 5. Eph. 5. 31. ^m John, 3. 6. & 7. 21—23. Eph. 4. 4. & 5. 30, 32. Phil. 2. 5. ⁿ Exod. 20. 14. 2 Tim. 2. 22. 1 Pet. 2. 11. Rom. 1. 24—28. 1 Thes. 4. 4. Heb. 13. 4. ^o Heb. 3. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 5. ^p Ch. 7. 23. Gal. 3. 13. Heb. 9. 12, 14. ^q 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. & 3. 18. Rev. 5. 9. Tit. 2. 14. ^r Rom. 6. 19. 1 Thes. 4. 3. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Ch. 3. 16.

^s Ch. 1. 30. Heb. 10. 22. 1 Pet. 1. 2, 3. Tit. 3. 5—7. Acts, 1. 15, 17. Rom. 14. 17. Col. 2. 22, 23. Mat. 22. 30. ^t Acts, 2. 24. 1 Thes. 4. 3. Rom. 6. 5, 8. & 8. 11, 17. ^u Gen. 3. 9. ^v Rom. 14. 7, 8. Ch. 3. 16. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Eph. 2. 21. ^w Mat. 5. 16.

a heathen judge; or at least that this had been talked of; which, if supposed, will give a great light to this whole passage, and several others in this Epistle; for St. Paul's argument, ch. v. 12, 13. ch. vi. 1, 2, 3, &c. runs plainly thus, coherent and easy to be understood, if it stood together as it ought, without the division into two chapters: "You have a power to judge those who are of your church, therefore put away from among you that fornicator. You do ill to let the case come before a heathen magistrate;—Are you, who are to judge the world, and angels, not worthy to judge such a matter as this?" See Locke.

Ver. 11. But ye are washed] "You are not only baptized, but divine grace has made a happy change in your state and temper, and you are purified and renewed, as well as discharged from the condemnation to which you were justly obnoxious, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of him, whom we are now taught, through that common Saviour, to call with complacency *our God*." See Heb. ix. 10—23. ch. x. 10. and 18. compared.

Ver. 12. All things are lawful unto me] *Are all things lawful for me?—However, all things are not expedient. Are all things lawful for me?—However, I will not be a slave to any.* Heylin.

Ver. 18. Every sin, &c.]—"Every other sin which a

man practises *is without the body*; its effects fall not so directly upon the body, but often more immediately upon the mind; but he that committeth fornication or any kind of lewdness, sinneth particularly against his own body; not only polluting and debasing it, by making it one with so infamous a creature, but perhaps infecting and enfeebling, wasting, and consuming it, which these vices, when grown habitual and frequent, have an apparent tendency to effect." It would be unreasonable to insist on the most rigorous interpretation of the words, *Every sin that a man doth, &c.* but the general sense is plain and true; and probably, on the whole, there is no other sin by which the body receives equal detriment, considering not only its nature, but how much it has prevailed. See Doddridge, Raphelius, and Grotius.

Ver. 19. What! know ye not, &c.] This question is repeated six times in this chapter, and seems to carry with it a very strong *irony* on their pretence to extraordinary wisdom. See ch. iv. 10. Locke, Wetstein, and Cicero *de Leg. lib. i. ad fin.*

Inferences.—How great a reproach do we bring on our Christian profession by so immoderate an attachment to our secular interests! How much does the family of our common Father suffer, while brother goes to law with brother!

CHAP. VII.

He treateth of marriage, shewing it to be a remedy against fornication; and that the bond thereof ought not lightly to be dissolved. Every man must be content with his vocation. Virginitie wherefore to be embraced: and for what respects we may either marry, or abstain from marrying.

[Anno Domini 57.]

NOW concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: ^a *It is good for a man not to ^b touch a woman.*

2 Nevertheless, ^c *to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.*

3 ^d *Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence; and likewise also the wife unto the husband.*

4 The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.

^a Mat. 17. 10. Ver. 8, 26. 23, 35. 1 Pt. 3. 7. Ch. 3. 1.

^b Gen. 20. 6. Ruth, 2. 9. Prov. 6. 29.

^c Ch. 6. 18. Ver. 9. Prov. 5. 19.

^d Exod. 21. 10.

brother!—What are these little interests of mortal life, that the *heirs of salvation*, by whom *angels* are to be judged, should wrangle about them, and for the sake of them do wrong, and that even to their brethren! ver. 1—8. Men had need, where such a temper prevails, to examine themselves, and take heed that they be not deceived; for though good men may fall into some degrees of this evil, through negligence, mistake, or the infirmities of our common nature; yet certainly it looks too much like the character of those, concerning whom the Apostle testifies that *they should not inherit the kingdom of God*, ver. 9, 10.

We may observe, that in the catalogue here given are contained, not only the most infamous and enormous offenders, but some who perhaps may be tempted, because of their freedom from flagitious crimes. to think much better of themselves than they ought. We find here the *effeminate* and *covetous*, the *revilers* and *extortioners*, ranked with *adulterers* and *fornicators*, with *thieves* and *drunkards*, with *idolaters* and *sodomites*. We can never be secure from danger of falling into the greatest sins, till we learn to guard against the least; or rather till we think no evil small, viewing every sin in its contradiction to the nature of God, and in the sad aspect that it wears with regard to an eternal state.

But how striking is it to reflect, that when the Apostle is speaking of persons of such infamous character, he should be able to add, in his address to his Christian brethren at Corinth, (ver. 11.) *and such were some of you!* Who must not adore the riches of divine grace?—Were such as these the best of the heathen world?—Were such as these prepared by their distinguished virtues to receive further assistance?—Let us pay our homage to the all-conquering grace of God; and let the greatest sinners hence learn not to despair of salvation, when made sincerely desirous of being washed and sanctified, as well as justified in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

It is that Name, it is that Spirit alone, which accomplishes wonders like these; and, blessed be God, all the wonders of this kind were not exhausted in those early ages; but some have been reserved for us, on whom the end of the world is come. The Gospel has had its triumphs in our own days, and they shall be renewed in those of our children: only let none hence presume to turn the grace of God into wantonness, lest, instead of being among those who are made trophies of the divine mercy,

they should perish with the multitude of the ungodly world.

With what incomparable advantages does our holy religion, in this respect peculiarly excellent, enforce all the lessons of moral virtue which it teaches!—With what holy disdain should we look on the baits of sense, and the pollutions which are in the world through lust, if we seriously and often reflected on these two things,—that *our bodies are the members of Christ*, and that they are *the temples of the Holy Ghost!*—It should be our unwearied care, as it will be our peculiar happiness, that they may not only *nominally*, but *really* be such; that by a living faith we may be united to the Lord, so as to become one Spirit with him, animated by that Spirit which resides in him, and dwells in all who are truly his, ver. 15—19.

Whenever we are tempted to alienate ourselves from the service of God, we should reflect upon the price with which we are bought; ver. 20.—That great, that important price, which we should never think of, but with secret shame, as well as with love and admiration. O Lord! hast thou paid such a ransom for me, and shall I act as if I thought even this not enough?—as if thou hadst acquired only a partial and imperfect right to me, and I might divide myself between thee and strangers, between thee and thine enemies?—Oh may I be entirely thine, and make it the business of the latest day and hour of my life, to *glorify thee with my body, and with my spirit*, which are, and ought to be, for ever thine!

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Apostle proceeds to censure another grievous abuse among them. A litigious spirit prevailed, and, to the shame of their holy profession, brother went to law against brother, *and that before the unbelievers*, the heathen magistrates.

1. He rebukes them for thus going to law among themselves, and that too, as appears, ver. 2: 7. on matters of small importance, which, without great detriment to themselves or families, they might have quietly passed by, and borne the loss of, rather than seek a litigious redress: and, worst of all, they chose rather to carry their causes before the heathen tribunals, than refer them to the decision of their own members, the saints of God; thereby giving the enemy occasion to triumph in their quarrels.

2. He suggests, as an aggravation of their fault, the honour and dignity to which the saints of God must shortly be

5. Defraud ye not one the other, except *it* yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for *be* with consent for a time, that ye may give

* Exod. 19. 15. 1 Sam. 21. 4. Joel. 2. 1, 16. Zech. 7. 3. 1 Thes. 3. 5. Mat. 19. 11.

be exalted, as assessors with the eternal Judge on his throne, while fallen angels and a guilty world stand at his bar, and receive from his lips their eternal doom. And if so, how strange must it be that they should not now be able to judge of the smallest matters, and determine concerning the trivial affairs of this life. (See the Annotations.)

3. With a warm expostulation on their folly and perverseness, he points out to them a remedy for the evil. *I speak to your shame.* In what an unbecoming and unchristian manner do you act? *Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? No, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?* Where they boasted of such high attainments in wisdom, it would be very strange if they could not find a better umpire of their disputes among the whole body of their church, than to have recourse to Gentile tribunals. There was therefore, no doubt, a fault in this matter; and far better was it for them to suffer some wrong and loss, than to seek redress in such a way. But, instead of this meekness, patience, and forgiveness, *ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren,* to the great dishonour of your Christian profession. *Note;* All differences among Christians should be amicably determined by their brethren: at least, in lesser matters, it were better to quit our right than have recourse to the wrangling bar.

2dly, The Apostle, having warned them against some particular offences, passes on to enumerate a black catalogue, of which they had formerly been guilty, and under the power of which, whoever continued to walk, he never could inherit the kingdom of God.

1. The sins mentioned are fornication, idolatry, adultery, effeminacy and lasciviousness, sodomy, theft, avarice, drunkenness, reviling, extortion, crimes which, if indulged, must necessarily exclude the soul from any part in the kingdom of grace, and for ever banish it from the presence of God in glory.

2. He warns them against all self-delusion in this matter. There was a lie in their right hand, if they flattered themselves with any vain imaginations that they had yet hope towards God, while walking in such abominations; which then, now, and for ever, if not forsaken and forgiven, must inevitably destroy both body and soul in hell.

3. He reminds them of the blessed change which had passed upon them, that they might not again return unto folly. *Such were some of you. But glory be to God's rich and boundless grace, 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:* ye are washed in the Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness: by the atoning Blood of the adored Redeemer your iniquities are pardoned, great and aggravated as they were; and you are not only accounted righteous, but made pure in heart by the mighty operation of the Divine Spirit, and in body, soul, and spirit renewed, that you might be made meet for the inheritance among the saints in light. *Note;* (1.) The greatest crimes ex-

clude none from salvation who fly to the atoning blood of Jesus. In him there is grace abounding for the chief of sinners. (2.) All who are justified by grace, are in a blessed measure sanctified by the Spirit. We deceive ourselves, if we think that we have an interest in the one, if we do not experience the effectual operation of the other. (3.) Nothing is so strong an argument to a genuine Christian to fly from sin, as the remembrance of the mercy that he has tasted, and of the ransom which has been paid.

3dly, As some at Corinth appeared to have too light thoughts of the sin of fornication which the Apostle ranked under the damning sins, and seem to have set it on a footing only with the meats forbidden to the Gentile converts, (Acts, xv. 29.) the Apostle strongly sets himself to shew their dangerous error. With regard to meats forbidden by the Levitical law, or offered to idols, *all things are lawful unto me, which Christ has not forbidden, and are not in their own nature sinful; but all things are not expedient;* even in indifferent matters, for the sake of others, it is right to forego our Christian liberty. *All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any,* so as to have my affections enslaved by them, or to have my conscience subjected to any human arbitrary authority. *Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats;* all wholesome food is designed for our use; *but these are things of trivial consequence, since God shall shortly destroy both it and them.* In the eternal world the glorified will not need these bodily refreshments, for they shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more: but respecting fornication, the matter is very different; though the belly is not at all defiled by meats, the body is by fornication.

He urges this matter by various arguments.

1. *Now the body is not for fornication;* it was not made to be prostituted to impurity; *but for the Lord,* to be employed for his glory, *and the Lord for the body,* who, as the bridegroom of his church and people, requires their bodies as well as souls to be under his holy government. *And,*

2. *God hath both raised up the Lord Jesus from the dead,* that his quickened body might be the pledge and earnest of our resurrection; *and will also raise up us by his own power:* our bodies therefore, which, if we be faithful to his grace, shall be fashioned like to his glorious body, ought not now to be polluted by fornication and uncleanness.

3. *Know ye not, that your bodies are the members of Christ?* Through faith we are united to Christ as our living head, and compose a part of his body mystical: *shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot?* How horrid the very suggestion! and every Christian heart, with detestation of the thought, cannot but cry, *God forbid!* *What, know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot, is one body?* Such an unhallowed connection is most contrary to the union of the heart with Jesus: *for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.* A fornicator becomes united to a harlot, and not to Christ; *but he that is joined unto the Lord, in real vital union of heart and person, is one spirit, actuated and*

influenced

your incontinency.

of commandment.

6 ¹ But I speak this by permission, and not

7 ² For I would that all men were even as

¹ 2 Cor. 11. 17. & 8. 8. Ver. 12, 25.

² Ch. 9. 5. & 12. 11, 25. Mat. 19. 12. Acts, 26. 29.

influenced by the same divine Spirit, which in all its fulness dwells in our exalted head. Therefore *flee fornication*, as one of the highest indignities that we can offer to the Lord, of whose body we are members. *Note*; In temptations to lewdness, flight is often the only preservative.

4. Every other sin that a man doeth, is without the body, and terminates upon an object without himself, not immediately defiling the body, though it brings guilt upon his soul; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body; not only offending against God and his neighbour, but immediately contaminating his own flesh by such an abomination.

5. What shall I farther urge? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God? And, since he hath been pleased to take up his abode in your hearts, ye are not your own, but bound to yield yourselves to his will and guidance, and to do nothing which should provoke the divine Inhabitant to quit his temple with abhorrence.

6. For, to finish with one argument more, ye are bought with a price, even the amazing price of a Redeemer's blood, from the curse of the law, and the bondage of corruption, that you might be restored to the service and enjoyment of the blessed God. Therefore, since this was one great end of your redemption, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's, nor dare to alienate your affections from him, or to dishonour your bodies by fornication, which should be employed in his blessed work, and wholly and unreservedly devoted to his glory.

CHAP. VII.

TO understand the precepts and advices contained in this chapter, it is necessary to know, that among the Jews, every person whose age and circumstances allowed him to marry, was reckoned to break the divine precept, *increase and multiply*, if he continued to live in a single state—A doctrine which the false teacher, who was a Jew, may be supposed to have inculcated, to ingratiate himself with the Corinthians. Some of the Grecian philosophers however affirmed, that if a man would live happily, he should not marry. Nay, of the Pythagoreans, some represented the matrimonial connection as inconsistent with purity. The brethren at Corinth, therefore, on the one hand, being urged to marriage by the doctrine of the Judaizers, and on the other, being restrained from marriage by the doctrine of the philosophers, and by the inconveniences attending marriage in the then persecuted state of the church, they judged it prudent to write to the Apostle the letter mentioned, ver. 1. in which they desired him to inform them, whether they might not, without sin, abstain from marriage altogether? and whether such as were already married might not dissolve their marriages, on account of the evils to which, in their persecuted state, they were exposed? The letter, in which the Corinthians proposed these and some other questions to the Apostle, has long ago been lost. But had it been preserved, it would have illustrated

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many passages of the Epistles to the Corinthians, which are now dark, because we are ignorant of the circumstances to which the Apostle in these passages alluded.

To the question, concerning the obligation which persons grown up and settled in the world, were under to enter into the married state, St. Paul answered, That although, in the present distress, it was better for them to have no matrimonial connections at all, yet, to avoid fornication, every one who could not live chastely in a single state, he told them, was bound to marry; for which reason, he explained to them the duties of married persons, as expressly established by the commandment of God, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.—But what he was farther to say in answer to their question, he told them, was not an injunction, like his declaration of the duties of marriage, but only an advice suited to their present condition, ver. 6.—Namely, he wished that all of them could, like him, live continently unmarried, ver. 7.—Then more particularly addressing the widowers and widows among them, he assured them that it would be good for them, if, in the then persecuted state of the church, they could live chastely unmarried, as he was doing, ver. 8.—But at the same time he told them, if they found that too difficult, it was better for them to marry than to be tormented with evil desires, ver. 9.

Next, in answer to their question concerning the separation and divorce of married persons, the Apostle considered, first, the case of the married who were both of them Christians. To these, his command and the command of Christ was, that the wife depart not from her husband, on account of the inconveniences attending marriage, ver. 10.—However, if any wife, finding the troubles of a married state, in those times of persecution, too great for her to bear, separated herself from her husband, she was in her state of separation to marry no other man, because her marriage still subsisted. And if, on trial, she found she could not live continently in a state of separation, she was to be reconciled to her husband. In like manner, a husband was not, on account of the inconveniences attending a married state, to put away his wife. Or, having put her away, if he could not live chastely without her, he was to be reconciled to her, ver. 11. But the last advice above given, respected only those times of most dreadful persecution.

In the second place, with respect to such Christians as were married to heathens, he told them, that what he was going to say was his commandment, and not the Lord's; meaning that the Lord, while on earth, had given no precept concerning such a case. These persons, the Apostle, by inspiration, ordered to live together, if the heathen party was willing so to do; because difference of religion does not dissolve marriage, ver. 12, 13.—And, to shew the propriety of continuing such marriages when made, he told them, that the infidel husband was *sanctified*, or rendered a fit husband to his believing wife, by the strength of his affection to her, notwithstanding his religion was different from her's; and that, by the same affection, an infidel

E e

wife

I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God; one after this manner, and another after that.

8 I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, ^h It is good for them if they abide even as I.

^h Ver. 1, 26, 35, 40.

wife was *sanctified* to her believing husband, ver. 14.—But if the infidel party who proposed to depart, maliciously deserted his or her believing mate, notwithstanding due means of reconciliation had been used; the marriage was, by that desertion, dissolved with respect to the Christian party willing to adhere, and the latter was at liberty to marry another, ver. 15.—In the mean time, to induce persons of both sexes who were married to heathens, to continue their marriages, he told them, it might be a means of converting their infidel yoke-fellows, ver. 16.

In the first age, some of the brethren, entertaining wrong notions of the privileges conferred on them by the Gospel, fancied that on their becoming Christians, they were freed from their former political as well as religious obligations. To remove that error, the Apostle, after advising the Corinthians to continue their marriages with their unbelieving spouses, ordered every Christian to continue in the state in which he was called to believe; because the Gospel sets no person free from any innocent political, and far less from any natural obligation, ver. 17.—The converted Jew was still to remain under the law of Moses, as the municipal law of Judea: and the converted Gentile was not to become a Jew, by receiving circumcision, ver. 18.—Because in the affair of men's salvation, no regard is had either to circumcision or uncircumcision, but to the keeping of the commandments of God, ver. 19. Every one therefore, after his conversion, was to remain in the political state in which he was converted, ver. 20.—In particular, slaves after their conversion were to continue under the power of their masters as before, unless they could lawfully obtain their freedom, ver. 21.—And a free man was not to make himself a slave, ver. 22.—The reason was, because being bought by Christ with a price, if he became a slave of men, he might find it difficult to leave Christ, his superior Master, ver. 23.—And therefore the Apostle, a third time, enjoined them to remain in the condition wherein they were called, ver. 24.—This earnestness he shewed, for this reason among others, because if the brethren disobeyed the good laws of the countries where they lived; or, if such of them as were slaves ran away from their masters after their conversion, the Gospel would have been calumniated as encouraging licentiousness.

In the third place, the Apostle considered the case of those young persons who never had married, perhaps because they were not well established in the world, or were still in their father's family. This class of persons of both sexes, he called *virgins*, and declared that he had no commandment of the Lord concerning them: by which he meant, that Christ, during his ministry on earth, had given no commandment concerning them; but the Apostle gave his judgement on their case, as one who had obtained mercy from the Lord to be faithful: that is, he gave his judgement as an Apostle, who had received inspiration to

enable him faithfully to declare Christ's will, ver. 25.—Beginning therefore with the case of the male virgin, he declared it to be good, in the present distress, for such to remain unmarried, ver. 26.—But if they married, they were not to seek to be loosed. And if their wives happened to die, he told them, they would find it prudent not to seek a second wife, ver. 27.—At the same time he declared, that if such persons married again they did not sin. The same he declared concerning the female virgin: only both the one and the other would find second marriages, in that time of persecution, attended with great bodily trouble, ver. 28.

By the way, to make the Corinthians less solicitous about present pleasures and pains, the Apostle put them in mind of the brevity of life; and from that consideration, exhorted them to beware of being too much elevated with prosperity, or too much dejected with adversity, ver. 29, 30, 31.—And to shew that he had good reasons for advising both sexes against marriage while the persecution continued, he observed, that the unmarried man, being free from the cares of a family, had more time and opportunity to please the Lord; whereas the married man was obliged to mind the things of the world, that he might please his wife, ver. 32, 33.—The same things he observed concerning wives and unmarried women, ver. 34. And told them, that he gave them these advices, and pointed out to them the inconveniences of a marriage state, together with the advantages of a single life, not to throw a bond upon them; but to lead them to do what was comely, and well besitting their Christian profession, without constraint, ver. 35.

Lastly, with respect to female virgins who were in their fathers' families, and under their fathers' power, the Apostle pointed out to the fathers of such virgins the considerations which were to determine them, whether they would give their daughters in marriage, or keep them single, ver. 36—39. But see in the critical notes another view of the subject noticed in this paragraph.

This long discourse the Apostle concluded, with declaring that all women, whether old or young, are by their marriage covenant bound to their husbands as long as their husbands live. But if their husbands die, they may marry a second time. Yet he gave it as his opinion, that they would be more happy if they remained widows, considering the persecution to which they were exposed. And in so saying, he told them he was sure he spake by the Spirit of God, ver. 39, 40.

Ver. 1. Now concerning the things, &c.] The chief business of the foregoing chapter we have seen to be, the lessening the credit of the false Apostle, and the extinguishing of that faction. What follows is in answer to some questions which they had proposed to St. Paul. This chapter contains conjugal matters; wherein he dissuades from marriage those who have the gift of continence, considering the present unsettled

9 But ¹if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

10 And unto the married I command, *yet* not I, but the Lord, ²Let not the wife depart from *her* husband:

11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to *her* husband: and let not the husband put away *his* wife.

12 But to the rest ¹ speak I, not the Lord:

If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, ^m let him not put her away.

13 And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

14 ⁿ For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

¹ Ver. 2, 16, 19. 1 Tim. 5. 14.
^m As Ezra, 9. 2. & 10. 2, 3, 11.

² Mat. 5. 32. & 19. 6, 9. Mark, 10. 11, 12. Luke, 16. 18.

ⁿ Ver. 6, 25. 2 Cor. 11. 17. & 8. 8.
Rom. 11. 16.

unsettled state of the Christian converts. Next, he teaches that converts ought not to forsake their unconverted mates, inasmuch as Christianity changes nothing in men's civil estate, but leaves them under the same obligations as they were tied by before. And last of all, he lays down directions about giving or not giving their daughters in marriage. Locke.

Ver. 3. *Due benevolence*] *What is due.* Wells. *Benevolence* here signifies that complacency and compliance which every married couple ought to have for each other, with respect to their mutual satisfaction. Locke.

Ver. 4. *Also the husband hath not power, &c.*] The woman, who in all other rights is inferior, has here the same power given her over the man, that the man has over her.

Ver. 5. *Defraud ye not one the other*] Do not in this matter be wanting one to another, unless it be by mutual consent for a short time, that you may wholly attend to acts of devotion, when you fast upon some solemn occasion: and when this time of solemn devotion is over, return to your former freedom and conjugal society; lest the devil, taking advantage, should tempt you to a violation of the marriage-bed.

Ver. 6. *But I speak this by permission*] "You will observe, that I say this by permission from Christ; but not by any express command which he gave in person in the days of his flesh, or gives by the inspiration and suggestion of his Spirit now;—by which inspiration you may conclude I am guided, when I throw in no such precautions as these." See Craddock, and Doddridge's Dissertation on the Inspiration of the New Testament, p. 30., &c. For a good explanation of the phrase *an' law's*, of or from myself, John, xvi. 13, &c. See "The Doctrine of the Trinity, as deduced by the Light of Reason, &c." p. 93.

Ver. 7. *For I would that all men, &c.*] "As for the main question that we are now upon, I could wish that all men were in this respect even as myself; that all Christians could as easily bear the severities of a single life, in the present circumstances, and exercise as resolute command over their natural desires." Common sense requires us thus to limit the Apostle's expression; for it would be a most flagrant absurdity to suppose that St. Paul wished marriage might entirely cease. It shews, therefore,

how unfair and improper it is in various cases to strain the Apostle's words to the utmost rigour, as if he perpetually used the most critical exactness. See Doddridge and Whitby.

Ver. 10. *And unto the married I command, &c.*] The translation published by the English Jesuits at Bourdeaux has it, *To those who are united in the sacrament of marriage*; which we mention as one instance selected from a number, of the dishonesty of that translation, and of the subtilty of the translators.

Ver. 12. *But to the rest speak I, &c.*] "I have reminded you of the decision of Christ, with respect to the affair of divorce; now, as to the rest of the persons and cases to which I shall address myself, it is to be observed that I speak according to what duty or prudence seems on the whole to require; and it is not to be considered, as if it were immediately spoken by the Lord." See on ver. 6.

Ver. 13. *Let her not leave him*] The Greek word being the same both in this and the 12th verse, though it be rendered *put away* in that, and *leave* in this, and being directed both to the man and woman, seems to intimate the same power and same act of dismissing in both; and consequently it should have been rendered *put away* in both places. See Locke and Doddridge.

Ver. 14. *Is sanctified*] The words *sanctified, holy, and unclean*, are used here by the Apostle in the Jewish sense. The Jews called all that were Jews *holy*, and all others *unclean*. Thus *proles gentis extra sanctitatem*, was, "a child begotten by parents, while they were yet heathens." *Genita intra sanctitatem*, was, "a child begotten by parents after they were proselytes." The meaning of this verse is as follows: "For, in such a case as this, the unbelieving husband is so sanctified to the wife, and the unbelieving wife is so sanctified to the husband, that their matrimonial converse is as lawful, as if they were both of the same faith, *otherwise your children*, in these mixed cases, *were unclean*, and must be looked upon as unfit to be admitted to those peculiar ordinances, by which the seed of God's people are distinguished: *But now* they are confessedly *holy*, and are readily admitted to baptism in all our churches, as if both the parents were Christians; so that the case, you see, is in effect decided by
E c 2 " this

15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but ° God hath called us * to peace.

16 P For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save *thy* husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save *thy* wife?

17 q But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk: and so ordain I in all churches.

18 r Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised: is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised.

19 s Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.

20 t Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.

21 u Art thou called *being* a servant? care not for it; but, if thou mayest be made free, use *it* rather.

° Rom. 12. 13. & 14. 19. Ch. 14. 33. Heb. 12. 14.
r Acts, 15. 1, 19. Gal. 5. 1, 2. & 6. 15. Col. 3. 11.

* Gr. in peace.

P 1 Pet. 3. 1. Mat. 5. 16.

q Ver. 7. Mat. 19. 12, 24.

† Eph. 4. 1. Phil. 1. 27. Col. 1. 10. 1 Thes. 2. 12. & 4. 11. 2 Thes. 3. 12.

s Rom. 2. 25. & 3. 30. Ch. 8. 8. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. Col. 3. 11. John, 15. 14.

t Gal. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11. Ch. 12. 13.

“ this prevailing practice.” This one passage is of great force to establish the use of infant baptism, and prove it even an apostolical practice; and this is the sense in which the ancient Christians understood and explained the text. Should those who are against infant baptism think this explication to be a modern invention, merely to support a system, the commentaries of St. Augustin, and others who lived long before the rise of the people called Baptists, will be a sufficient refutation of such a suspicion. Should it be supposed that *holy* signifies *legitimate*, and that unclean denotes *illegitimate* or *bastards*;—not to urge that this sense of the phrase is not warranted by Scripture,—the argument will not bear it: for it would be reasoning in a circle, and proving a thing by itself, to say that the marriage of the parents was lawful or not dissolved, because the children were not bastards; whereas all who thought the marriage of the parents to be unlawful or dissolved, must of course esteem the children to be bastards. See Locke, Hammond, Bingham’s Antiq. Wall on Infant Baptism, part i. ch. 19. and Elfner, vol. ii. p. 94.

Ver. 15. *Is not under bondage, &c.*] That is, says Hilary, “The Christian in this case is free to marry to another Christian.” “He is free,” says Photius, “to depart, because the other has dissolved the marriage.” “If he depart,” say Chrysostom, Œcumenius, and Theophylact, “because thou wilt not communicate with him in his infidelity, be thou divorced, or quit the yoke, &c.” But it must be remembered, that the present subject refers only to marriages between Christians and those who were professedly heathens. A brother or sister, in the case above mentioned, after all due means of peace and reconciliation have been in vain attempted, (for *God hath called us to peace*,) is not enslaved.

Ver. 16, 17. *For what knowest thou, &c.*] Continue with your infidel spouses who are willing to dwell with you; for *how knowest thou, O Christian wife, whether thou shalt convert thy husband*, (see 1 Pet. iii. 1.) and *how knowest thou, O Christian husband, whether thou shalt convert thy wife*, if thou continue with her. But, though this should not be the case, yet as *God hath distributed to every one his lot, and in the state wherein the Lord Christ hath called every*

one, so let him continue, fulfilling the duties thereof, unless he can change his condition lawfully. *And so in all the churches I ordain.*

Ver. 18. *Is any man called being circumcised?*] This is a very pertinent digression, as it so directly contradicts the notion which prevailed among the Jews, that embracing the true religion dissolved all the relations which had before been contracted; whereas the Apostle here declares, that the Gospel left them in this respect just as it found them; increasing, instead of lessening, the obligations they were under to a faithful and affectionate discharge of their correspondent duties. The word *ἑπιπάσθη* has an evident relation to attempts like those referred to 1 Maccab. i. 15. which it is not necessary more particularly to illustrate. See Doddridge, Hammond, and Wall.

Ver. 20. *Let every man abide in the same calling, &c.*] It is plain from what immediately follows, that this is not an absolute command; but only signifies, that a man should not think himself discharged by the privilege of his Christian state, and the franchises of the kingdom of Christ into which he was entered, from any ties or obligations that he was under as a member of the civil society. The thinking themselves freed by Christianity from those ties, was a fault, it seems, which those Christians at Corinth were very apt to run into; for St. Paul thinks it necessary to guard them against this prejudice three times in the compass of seven verses; and, in the form of a direct command, enjoins them not to change their condition or state of life: whereby he manifestly intends that they should not change, upon a presumption that Christianity gave them a new or peculiar liberty to do so; for, notwithstanding the Apostle’s positively bidding them to remain in the same condition in which they were at their conversion, it is yet certain, that it was lawful for *them*, as well as others, to change, where it was lawful for them to change had they not been Christians. See Locke.

Ver. 21. *Being a servant*] That is, a *slave*. *Use it rather*, implies, that if a man could obtain his freedom, he might lawfully desire it; but if he could not, he was not to look upon it as a mark of the displeasure of God. The word *ἄπελευθερος*, rendered *freed-man*, in Latin *Libertus*, signifies

22 ^a For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's † freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.

23 ^b Ye are bought with a price; ^c be not ye the servants of men.

24 Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein ^d abide with God.

25 ^e Now, concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment as one that hath ^f obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

26 I suppose therefore that ^g this is good for

the present distress, *I say*, that *it is* good for a man so to be.

27 Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.

28 ^h But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned: nevertheless, such shall have trouble in the flesh; but I spare you.

29 But this I say, brethren, ⁱ the time is short. It remaineth that ^j both they that have wives be as though they had none;

30 And they that weep as though they

¹ Ver. 18. Rom. 6. 18, 22. Gal. 5. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 16. John, 8. 32, 36. Luke 1. 74, 75. Ch. 9. 21. Eph. 6. 5, 6. Philem. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 16. † *Cr. made free.* ² Lev. 25. 42. Ch. 6. 20. Acts, 20. 28. Mat. 20. 28. Rom. 4. 24. Tit. 2. 14. Gal. 1. 4. & 3. 13. Rev. 5. 9. & 1. 5. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. & 3. 18. Heb. 9. 12, 14. ³ Gal. 2. 4. Col. 2. 20—22. Dan. 3. 18. Mat. 33. 8—10. ⁴ Gen. 5. 24. & 6. 9. & 17. 1. 1 John, 1. 3, 7. ⁵ Ver. 6, 12, 40. ⁶ 2 Cor. 8. 8, 10. & 11. 17. ⁷ 1 Tim. 1. 12, 13. Ch. 4. 2. ⁸ 2 Cor. 2. 17. & 4. 7. ⁹ Ver. 1, 8, 35, 40. Job, 15. 24. Pf. 119. 143. Jer. 9. 15. & 15. 4. & 16. 2—4. Mat. 24. 9, 19. 1 Pet. 4. 17. Zeph. 1. 15. Luke 21. 23, 28, 31. & 23. 29. ¹⁰ Heb. 13. 4. ver. 38. ¹¹ Rom. 13. 11. Ch. 10. 11. 1 Pet. 4. 7. 2 Pet. 3. 8, 9. Pf. 102. 23. ¹² Ezek. 7. 12. Mat. 6. 19. Hf. 39. 6. Prov. 23. 5. Hf. 24. 4. & 40. 6, 7. Jam. 1. 10. & 4. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 24. 1 John, 2. 17.

signifies not simply a free-man, but one who, having been a slave, has had his freedom given him by his master. See Locke and Clarke.

Ver. 23. *Ye are bought with a price*] Slaves were bought and sold in the market, as cattle are, and the laws of the Roman Empire considered them as the property of the purchasers. This therefore is a reason for what the Apostle advised, ver. 21. *that they should not be slaves to men*, that is, not make themselves the slaves of men, because Christ had paid a price for them, and they belonged to him. But he tells them in general, in the next verse, that nothing in any man's civil estate or right is altered by his becoming a Christian. See Locke. According to Dr. Whitby the meaning is, "Are you redeemed from servitude? Do not sell yourselves for slaves again." It is indeed probable, that the Apostle does counsel Christians against becoming slaves, if it could be prevented; and with great reason; as it was a circumstance which seemed less suitable to the dignity of the Christian profession, and must expose them to many incumbrances and interruptions in duty, especially on the sabbath, and other seasons of religious assembly,—besides the danger of being present at domestic idolatrous sacrifices, or being ill-treated if they refused their compliance. The interpretation, however, seems objectionable, because the advice is unnecessarily restrained thereby to those slaves who had been redeemed; which plainly as well suited those who had their freedom given them; and indeed suited all Christians, who never had been slaves at all, and who might more easily have been prevailed upon by their poverty to bring themselves into a condition, the evils and inconveniences of which they did not thoroughly know.—If a state of slavery be so inconvenient for the practice and unworthy the dignity of the Christian profession,—in how horrible a light must they stand, who call themselves Christians, and yet carry on an infamous traffick, in order to enslave, and reduce to the most complicated distress, millions of their fellow-creatures! See Mr. Sharp's short account of Africa, and of the Slave-trade.

Ver. 24. *Abide with God*] Beaufobre and L'Enfant explain παρα τῷ Θεῷ, by, *in the sight of God*;—"taking care to behave in a religious and prudent manner, as under the divine inspection." (See 2 Cor. xi. 11. Ephes. ii. 6.)

Ver. 25. *Now, concerning virgins*] St. Paul by *virgins* evidently means those of both sexes who are in a state of celibacy. It is probable that he had formerly dissuaded them from marriage, in the present situation of the church. (See the next note.) It seems they were uneasy under this, (ver. 28 and 35.) and therefore sent some questions to St. Paul about it: In answer to which, from ver. 25. to 37. he gives directions to the unmarried about their marrying or not marrying: in ver. 38. he addresses himself to parents about marrying their daughters; and then ver. 39, 40. speaks of *widows*. When he says, *I have no commandment of the Lord*, he means, "I have no express or positive commandment upon this subject in any of Christ's discourses transmitted to us."

Ver. 26. *For the present distress*] This must certainly refer to the prevalence of persecution at that time; for nothing (as we have before remarked) can be more absurd, than to imagine that an inspired Apostle would in the general discountenance marriage; considering that it was expressly agreeable to a divine institution, and of essential importance to the existence and happiness of all future generations. See Locke, and Doddridge.

Ver. 29. *The time is short*] "Is contracted within very narrow limits." The word συρραμηνός properly imports this, being a metaphor taken from *hurrying* or *gathering up a sail*. The Apostle probably said this from a prophetic view of the approaching persecution under Nero; while in its general import it may respect the shortness of our duration in this world; which should guard us against too fond an attachment to any earthly relation or possession. Some would render this clause, *The time, as to what remains, is short; when both they, &c.*" See Hammond, Grotius, and Heylin.

wep't not; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not;

31 And they that use this world as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

32 But I would have you ^h without carefulness. ⁱ He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:

33 But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please *his* wife.

34 There is difference *also* between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be

holy ^h both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please *her* husband.

35 And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but ⁱ for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

36 But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of *her* age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.

37 Nevertheless, he that standeth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doth well.

^h Pf. 55. 22. Mat. 6. 25—34. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7. ⁱ 1 Tim. 5. 5, 8. Luke, 10. 40—42. ^k Ch. 6. 20. 1 Thes. 5. 23. ^l Mat. 6. 31. Ch. 14. 40. Luke, 8. 14. & 10. 41. & 21. 34. & 2. 37. & 1. 75.

Ver. 31. As not abusing it.] The word *καταχρῶμενοι* does not here signify *abusing* in our sense of the word, but *intently using*,—not carrying the enjoyments of it to any excess; for the whole scheme and *fashion of this world passes off*, and is gone like a scene in a theatre, which presently shifts; or a pageant in some public procession, which, how gaudily soever it be adorned, to strike the eyes of spectators, is still in motion, and presently disappears, to shew itself for a few moments to others. The reader will observe great elegance and beauty in this comparison: See 1 John ii. 17. Wall, Doddridge, and Locke; the latter of whom thinks that all, from the beginning of ver. 28. to the end of the present verse, should be looked upon as a parenthesis.

Ver. 34, 35. How she may please her husband, &c.] The Apostle in this text, and the counterpart to it, seems to declare, that single persons of either sex have generally opportunities for devotion beyond those who are married, even in the most peaceful times of the church; and that a diversity of humours, both in men and women, makes it difficult for them to please each other so thoroughly as is necessary in order to make a married life perfectly delightful. So that it intimates a counsel to single people to value and improve their advantages; and to married people to watch against those things that would ensnare them, and injure their peace and comfort. The word *βέρονον*, which we translate *snare* in the next verse, signifies *a cord*, which possibly the Apostle might use here for *binding*, according to the language of the Hebrew school: and then his discourse runs thus, “Though I have declared my opinion, that it is best for a virgin to remain unmarried, in the present distress, yet I bind it not; that is to say, I do not declare it to be unlawful to marry.” In the word *ωσχημον*, *comely*, he seems to intimate, that they were now in circumstances, wherein God did as it were exact a peculiar severity from all their thoughts; and that it was a time to think of the trials of martyrdom, rather than the endearments of human passions. The word *ἀπερωπάτως* is rendered in our translation

by the addition of several words. The sentence would be rendered better, *for that which is comely and decent in the Lord, without violent constraint*. See Locke, Doddridge, and Knatchbull.

Ver. 36, 37. Toward his virgin.] The word *παρθένον* seems here, says Mr. Locke, used for the *virgin state*, and not for the *person* of a virgin. Whether there be examples of the like use of it, he adds, I know not; and therefore I propose it as my conjecture upon these grounds: *First*, because the resolution of mind here spoken of must be in the person to be married, and not in the father, who has the power over the person concerned. *Secondly*, the necessity of marriage can only be judged of by the persons themselves. A father cannot feel the child's sensations. *Thirdly*, *hath power over his own will*, ver. 37. must either signify, “can govern his own desires,—is matter of his own will,” or “has the disposal of himself;” that is, is free from the father's power of disposing of his children in marriage. But the first cannot be meant, because it is sufficiently expressed before by *steadfast in his heart*; and afterwards too by *decreed in his heart*. I think the words should be translated, *hath a power concerning his own will*; that is to say, concerning what he willeth: for if St. Paul meant, a power over his own will, one might think he would have expressed that thought, as he does ch. ix. 12. and Rom. ix. 21. without the word *περι*, or by the preposition *επι*, as it is Luke ix. 1. *Fourthly*, because if *keep his virgin* had here signified, “keep his children from marrying,” the expression would have been more natural, had he used the word *τηνυα*, which signifies both sexes, rather than the word *παρθένος*, which belongs only to the female. If therefore the word *παρθένος* be taken abstractedly for *virginity*, the 36th verse must be understood thus: “But if any one think it a shame to pass the flower of his age unmarried, and finds it necessary to marry, let him do as he pleases, he sins not; let such marry.” St. Paul seems to obviate an objection which might be made against his dissuading from marriage; namely, that

38 ^a So then he that giveth *her* in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth *her* not in marriage doth better.

39 ^a The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth: but if her husband be

dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; ^a only in the Lord.

40 ^a But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and ^a I think also that I have the Spirit of God.

^a Heb. 13. 4. Ver. 2, 9, 28, 36. with Ver. 18, 26, 34. ^a Rom. 7. 1—3. See Ver. 10, 15. ^a 2 Cor. 6. 14. Ch. 10. 31. Ezra, 9. 2. Deut. 7. 3, 4. Mat. 2. 11. ^a Ver. 18, 20, 35. ^a Ver. 25. 1 Thes. 4. 8. 2 Cor. 10. 10. & 12. 11. See Rom. 1. 1.

that it might be an indecency which one would be guilty of, if one should live unmarried past one's prime, and afterwards be obliged to marry: To which he answers, That no body should abstain, upon the account of being a Christian, but those who are of a steady resolution, who are at their own disposal, and have fully determined it in their own minds. The word *καλῶς*, rendered *well*, ver. 37. signifies not simply *good*, but *preferable*, as in ver. 1. 8. 26. See Locke, Heintius, Doddridge, on ver. 25. and compare this note of Mr. Locke's with the introduction to this chapter.

Ver. 38. *So then, he that giveth her in marriage, &c.*] If the word *γαμίζω* be taken in the sense proposed in the last note, it is necessary in this verse to follow those copies which read *γαμίζω*, marriage, for *εγαμίζω*, giving in marriage.—*So then, he that marrieth, doth well; but he that marrieth not, doth better.* See Locke, Mill, and Wettstein.

Ver. 39. *Only in the Lord.*] “Only let her take care that she marry in the Lord; and that, retaining a sense of the importance of her Christian obligation, she do not choose a partner for life of a different religion from herself.” See Doddridge.

Ver. 40. *I think also that I have the Spirit of God.*] This seems to glance at his adversaries in the church, who might be of a different opinion. What he writes was to answer questions proposed. It is very unreasonable for any to infer hence, that St. Paul was uncertain whether he was inspired or not: whereas this is only a modest way of speaking; and *δοκῶ εἶναι*, *I think I have*, or *I appear to have*, often signifies the same with *χω*, *I have*. Comp. Luke viii. 18. with Matth. xiii. 12. 1 Cor. x. 12. xiv. 37. and see Heylin and Doddridge.

Inferences. The decisions of the holy Apostle in the chapter before us are given with such gravity, seriousness, and purity, that one would hope, delicate as the subject of them is, they will be received without any of that unbecoming levity, which the wantonness of some minds may be ready to excite on such an occasion. It becomes us humbly to adore the divine wisdom and goodness manifested in the formation of the first human pair, and in keeping up the different sexes, through all succeeding ages, in so just a proportion, that *every man might have his own wife, and every woman her own husband*; that the instinct of nature might, so far as it is necessary, be gratified without guilt, and *an holy sed be sought*, which, being trained up under proper discipline and instruction, might supply the wastes which death is continually making, and *be accounted to the Lord for a generation*:—and that so virtue, holiness, and religion, for the sake of which alone it is desirable that human creatures should subsist, may be transmitted through every age, and earth become a nursery for heaven. ver. 2—4.

With these views should marriages ever be contracted, when it is proper they should be contracted, ver. 5. Let none imagine the state itself to be impure, and let it always be preserved undefiled; all occasion of irregular desire being prudently guarded against by those who have entered into it. And let *all Christians*, in every relation, remember that the obligations of devotion are common to all, and that Christ and his Apostles seem to take it for granted that we shall be careful to secure proper seasons for *fasting*, as well as for *prayer*, so far as may be needful, in order that the superior authority of the mind over the body may be exercised and maintained, and that our petitions to the throne of grace may be offered with greater intenceness, copiousness, and ardour.

From the Apostle's reasonings and exhortations, ver. 14. we may learn a becoming solicitude to contribute as much as we possibly can to the *Christian edification* of each other; and especially let this be the care of the nearest relatives in life. What can be more desirable, than that the *husband may be sanctified by the wife, and the wife by the husband*?—May all prudent care be taken in contracting marriages, as to the *religious character* of the intended partner for life; and in those already contracted, where this precaution has been neglected, or where the judgement formed seems to have been mistaken, let all considerations of prudence, of religion, of affection, concur to animate to a mutual care of each other's soul,—that most important effort of love, that most solid expression and demonstration of friendship. Nor let the improbability of success be pleaded in excuse for neglect, even where the attempt must be made by the subordinate sex. A possibility should be sufficient encouragement; and surely there is no need to say, *How knowest thou, O wife, but thou mayest save him*, whose salvation, next to thine own, must be most desirable to thee? ver. 16.

Let us all study the duties of those relations in which God hath placed us, and *walk with him in our proper callings*; not desiring so much to exchange, as to improve them, ver. 24. His wise providence hath *distributed* the part; it is our wisdom, it will be our happiness, to *act* in humble congruity to that distribution. Surely the Apostle could not have expressed in stronger terms his deep conviction of the small importance of human distinctions than he here does, when speaking of what seems to great and generous minds the most miserable lot,—even that of a *slave*, He says, *care not for it*, ver. 21. *If liberty* itself, the first of all temporal blessings, be not of so great importance, as that a man, blessed with the highest hopes and glorious consolations of Christianity, should make himself very solicitous about it,—of how much less importance are those comparatively trifling distinctions, on which many lay so disproportionate, so extravagant a stress!

Let

CHAP. VIII.

To abstain from meats offered to idols. We must not abuse our Christian liberty to the offence of our brethren; but must bridle our knowledge with charity.

[Anno Domini, 57.]

NOW, as ^a touching things offered unto idols, we know that ^b we all have know-

^a Acts, 15. 20, 29. Rev. 2. 14. Ver. 10. Ch. 10. 19—21, 25, 27. ^b Ver. 2, 4, 7. Rom. 14. 14, 22, 3, 10. ^c Ch. 13. 8, 12. Gal. 6. 3. 1 Tim. 1. 7. 6, 3, 4. ^d Exod. 33. 12. Num. 16. 5. Nah. 1. 7. Mat. 7. 23. Rom. 8. 29. & 11. 2. John, 10. 14. Gal. 4. 9. 2 Tim. 2. 19.

Let *Christian servants* [for, blessed be God, among us we have no *slaves*] remember their high privileges,—as the *Lord's freed-men*. Let *Christian masters* remember the restraint—as the *Lord's servants*, ver. 22. and let the benefits of liberty, especially when considered in its aspect upon religion, be so far valued, as not to be bartered away for any price which the enemies of mankind may offer in exchange.

But, above all, let us remember the infinite importance of maintaining the freedom of the mind from the bondage of corruption; and of *keeping* with all humble and cheerful observance the *commandments of God*, ver. 19. While many express the warmest zeal for *circumcision* or *uncircumcision*, in defence of, or in opposition to, this or that mode or form of external worship, let our hearts be set on what is most vital and essential in religion; and we shall find the happiest equivalent in the composure and satisfaction of our own spirit now, as well as in those abundant rewards which the Lord hath laid up for them that love him.

In the mean time observe we the humility of the excellent Apostle with pleasure. When he speaks of his fidelity in the ministry, (ver. 25.) he tells us, he *obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful*. Edified by such an example, let us ascribe to *Christ* the praise, not only of our endowments, but of our virtues;—even to him, *who worketh in us both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure*.

Attentive to the affecting lesson which the Apostle here gives of the *shortness of time*, (ver. 29.) let us seriously reflect upon the advantages and snares of our respective conditions in life, that so we may improve the one, and escape, as far as possible, all injury from the other. Those who are *single* will do well to employ their leisure for God, and to endeavour to collect such a stock of Christian experience as may support them, when the duties and difficulties, the cares and sorrows of life shall be multiplied. Those who are *married*, ought with mutual tender regard to endeavour to please each other, and to tender that relation into which Providence hath conducted them, as comfortable and agreeable as they may; (ver. 33, 34.) and whatever cares press upon their minds, or demand their attention, let them order their affairs with such discretion, as that they may still secure a due proportion of their time for the *things of the Lord*.

Should any in their consciences be persuaded, that, by continuing single, they should best answer the purposes of religion, and promote the good of their fellow-creatures, in conjunction with their own; let them do it. As for those who *marry*, whether a first or second time, let them do it *in the Lord*; acting in the choice of their most inti-

ledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

2. And, if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

3. But, if any man love God, the same is ^d known of him.

mate friend and companion as the *servants of Christ*; who are desirous that their conduct may be approved by him, and that any avocations, and interruptions in his service, which may be occasioned, even in peaceful times, by marriage, may be in some measure balanced by the united prayers, prudent counsels, and edifying converse of those with whom they unite in this tender bond.

REFLECTIONS.—1st. In answer to some cases of conscience, which the Corinthians had sent to the Apostle for his solution, he replies:

1. In the persecuted state of the church, and considering the incumbrances which a married state necessarily produced, he suggests, that it would be well for those who had the gift of continence to keep themselves single.

2. Yet he was far from enjoining celibacy as a duty. Where the gift of continence was not possessed, and circumstances made it more eligible, it was advisable that every man and woman should enter into the honourable estate of marriage, with all conjugal fidelity and love cleaving alone to those with whom they are thus united. See the annotations.

3. The Apostle declares, *I speak this by permission*, as my advice, and not of commandment, as what is absolutely necessary for every individual; not as if it was every man's duty to marry, who was thereto inclined; there were cases and circumstances when persons could best judge for themselves. *For I would that all men were even as I myself*, and could as contentedly continue in a state of celibacy; but *every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that*, according to their different dispositions and constitutions. *I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if*, in these perilous times, *they abide even as I*, and can with safety and satisfaction continue single: otherwise, *let them marry*: this then becomes a duty, and it would be sinful to neglect the ordinance of God.

2dly. As many who had been called in a conjugal state, had partners who still continued in heathenism, and divorces were common among the Jews, the Apostle, by immediate authority from his Lord, declares what was their duty in such circumstances.

1. *Let not the wife depart from her husband. But if she depart voluntarily, or be dismissed through any quarrel, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband*, whose regard it is her duty by all lawful means to endeavour to regain. *And let not the husband put away his wife*, on any consideration but the defilement of the marriage-bed. *Note*, Those who are married should desire and delight to make that

4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

* 11. 24. & 24. 8, 9. Jer. 2. 5, 11. & 10. 14, 18. & 51. 17, 18. Pl. 115. 4—8. Mark, 12. 29. Eph. 4. 6. 1 Tim. 2. 5. & 1. 17.

† Deut. 4. 39. & 6. 4. & 32. 39. If 37. 23. & 4. 64

that state a comfort to each other: every breach involves both in misery. *Note*, The voluntary departure of the wife from her husband, intimated above, was at the best but tolerated on account of those dreadful times of persecution. It is certainly prohibited by our Lord, in Matt. v. 32. xix. 9. and Mark x.

2. With regard to those who have partners that continue in heathenism, while they themselves are called to the knowledge of the truth, the following directions I give by the Spirit, the Lord having left no express command concerning the matter.

(1.) If any heathen wife or husband choose to remain with their partner, who is converted to the faith of Christ, the christian wife or husband must not separate themselves from the heathen on account of religion. And he suggests his reasons for what he enjoined: [1.] The state is sanctified by the faith of either of the parties. *The unbelieving husband is sanctified by, or in, the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by, or in, the husband,* they being one by virtue of the marriage union, which is therefore sanctified to the faithful person; *else were your children unclean,* and not entitled to the blessings and privileges that belong to the visible church; *but now are they holy,* capable of being received into the congregation of the faithful, and admitted to the seal of the covenant, as much as if they descended from parents who were both Christians in profession. [2.] *God hath called us to peace;* and therefore, so far as we can maintain it with our heathen relatives, we are bound to do it, and not make our different sentiments in religious matters the ground of contention and angry dispute: and though we wish they were even as we, yet should we not quarrel with them because they refuse to be of the same mind with us, but bear with the perverseness and displeasure which they may testify against us on account of our profession. [3.] While thus walking in love, peace, and chastity, *what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?* and be made the instrument of her conversion? *But, whether this be the case or not, as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one,* in whatever state or relation, *so let him walk,* as may most adorn his holy profession; *and so ordain I in all churches,* laying this down as a general rule, to be accommodated to particular cases.

But, (2.) The case however is quite different, *if the unbelieving depart,* and, offended at their partner for embracing the gospel, for that cause refuse any longer to dwell with them; and, all kind means being used, insist on a separation; *a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases,* nor obliged to detain them, when they desire to depart. But this rule refers only to professed Christians when married to professed Heathens. See the annotations.

3dly. The Apostle passes on to other cases.

1. Respecting circumcision. *Is any man called being circumcised, Jew or Profelyte? Let him not become uncircum-*

cised, or regret that he submitted to this rite. Is any one called in uncircumcision? let him not become circumcised, all these marks of peculiarity being abolished under the gospel. Jew and Gentile have now but one way to glory: *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing,* of no avail at all to salvation; *but the grand point is, the keeping of the commandments of God,* from the divine principle of faith which worketh by love.

2. With regard to men's stations in life, *Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called,* desiring no alteration in his circumstances, but satisfied with the dispensations of God's providence. *Art thou called being a servant? care not for it;* as if because a servant or slave, therefore the less acceptable to God. With him there is no respect of persons. *But if thou mayest be made free, use it rather;* if the Lord open a door for your liberty, thankfully accept it, in the mean time being resigned to wait his will. *For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's free man,* brought from the bondage of corruption to the most desirable freedom, even into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. *Likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant:* whatever our civil privileges may be, when we have taken the Lord for our Master, we are, as much as the meanest slave, bound to yield ourselves to him, obedient in all things. *Ye are bought with a price,* both one and the other with the same price, even the blood of Jesus: *be not ye therefore the servants of men;* but whenever their commands interfere with the will of your great Master, hesitate not a moment whom you shall obey. Upon the whole, *brethren,* this is my injunction; *Let every man wherein he is called,* whatever his station in life may be, *therein abide with God,* resigned to his will, aiming at his glory, maintaining communion with him, and looking up for grace to serve him acceptably. *Note,* (1.) As our worldly circumstances are ordered by the divine appointment or permission, to repine is to rebel against God. (2.) No attainments in religion give us a right to any superiority in worldly things. Dominion is not founded in grace.

4thly. In answer to their question with regard to unmarried persons, though our Lord had given no particular directions, yet the Apostle, under divine inspiration, delivers his judgment.

1. Considering the troublesome times, and the present distresses that they were under, he advises those who with chastity could, to continue single. If they were already married, they must be content in that state, nor seek to loose that indissoluble bond; but if unmarried, they would do well not hastily to change their condition.

2. If any persons found it more advisable or necessary for them to marry, they would commit no sin in so doing, marriage being honourable in all; only they would encumber themselves more in the world, and in those days of persecution expose themselves to more dangerous trials. But he urges not the point, lest he should bring them into

Ff

a snare,

5 For though there be that ^e are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be

gods many, and lords many,)

6 But to us *there is but* ^h one God, the Fa-

^a Deut. 3. 24. & 10. 17. Jer. 2. 11, 28. & 11. 13. Dan. 11. 8. & 5. 4. Rom. 11. 36. Eph. 3. 15. John, 17. 3.

^b Deut. 6. 4. & 32. 39. Mal. 2. 10. Eph. 4. 6. Acts, 17. 28.

a snare, when he only meant to suggest the cautions which prudence dictated.

3. Whatever was their state, married or unmarried, he had one important charge to give them. *This I say, brethren, the time is short*, eternity is advancing swiftly, and the days which are here allotted us draw to their end. Since therefore our great concern in this world is to prepare for a better, *it remaineth that both they that have wives, be as though they had none*; not setting their affections on a dying world, or retarded from the pursuit of heavenly things by any engagements or attachments here below: *and they that weep, as though they wept not*; restraining all inordinate grief for the loss of dearest relatives, or for any other afflictions, since all present sufferings must so quickly have an end: *and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not*; considering the transitory nature of all their worldly comforts, and therefore sitting loose to them: *and they that buy, as though they possessed not*; not trusting in uncertain riches, nor placing their happiness in these possessions, but looking for a more enduring substance; *and they that use this world, as not abusing it*, to flatter their pride, or gratify their luxury: *for the fashion of this world passeth away*; all things below are fleeting as the shadow, and will shortly vanish as the dream when one awaketh. *Note*, (1.) A deep sense of the vanity of time, and the importance of eternity, is needful to regulate both our joys and sorrows, and to keep our affections disengaged from the objects of sense, which would otherwise enslave us. (2.) We are dying worms in a dying world: the longest life is but for a *short time*; every moment we are in jeopardy; and what is all the world to a dying man?

4. He suggests the general reason on which he grounded the foregoing advice. *I would have you without carefulness*, not to lay a snare upon you by enforcing celibacy, but that those who have the gift, *may attend upon the Lord without distraction*. The advantage of the unmarried state is this, that being less encumbered with worldly cares, the single brother or sister is more at leisure for the service of the Redeemer, and they can more entirely devote their time and talents, and employ both body and spirit in his blessed work: while married persons must necessarily be more engaged in the care of a family, and the needful provision for them, and have the partners of their bosom to please in all lawful things, solicitous to promote their temporal and eternal happiness. *Note*, (1.) That is always best for a Christian, which is best for his soul. (2.) Our first desire should be to please the Lord, and, whether married or single, to be holy both in body and spirit.

5thly. The Apostle proceeds with farther directions concerning marriage.

1. Concerning virgins. *If any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely towards his virgin* by restraining his daughter or ward, who is disposed thereto, from marrying; *if she pass the flower of her age*, and is come to years of maturity, and need so require, and, on deliberating the matter, it seems

most eligible that she should change her condition, *let him do what he will, he sinneth not* in disposing of her; *let him marry her* to a proper partner. *Nevertheless, be that standeth steadfast in his heart, resolved to keep his ward or daughter single, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart, with her consent, that he will keep his virgin as she is, doeth well*, and shews in such trying times a prudent care of her. *So then, he that giveth her in marriage, when it becomes needful, doeth well*; acts a lawful and commendable part: *but he that giveth her not in marriage, doeth better*; provides more for her comfort, and keeps her more at her liberty to serve the Lord.

Others suppose that *την εαυτης παρθενον* signifies not his virgin, but the state of virginity, and give the sense, that if any man continued single beyond the usual time when it was thought reputable to marry, and afterwards should think that he had put an undue restraint upon himself, and see cause to change his condition, it would be lawful for him, even if advanced in years, to take a wife: for though it might be most commendable if he could keep his first purpose, yet, if he find the state of wedlock needful, he is at liberty, and may marry. See the subject handled at large in the annotations.

2. Concerning widows. The wife is bound by the law to her husband for life. *But if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will*; only in the Lord; careful not to be unequally yoked with an unbeliever, and giving her hand to no man, who has not, as far as she can judge, given his heart to Christ. *But, in most cases, she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment*, and live unmarried; and, in what I here advise, *I think also*, whatever false teachers may suggest, *that I have the Spirit of God*, and now speak under his immediate inspiration.

C H A P. VIII.

WHEN the heathens offered sacrifices of such animals as were fit for food, a part of the carcase was burnt on the altar, a part was given to the priest, and on the remainder the offerers feasted with their friends, either in the idol's temple, or at home. Sometimes also a part was sent as a present to such as they wished to oblige; and if the sacrifice was large, a part of it was sold in the public market. To these idolatrous feasts, the heathens often invited the Christians of their acquaintance in Corinth; and some of the brethren there, desirous of preserving the friendship of their neighbours, accepted these invitations; perhaps at the persuasion of their false teacher, who called it an innocent method of avoiding persecution. They knew that an idol was nothing in the world: and therefore their partaking of the sacrifice, even in the idol's temple, could not, they thought, be reckoned a worshipping of the idol. Besides, as they argued, such a feast was considered by enlightened Christians as a common meal, which under the Gospel they were at liberty to eat; especially if they did it to shew their belief that idols have no existence as gods.

ther, of whom *are* all things, and we * in him; and 'one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *are* all things, and we by him.

7 * Howbeit *there is* not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat *it* as a thing offered

* Or for him. † Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18. Rom. 14. 9. John, 13. 13. Ch. 12. 3. Eph. 4. 5. Phil. 2. 11. AGs, 2. 36. Eph. 1. 4-6. † Pet. 1. 31. John, 1. 3. Col. 1. 16, 17. Heb. 1. 2, 3. † Ch. 5. 11. & 10. 28 Rom 14. 14. 23.

These arguments, it is true, are not explicitly stated by the Apostle. But the things that he has written in this chapter and in chap. x. being direct confutations of them, we may believe that they were mentioned by the Corinthian brethren, in their letter referred to in chap. vii. 1.

Agreeably to this supposition, the Apostle begins his discourse concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, with acknowledging that the generality of Christians had much more knowledge than the heathens. But at the same time he told them, that knowledge often puffeth up individuals with pride, and makes them neglect the good of their neighbours. Whereas love leadeth one to edify his neighbour, ver. 1.—Next he declared, that whoever is vain of his knowledge, and makes an uncharitable use of it, knows nothing yet as he ought to know; because true knowledge always makes a man humble and charitable, ver. 2.—And that the way to attain true knowledge in religious matters, is to love God, who in time will make us know things, as we ought to know them, ver. 3.—Having laid down these principles, the Apostle, in answer to the first argument, whereby the partaking, even in the idol's temple, of the sacrifices offered there, was pretended to be justified, acknowledged that most Christians know an idol is nothing in the world; has no existence as a God, and no share in the government of the world; and that there is no other God but one: and no other Lord but Jesus, ver. 4, 5, 6.—But at the same time he told them, there were some weak brethren, who had not that knowledge, but believed idols to be real gods, who possessed some share in the government of the world; consequently, when they ate of the sacrifices offered to idols, they did it with a conscience, or belief, of the existence of the idol, and of his power in human affairs. In them therefore the eating of such sacrifices was certainly an act of idolatry, whereby their conscience was defiled, ver. 7.—Next, to the argument, that the things sacrificed to idols, being meats the eating of which was lawful under the Gospel, consequently that they might be eaten in any place, ver. 8. the Apostle replied, that in the use of their Christian liberty of eating all kinds of meats without distinction, they were bound to take care not to lead the weak into sin, by their example, ver. 9.—This, he told them, they would certainly do, by eating the sacrifices of idols. For, said he, if a weak brother, who fancies an idol to be a real god, see thee, who knowest that it is no god, sitting at a feast on the sacrifice in the idol's temple, will not his ill-informed conscience be encouraged by the example to eat of that meat as sacrificed to a real god? ver. 10.—And thus, through an improper use of thy knowledge, shall thy weak brother commit idolatry, and perish, for whom Christ died, ver. 11.—Such a conduct, the Apostle termed a *sinning against the brethren and against Christ*, ver. 12.—Then in a high strain of Christian benevolence, he declared, that if his eating any kind of flesh occasioned his brother to sin, he would

abstain from it all his life, ver. 13.—By saying this, the Apostle insinuated to the faction, that, whatever they might pretend, their real motives for joining the heathens in their idolatrous feasts were of a sensual kind. They loved good cheer and merriment. But, were it only for the salvation of their brethren, it was their duty willingly to have denied themselves all such gratifications.

Here it is necessary to observe, that the Apostle's design, in this part of his letter, was, not to shew the Corinthians the sinfulness of sitting down with the heathens in an idol's temple, to feast on the sacrifices offered there: that subject he treats of in ch. x. But his design was, to make them sensible, that although it had been lawful for those who knew the truth concerning idols to partake of these feasts, they were bound to avoid them, because their weak brethren, who believed idols to have some share in the government of the world, would by their example be led to eat at these feasts as an act of worship, and so be guilty of idolatry.—The remaining arguments in vindication of the practice, together with the general question itself, concerning the lawfulness of eating in the temples, or elsewhere, meats that had been sacrificed to idols, the Apostle considered afterwards, chap. x.—See chap. xi. 5. note 1. where the reason of the Apostle's treating this subject hypothetically, in the part of his letter now under our consideration, is assigned, and applied for illustrating his treating hypothetically of women's praying and prophesying in the public assemblies for worship.

Ver. 1. *Now as touching things, &c.*] This chapter is concerning the eating of things offered to idols: wherein one may guess by St. Paul's answer, that they had written to him; that they knew their Christian liberty herein; that they knew that an idol was nothing, and therefore argued that they did well to shew their knowledge of the nullity of the heathen gods, and their disregard of them, by eating promiscuously, and without scruple, things offered to them. Upon which the design of the Apostle here seems to be, to take down their opinion of their knowledge, by shewing them, that notwithstanding all that knowledge on which they presumed, and with which they were puffed up, yet the eating of those sacrifices did not recommend them to God, ver. 8. and that they sinned through want of charity, by offending their weak brother. This seems plainly, from ver. 1, to 3. and 11, 12. to be the design of the Apostle's answer, and not to resolve the case of eating things offered to idols in its full latitude; for then he would have prosecuted it more at large, and not have deferred the doing so to ch. x. where, under another head, he treats of it more particularly. See Locke; who observes, that to continue the thread of the Apostle's discourse, the 7th verse must be considered as joined to the 1st, and all the rest looked on as a parenthesis. Elsevier, with many other commentators, allow that there is a parenthesis here; but they think it begins in the middle of ver. 1. and ends after the

unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

8¹ But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, * are we the better; neither, if we eat not, † are we the worse.

9 But ^m take heed lest by any means this ‡ liberty of your's become a stumbling block to them that are weak.

10 For, if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat ⁿ in the idol's temple, ^o shall not the conscience of him which is weak be || emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

12^p But when ye sin so against the bre-

¹ Rom. 14. 17. Heb. 13. 9. Ch. 6. 13. Col. 2. 20—23. Ver. 10. Mat. 18. 6, 17. Ch. 10. 12. † Or power.

* Or have we the more. † Or have we the less. ^m Rom. 14. 13, 20. Gal. 5. 13. ⁿ Amos, 2. 8. ^o Ver. 11. Ch. 10. 29. Rom. 14. 15, 20. 2 Pet. 2. 1. || Gr.

^p Rom. 14. 15. Acts, 9. 4. Mat. 25. 45.

first clause of the 4th.—*We all have knowledge;—we know that an idol is nothing, &c.*—*We know that we all have knowledge,* means, “We know that we all, as Christians, have that general knowledge of the vanity of those fictitious deities, of which some are ready to boast as if it were an extraordinary matter, and which they are at some times in danger of abusing, by making it the foundation of liberties which may be very detrimental. But let it be remembered, that knowledge often puffeth up, and is the occasion of great self-conceit and arrogance; whereas it is considerate love and gentle tenderness which edifies, and has such a happy effect in building up the church of Christ.” See Locke, Doddridge, Ellner, and Bos.

Ver. 3. The same is known of him] That is approved by him. Such a man has attained the true knowledge of God, and will be sure of his approbation and favour. Mr. Locke would render it, *is made to know, or is instructed by him;* for the Apostle, says he, though writing in Greek, yet often uses the Greek verbs according to the Hebrew conjugations. So ch. xiii. 12. the word *Ἐπιγνώσκειν*, which properly, in the Greek, signifies *I shall be known*, is used for *I shall be made to know;* and thus Gal. iv. 9. The word *Γνωσθήναι* is put to signify being taught. See Pierce's 6th Dissertation, and Acts, x. 36.

Ver. 4. We know that an idol is nothing] This was a common aphorism among the Jews, to which the word *אִלִּים*, *alim*, which signifies *idols*, and *things of nothing*, alluded. See Job, xiii. 4. xiv. 12. Whitby, Hammond, Ellner, and Parkhurst's Lexicon.

Ver. 5. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, &c.] This is an allusion to the famed division of the heathen gods into *celestial* and *terrestrial*. The former, whom they called *Θεοί*, gods, they supposed to reside generally in the heavens. The latter, whom they called *Δαιμόνες*, they supposed to reside for the most part upon the earth, or in the sea, and, performing the office of mediators between the superior gods and men, directed terrestrial affairs. These in the Old Testament are called *Baalim*; and by St. Paul, *Lords*; which is the literal translation of *Baalim*. They had also infernal gods and goddesses, such as *Pluto*, *Proserpine*, *Rhadamanthus*, &c. who ruled in the invisible world, judged the dead immediately on their death, and appointed them habitations according to their different characters.

Ver. 6. But to us there is but one God, &c.] One God is exclusive, not of the one Lord, as though he were an in-

ferior Deity, but only of the idols, to which the one God is opposed: to think otherwise would be to destroy the Apostle's own argument for the unity of God, and make him talk as inconsistently, as if he would prove, that there is none other God but one, because, instead of many, there are only two, one supreme and the other subordinate; and then would give such a reason for this, as overturns the distinction itself, by adding that all those things, which are of the Father, are in their utmost latitude by the Son, as one in operation with him, just as at other times, speaking of the Father, all things are said to be by him. Rom. xi. 36. Heb. ii. 10. In the first of these places, the Father is stiled the Lord, (*Κυριος*), without the article, as Christ is here; but by the same way of arguing, which excludes the Lord Jesus Christ from being God, the Father would be excluded from being Lord: or if the Apostle here alludes to the custom of the heathens, who worshipped one or more sovereign deities by inferior demons, called *Baalim* or *Lords*, (see the last note,) then what is said of the one Lord Jesus Christ, may be considered as relating, not so directly to what he is in his original nature, as to his office of mediation with God the Father; while he himself is stiled Lord, and the very same works are ascribed to him as to the Father, to shew what a divine Mediator he is. See Mede, Locke, Guyse, Calamy's Sermons on the Trinity, p. 25, and 244. Jones's “Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity,” ch. i. sect. 3. and Waterland's Sermons on the Trinity, p. 48—53.

Ver. 7. For some with conscience, &c.] For there are some, who with notions still remaining that the idol may have some efficacy upon the victim, eat of it as a real victim, and their conscience, &c. Heylin. Dr. Doddridge reads it, *But some do, even until now, with consciousness of the idol, eat the things as sacrificed to the idol; and so their conscience, &c.*

Ver. 8. Meat commendeth us not to God] *Οὐ παρίσκει*, sets us not before God; that is, to be taken notice of by him. It cannot be supposed that St. Paul, in answer to a letter of the Corinthians, should tell them, that if they ate things offered to idols, they were not the better, or if they ate not, were not the worse, unless they had expressed some opinion of good in eating. Locke.

Ver. 10. Sit at meat in the idol's temple] Entertainments among the heathens commonly consisted of what had been sacrificed to their fictitious deities; from which, however, the truly pious among Christians religiously abstained, even when most rigorously imposed; and no doubt the Apostle's decision here had great weight with them. These feasts were

thren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

13 Wherefore, ¹ if meat make my bro-

ther to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

¹ Rom. 14. 21. Ch. 6. 12. & 9. 12. & 10. 23. 2 Cor. 11. 29.

were often celebrated in their temples. See Eisner, Chemnitz, and Faber.

Ver. 13. *While the world standeth*] Εἰς τὴν αἰῶνα; that is, "as long as I live."

Inferences.—From this short, but excellent chapter, we may learn to estimate the true value of *knowledge*, and to see how worthless and dangerous it is, when, instead of discovering to us our own ignorance and weakness, it serves only to *puff up* the mind. We should rather labour and pray for that *love and charity* which *edifieth* ourselves and others; (ver. 1.) taking heed that we do not demonstrate our ignorance by a high conceit of our attainments in knowledge; for nothing can more evidently shew how small those attainments are, than not to know their limits, when those limits so soon meet us on what side soever we attempt to make an excursion. Give us, O Lord, that *love* to thee, which is the best proof of our *knowledge*, and the surest way to its highest improvements!

While we remember, and steadfastly adhere to the grand principle of the *unity of God*, we must not fail with one God and Father of all, to *adore the one Lord Jesus Christ*, by whom, we exist: setting him, in our estimation, far above all the powers, dignities, and glories of created nature, ver. 5, 6. Belonging to so divine a Master, we shall certainly have emulation enough to learn and to practise the most generous principles of his benevolent religion. We shall not found our confidence on admitting and contending for, or despising and deriding this or that particular observance, by which, as it may happen to be circumstanced, God is neither honoured nor dishonoured, pleased nor displeased; but we shall ever maintain the tenderest concern for the edification and comfort of our brethren, and guard against whatever might either grieve or ensnare them.

When we remember that *Christ died* for the *weakest*, as well as the strongest, (ver. 11.) their relation to him, and his tender and compassionate regard for them, will melt down our hearts, when seized with that cold insensibility, which, alas! is too ready to prevail among Christians. It is *Christ* that we *wound*, in wounding our brethren: and in *smiting them*, we *smite Him*; ver. 12.

Stay then, O man, that rash hand, which is so ready in mere wantonness to do mischief; and be willing to deny thyself in thy desire for ever so long a time, rather than by thy indulgence to dishonour God, and injure others. This is the excellent lesson which the candid, the benevolent St. Paul often inculcates, (see ver. 13.) and of which he himself was a shining example: but O how low are multitudes of Christians, multitudes of ministers fallen, when they cannot deny themselves in what is unnecessary, and even unlawful, where either interest or pleasure solicits the gratification!

REFLECTIONS.—*1st*, The Apostle proceeds to consider

the case of eating the flesh of animals which had been offered in sacrifice to idols. Sometimes the idolaters feasted their friends thereon in the idol temples, sometimes in their own houses; and what they did not make use of, was sold in the shambles.

1. He warns them against leaning upon their own understanding, and proudly abusing their Christian liberty. *Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all, in general, have knowledge*, and are persuaded of the vanity of idols, as well as you. Nevertheless, *knowledge*, without grace, *passeth up*, but *charity edifieth*, and will engage us not merely to consider what is lawful, but what is expedient, making us condescending to those whose attainments are less, and who do not see things as clearly as we may. *And if any man think that he knoweth any thing*, self-opinionated, and above attending to the sentiments or weakness of his brethren, *he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know*. *But if any man love God*, and from that blessed principle is engaged to make a practical improvement of his knowledge for God's glory, and his neighbour's edification, *the same is known of him*, and will receive his approbation. *Note*: (1.) That is the truly valuable knowledge, which enables us to be most useful. (2.) Self-conceit is a sure proof of ignorance. (3.) There may be much knowledge in the head, where there is little Christian love in the heart.

2. He admits, that an idol is nothing, a mere imaginary being; and that, abstractedly considered, the eating of meat offered in sacrifice to idols is no evil, since *there is no other God but one*, whose creatures are all good in themselves. *For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many),* multitudes of celestial and terrestrial deities being worshipped by the deluded heathen: *but to us there is but one God*, in opposition to the pagan polytheism, one in essence, who is represented in the Gospel revelation as *the Father, of whom are all things*, the Creator, Governor, and Preserver of all, *and we in him*, living, moving, and having our being in him; *and one Lord Jesus Christ*, not another God, like the heathen deities, of an inferior nature, but a partaker of the same undivided Godhead and glory, *by whom are all things, and we by him*; one in operation with the Father, as Creator of all; and as Mediator in his personal character appointed to govern the peculiar kingdom delegated to him, to be our advocate for all blessings, and the dispenser of them to his believing people.

2dly, Admitting the vanity of idols, the Apostle shews, that for the sake of a weak brother they ought, notwithstanding, to abridge themselves of that liberty which they might otherwise take, and not offend him by eating what was offered in sacrifice to these abominable deities. For,

1. Some of the new converts not having entirely lost their veneration for those idols which they used to worship, nor as yet wholly persuaded of their vanity, still when they eat their sacrifices, pay them some sort of honour and

CHAP. IX.

He sheweth his liberty, and that the minister ought to live by the Gospel; yet that himself hath of his own accord abstained, to be either chargeable unto them, or offensive unto any in matters indifferent. Our life is like unto a race.

[Anno Domini 57.]

A^m I not an apostle? ^b am I not free? ^c have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? ^d are not ye my work in the Lord?

2 If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.

3 Mine answer to them that do examine me is this,

4 ^e Have we not power to eat and to drink?

5 ^f Have we not power to lead about a sister, a ^g * wife, as well as other apostles, and

^a See Rom. 1. 1. 2 Cor. 11. 5. & 12. 11. 1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 11. Acts, 9. 15. & 13. 2, 3. & 22. 21. & 26. 17, 18. Gal. 2. 7. 5. 1, 13. Ver. 19. 1 Pet. 2. 16. ^c Ch. 15. 8. Acts, 9. 3, 5, 17. & 22. 11, 17, 18. & 21. 11. & 26. 16. ^d Ch. 3. 5, 6, 9, 10. & 4. 15. Acts, 18. 9—11. 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3. & 12. 12. ^e Ver. 14. Luke, 10. 7. 1 Thes. 2. 6, 9. 2 Thes. 3. 8, 9. Ch. 4. 12. Ver. 18, 19. ^f 1 Tim. 4. 3. Heb. 13. 4. Mat. 8. 14. & 12. 46 & 13. 55. John, 2. 12. Acts, 1. 14. Mark, 6. 3. Luke, 6. 15. Gal. 1. 19. ^g Or woman.

and regard; and *their conscience being thus weak, through their remaining ignorance, is defiled with the guilt of idolatry.*

2. We should be cautious, therefore, for others sake, though we ourselves have knowledge, lest we should become a stumbling-block to *them that are weak*, considering that meat of one kind or another, used or abstained from, is no recommendation to God's favour: *for neither if we eat the food, without any respect to the idol, are we the better; neither if we eat not, prudently abstaining for others sake, are we the worse.* But though the eating of the idol sacrifices be never so innocent in itself, yet it may prove a great hurt to the consciences of the weak, who, seeing you eating in an idol temple, may be emboldened by your example, though not satisfied of the lawfulness of the action, to do the like; and thus what you, who know the vanity of idols, might otherwise do innocently, may be the means of leading a weaker brother to wound his conscience with guilt, *for whom Christ died*, and who, having made profession of his faith, is, in the judgment of charity, to be reckoned among his believing people. *But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ*, whose compassions toward the lambs of his flock are great; and he will resent every slight put upon them, and every offence given to them. *Wherefore if meat offered to idols make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth*, however innocent the thing may be in itself, *lest I make my brother to offend.* Note; It is not enough that we avoid what is sinful ourselves; Christian love will teach us even to abridge ourselves of our liberty in lawful things for others good.

CHAP. IX.

THE false teacher having come to Corinth to enrich himself, we may suppose he was much disconcerted when he found that all the time the Apostle had preached among the Corinthians, he had taken nothing from them on account of his maintenance, nor on any other account. Wherefore, to remove the obstruction which St. Paul's disinterestedness had laid in the way of his covetous designs, he boldly affirmed to the Corinthians, that St. Paul was no Apostle, because he had not accompanied Christ during his ministry on earth; and that his demanding nothing from them for his maintenance, shewed he was con-

fiscious to himself that he was no Apostle, and had no right to maintenance from the Corinthians. For if he knew himself to be an Apostle, why did he not use the rights of an Apostle? Why did he not lead about a sister and wife to take care of him, as other Apostles did, and demand maintenance for her as well as for himself? This I suppose the false teacher had done. But be that as it may, it cannot be doubted, that the Corinthians in their letter to the Apostle, mentioned the particulars which his enemies objected to his character. Wherefore, after deciding some very difficult questions which the Corinthians had proposed to him, and particularly after affirming in the end of chapter vii. that he had decided these questions by the inspiration of the Spirit; and after shewing himself a faithful Apostle of Christ, by declaring in the end of chapter viii. his resolution on all occasions to abstain from things indifferent, rather than, by using his liberty respecting them, to lead his fellow Christians into sin, he with great propriety introduced the proof of his Apostleship, and answered all the objections and calumnies whereby his enemies endeavoured to discredit him in the eyes of the Corinthians.

The proof of his Apostleship, St. Paul discusses in a few words, by asking the Corinthians, whether they did not know him to be an Apostle? and a free man, who had a right to preach the gospel without reward, if he thought fit to do so? whether they did not know, that he had seen the Lord since his resurrection? and whether themselves were not his workmanship, as an Apostle of Christ? ver. 1. —Whatever he might be to others, he was certainly an Apostle to them. For their conversion from heathenism, followed with the spiritual gifts which he had conferred on them, was such an unquestionable proof of his Apostleship, that they could entertain no doubt of it, ver. 2.

Next addressing the faction, he said, my answer to them who condemn me as no Apostle, is this: I have a right to be maintained at the charges of the persons to whom I preach, ver. 3, 4.—I have a right also, to lead about a wife who is a believer, to take care of me; and I am entitled to demand maintenance for her likewise, even as other Apostles do, and the brethren of the Lord, and Peter, ver. 5.—Unless it be pretended, that of all the ministers of the gospel, I and Barnabas only have not that right, ver. 6.—His right to maintenance, he told them, was founded

on

as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?
6 Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?

7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feed-

2 Thes. 3. 8, 9. 1 Thes. 2. 6, 7. Acts, 20. 34. Ch. 4. 12.

Deut. 20. 6. Prov. 27. 18. Ch. 3. 6-8. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. 1 Tim. 1. 18. & 6. 11. 2 Tim. 2. 3. & 4. 7. John, 21. 15-17. Acts, 20. 28. 1 Pet. 5. 2.

on the common sense and practice of mankind, who give maintenance to soldiers, vine-dressers, and shepherds, in return for their labours, ver. 7.—It was founded also on the law of Moses, which forbade the Israelites to muzzle the ox while treading out the corn, ver. 8, 9, 10.—Wherefore, having sown in the minds of the Corinthians spiritual things, that is, having given them the first knowledge of the Gospel, it was no great return if he partook of their carnal things, ver. 11.—Especially as others (meaning the false teacher) who had but lately come among them, had been plentifully maintained by them. But though he had a complete right to maintenance, he had never used that right, but had endured every hardship, that the Gospel might not be hindered, ver. 12.—Farther, he told them, his right was founded still more directly on another precept of the law, which appointed those who performed sacred offices, to eat from the temple, ver. 13.—Nay it was founded on the will of Christ, who had expressly authorized those who preach the Gospel, to live by the Gospel, ver. 14.—But the Apostle being a free man, who was at liberty to do in that matter as he pleased, he had made use of none of these precepts and rights; neither did he mention them on this occasion to induce the Corinthians to give him maintenance. For he would rather die of want, than be deprived of glorying in having preached the Gospel, without receiving any reward from his Corinthian disciples for that important service, ver. 15.—The reason was, he had nothing to boast of in barely preaching the Gospel; because his conviction of its truth, together with the command of Christ, laid him under such a necessity of preaching, that he would be absolutely miserable, if he did not make known things, which were of so great importance to the world, ver. 16, &c.

But, because the faction thought the Apostle a fool for not demanding maintenance, and because the rest might be surpris'd at his subjecting himself to so many inconveniences and hardships while preaching the Gospel, he put them in mind of the bodily labours and hardships to which their countrymen, who contended in the games, subjected themselves, for the trifling reward of a crown of green leaves, which soon withered. Whereas; he and his brethren Apostles, in return for the bodily labours and hardships which they endured, expected to obtain an incorruptible crown. The greatness therefore of the reward sufficiently justified the Apostles in the pursuit, although it was attended with so much labour and suffering; and shewed that they had good reason to disregard every temporal advantage, while pursuing a felicity of such magnitude, ver. 24-27.

Ver. 1.] St. Paul had preached the Gospel at Corinth about two years, in all which time he had taken nothing of them, 2 Cor. xi. 7-9. This, by some of the opposite faction, and particularly, as we may suppose, by their leader, was made use of, to call in question his apostleship.

For why, if he were an Apostle, should he not use the power of an Apostle, to demand maintenance where he preached? In this chapter St. Paul vindicates his apostleship; and in answer to these inquiries gives the reason why, though he had a right to maintenance, yet he preached *gratis* to the Corinthians. "My answer, says he, to these inquisitors, is, that though, as being an Apostle, I know that I have a right to maintenance, as well as Peter, or any other of the Apostles, who all have a right, as is evident from reason and from Scripture;—yet I neither have used, nor shall make use of my privilege among you, for fear lest, if it cost you any thing, that should hinder the effect of my preaching. I would neglect nothing that might promote the Gospel. I do not content myself with doing barely what is my duty, for by my extraordinary call and commission it is now incumbent on me to preach the Gospel; but I endeavour to excel in my ministry, and not to execute my commission in a manner just enough to serve the turn. For if those who are in the Agonistic games, aiming at victory to obtain only a corruptible crown, deny themselves in eating and drinking, and other pleasures; how much more does the eternal crown of glory deserve that we should do our utmost to obtain it? To be as careful in not indulging our bodies, in denying our pleasures, in doing every thing that we can in order to get it, as if there were but one that should have it? Wonder not therefore, if I, having this in view, neglect my body, and those outward conveniences which, as an Apostle sent to preach the Gospel, I might claim, and make use of: wonder not that I prefer the propagating of the Gospel, and making of converts, to all care and regard of myself." This seems the design of the Apostle, and will throw light on the following chapter. See Locke.

Am I not free?] "Am I not at liberty, as much as any other of the Apostles, to make use of the privileges due to that office?"—"Am I not an Apostle?" It was necessary, in order to St. Paul's being an Apostle, and a witness of the resurrection, that he should have seen Jesus Christ. See Acts, xxii. 14, 15. xxvi. 16. 1 Cor. xv. 8.

Ver. 2. For the seal of mine apostleship are ye] "Your conversion to Christianity, is as it were a seal set to make good the truth of my apostleship."

Ver. 5. To lead about a sister, a wife] It is very improbable that the Apostle would have carried about with him, in these sacred peregrinations, a woman to whom he was not married; so that the answer which the Papists generally make to the argument often brought from these words in favour of a married clergy, is absolutely inconclusive. The disjuncture between the Apostles and the brethren of the Lord, is a proof that James bishop of Jerusalem, and Jude, our Lord's brethren, were not of the number of the

eth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?

8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?

9 For it is written in the law of Moses, 'Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

10 ^k Or saith he *it* altogether for our sakes? for our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

11 'If we have sown unto you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

12 If others be partakers of *this* power over you, *are* ^m not we rather? nevertheless, we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

13 ⁿ Do ye not know that they which mi-

nister about holy things * live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

14 Even so ^o hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

15 ^p But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things that it should be so done unto me: for *it were* better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.

16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for ^q necessity is laid upon me; yea, wo is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!

17 For if I do this thing willingly, ^r I have a reward: but if against my will, ^s a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.

18 What is my reward then? ^t Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

¹ Deut. 2. 4. 1 Tim. 5. 18. Prov. 12. 10. Exod. 23. 12. Jon. 4. 11. Gal. 6. 6. Mal. 2. 8, 9. ^m Acts, 20. 31, 33, 34. 2 Cor. 11. 9, 12. & 12. 11. 1 Thes. 2. 6—9. 2 Thes. 3. 8, 9. ⁿ Lev. 6. 16, 26. & 7. 6. Num. 18. 8, 20. Deut. 10. 9. & 18. 1. Ch. 10. 18. * Or feed. ^o Mat. 10. 10. Luke, 10. 7, 8. Gal. 6. 6. 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18. Jer. 31. 14. 1 Tim. 5. 8. If. 23. 18. ^p Acts, 18. 3. & 20. 34. Ch. 4. 12. 2 Cor. 11. 9—11. & 12. 13—18. ^q Jer. 20. 7. Amos, 3. 8. & 7. 15. Acts, 9. 6, 15. & 13. 2. & 22. 14, 15, 21. & 26. 16—18. Rom. 1. 14. Gal. 1. 13, 12. ^r Ch. 3. 8. 1 Pet. 5. 4. ^s Luke, 10. 7. Ch. 4. 1. Gal. 2. 7. Phil. 1. 17. Col. 1. 25. Eph. 3. 2, 8. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 12. with Mat. 20. 10, 14. ^t Ch. 4. 12. Acts, 20. 34. & 18. 3. 2 Cor. 11. 9, 18. & 12. 13—18. 1 Thes. 2. 6—9. 2 Thes. 3. 8, 9. with ch. 7. 31. & 10. 33. 2 Cor. 4. 5. & 11. 7.

the Apostles. The last clause of this verse, *And Cephas*, is important; both as it declares in effect that St. Peter continued to live with his wife after he became an Apostle, and also that St. Peter had no rights as an Apostle, which were not common to St. Paul.—A remark utterly subversive of popery, if traced to its obvious consequences. See Locke, Doddridge, and Wall.

Ver. 6. Or I only, and Barnabas] From this expression one would think that the Judaizing Christians, who were the main cause of St. Paul's uneasiness in this respect, had a peculiar spleen against these two Apostles of the uncircumcision; who were so instrumental in procuring and publishing the Jerusalem decree, which determined the controversy so directly in favour of the believing Gentiles. It seems probable, from ver. 12., that Barnabas supported himself by the labour of his hands when at Corinth, as well as St. Paul. See Wall, Whitby, and Calmet.

Ver. 9. Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox] See on Deut. xxv. 4. and Raphelius on the place.

Ver. 10. Altogether] *On the whole*. It cannot be thought that God had no regard at all to the brute creatures, in such precepts as these; and therefore it is better to render *πᾶνως*, by *on the whole*, than *entirely*, or *altogether*; though that sense is more frequent. See Mintert, and Vigerus.

Ver. 12. Partakers of this power] It may be proper just to observe, that Matt. x. 1. John, xvii. 2. and many other places prove, that *ἐκστῆς ὑμῶν* may properly be rendered a *power over you*. The Corinthians, considering the low rate at which Socrates taught, might have been induced to think that St. Paul was not wholly disinterested in his mission, if he had claimed a maintenance for his instruction; and this very suspicion might have been prejudicial to the Gospel in those parts. From the conduct of the Apostle here, and the other Apostles in other places, particularly among the Macedonian churches, we may conclude, that he might see some circumstances which determined him to decline accepting any subsistence from the Corinthians while he resided among them. See Locke, Doddridge, and Pyle.

Ver. 14. Should live of the Gospel] *That man might be said to live on the Gospel*, who was maintained for preaching it; as he might be said to live on the *temple*, who was supported out of its income for ministering there. See Mede's *Diatrib.* on the place.

Ver. 17, 18. But if against my will, &c.] *But if I do it merely because I am obliged to it, I only discharge an office which is committed to me: ver. 18. For what then shall I be rewarded?—It is for this, that preaching the Gospel of Christ, I preach it gratis; and do not insist upon [or use] a claim, which the Gospel itself gives me.* See Heylin, Wall, chap.

19 ^a For though I be free from all *men*, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

20 And ^x 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;

21 ^y To them that are without law as without law, (being ^z not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

22 ^a To the weak became I as weak, that

I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

23 And this I do ^b for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with *you*.

24 ^c Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? ^d So run that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown, but we ^e an incorruptible.

^a Ver. 1, 10-23. Rom. 15. 2. 1 Tim. 4. 16. Ch. 10. 33. Gal. 5. 17. 1 Pet. 3. 1. Rom. 11. 14. ^x Acts, 16. 3. & 18. 18. & 17. 2, 3. & 21. 30-28. Gal. 4. 37. ^y Rom. 2. 12. Acts, 15. 28. & 21. 25. Gal. 2. 3, 4, 11-14. 2 Cor. 3. 6. ^z Ch. 7. 19, 22. & 10. 32. Pl. 116. 15 & 119. 31. ^a Rom. 10. 12. 2 Cor. 11. 29. Gal. 6. 1, 2. Ch. 3. 12. & 10. 23. & 7. 16. Rom. 11. 14. Ver. 19-23. ^b Ch. 25. 31. 1 Pet. 4. 11. 2 Thes. 3. 1. 2 Tim. 2. 10. & 1. 8. ^c Ver. 15, 26. Hof. 12. 10. Ch. 3. 1. 2 John, 3. 12. Gal. 3. 15. ^d Mat. 10. 22. Heb. 12. 1, 2. Rev. 2. 10. Phil. 3. 14. & 2. 16. Gal. 5. 7. & 6. 9. Heb. 12. 28. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. & 2. 4, 5. Eph. 6. 12. 1 Tim. 6. 12. ^e 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Jam. 1. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 4. & 5. 4. Rev. 2. 10. & 3. 11.

chap. ii. 12. and vii. 31. Some read the last clause,—*That I use not the power I have in the Gospel.*

Ver. 19. *Servant unto all*] This is very emphatical, and intimates that he acted with as self-denying a regard to their interests, and as much caution not to offend them, as if he were absolutely in their power,—as a slave is in that of his master. See Doddridge.

Ver. 20. *Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, &c.*] For an illustration of this, see Acts, xvi. 3. xxi. 21, &c. which instances were undoubtedly a specimen of many more of the like kind. *As under the law*, in the next clause, can only signify that he voluntarily complied with it as an indifferent thing; but it cannot by any means imply, that he declared such observances necessary, or refused to converse with any who would not conform to them: for this was the very dissimulation which, with so generous a freedom, he condemned in St. Peter, Gal. ii. 14, &c. See Doddridge, Calmet, and Whitby. Some commentators, following many manuscripts, versions, and fathers, read,—*To those under the law, (not being myself under the law) that I might gain them that are under the law.* Wetstein and Bengelius.

Ver. 21. *That I might gain them that are without law*] This refers to the Gentiles not yet converted to Christianity.

Ver. 22. *I am made all things*] I am become, &c.

Ver. 23. *That I might be partaker, &c.*] *That I may share in its benefits.* Heylin. There is nothing for *with you* in the original. The words seem to refer to the satisfaction which St. Paul found, in imparting the invaluable and inexhaustible blessings of the Gospel to all around him;—a sentiment most suitable to his character and office.

Ver. 24. *They which run in a race, &c.*] The Apostle here refers to the *Isthmian games*, so called from their being celebrated on the Corinthian Isthmus, or the neck of land which joins Peloponnesus to the continent. They are supposed to have been instituted in honour of Palæmon, or Melicertes, and Neptune. They were observed every

third year, or rather every fifth, and held sacred and inviolable. When Corinth was sacked and totally destroyed by Mummius the Roman general, they were not discontinued; but the care of them was committed to Sicyonians, till the rebuilding of the city, and then it was restored to the inhabitants. The sports which composed those games, were running, wrestling, boxing, and other athletic exercises. The Apostle alludes here to the *stadium*, or foot-race, in which there was but one prize for the victor; though in some of the games there were several prizes. Nothing can be more forcible and emphatical than the argument which the Apostle draws from this comparison; whoever would see the full force of which, will do well to read Mr. West's excellent Dissertation on the Olympic games, particularly ch. vi. and vii. and the conclusion. We here subjoin his translation and brief paraphrase of the passage before us: "Know ye not that they who run in the *stadium*, or foot-race, run all, and yet but one receiveth the prize?—So run therefore, that ye may obtain. Moreover, every one that contendeth in the games, is temperate in all things. They, indeed, that they may obtain a corruptible crown; but we, an incorruptible. Wherefore I for my part so run, as not to pass undistinguished; so fight, not as beating the air (that is to say, practising in a feigned combat, without an adversary); but I mortify my body, and bring it under subjection; left, &c."

Ver. 25. *A corruptible crown*] The Apostle alludes to the crowns at the Olympic games, which were formed of *garlands of leaves*, which soon withered and perished, and which were the only rewards of the contenders in those games. In the *Olympic games*, sacred to Jupiter, the crown was of *wild olive*; in the *Pythian*, sacred to Apollo, it was of *laurel*; in the *Isthmian* or *Corinthian*, it was of *pine-tree*; and in the *Nemean*, of *parsley*: but concerning these particulars, as well as the remarkable temperance alluded to above, we refer to Mr. West, and to Elser on the place.

26 I therefore so run, not as ^f uncertainly: *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be ^h a cast away.

^f 2 Tim. 2. 5. & 4. 8. & 1. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 1. 11. 23. Eph. 5. 3.

^h Jer. 6. 30. 2 Cor. 13. 5, 6.

Ver. 26. I—run, not as uncertainly] 'The *stadia*, or courses of the Greeks, were like the courses of our horse-races, marked with posts and other signs, that shewed the racer which way he was to run, and of which he could not be ignorant; and the word rendered *uncertainly*, is often used for *ignorantly*. It may also refer to the *certainty* of obtaining the prize, on condition of observing the laws of the course; and our translation may be very well understood in that sense. The word may have another sense, which will refer to the spectators, who would not pass by the victorious runner without distinction and notice. "I run, not as one who is to *pass undistinguished*; but, knowing what eyes are upon me, and solicitous to gain the approbation of my judge, and attending with diligence to the boundaries which are marked out, I exert myself to the utmost." In order to acquire a greater agility and dexterity, it was usual for those who intended to box in the games, to exercise themselves with the gauntlet, and to fling their arms about, as if they were engaging with a real combatant. This was called *beating the air*. Hence it came to be a proverbial expression for a man's missing his blow, when he aimed at his enemy; which seems to be the meaning of the Apostle, who does not confine himself absolutely to a single branch of contest in these games. See Hammond, Doddridge, Elfner, West, and on ver. 24.

Ver. 27. But I keep under my body] 'Ἐπιπλάζω, rendered *I keep under*, signifies properly to *strike on the face*, as the boxers did; and particularly on that part under the eyes which they especially aimed at. Hence it often signifies a livid tumour on that part, and sometimes is proverbially used for a face terribly bruised, and disfigured, like that of a boxer just come from the combat. The Apostle hereby intimates, that he made use of the greatest rigour and severity to subject his appetites to the dominion of grace. The word *Δουλοῦμαι*, rendered *bring into subjection*, is borrowed from another kind of competitors in the Isthmian games,—the *wrestlers*; and alludes to the practice of giving their adversary a fall, so as to secure the victory. Hence the Apostle shews himself to be so far from using his Christian liberty to its full extent, that he, through grace, subdued himself, and abstained from many things which he might have lawfully enjoyed; and endured many hardships from which he might have been exempted, in order to acquire the *crown*, or reward, which can never fall to the lot of the indolent.—The word *Κηρύξας*, rendered *preached*, expresses the office of a herald at the Isthmian games; who from a scaffold, or some eminence, proclaimed the conditions of the games, displayed the prizes, exhorted the combatants, awakened the emulation and resolution of those who were to contend, declared the terms of the contest, and pronounced the names of the victors. The Apostle, however, intimates, that there was this peculiar circumstance attending the Christian contest, that

the person who proclaimed its laws and rewards to others, was also to engage himself; and that there would be a peculiar infamy and misery in miscarrying in such circumstances. *Ἀδόκιμος* rendered *cast away*, or *rejected*, signifies one who is disapproved of by the judge of the games, as not having fairly deserved the prize. Hence the word signifies to *miscarry*, and lose what is contended for. See Rom. i. 28. Hammond, Bos, Elfner, Faber's *Agonist*. lib. iii. c. 14. and R. Bentley, apud Weststein.

Inferences.—To quicken us in the pursuit of our heavenly reward, it may be proper, *first*, to enforce the Apostle's argument, which represents the excellence of it; and, *secondly*, to remember the methods which he both prescribed and practised for obtaining it.

The motives taken from his words before us may be two,—the value of the crown,—and the possibility of obtaining it; and a little reflection upon each might suffice for the answering of his purpose, did but men bring along with them a disposition to let any arguments in this cause have their full force upon them.

The comparison here brought lies between one crown and another; (ver. 25.) both looked upon as an ample recompence for the pains taken to obtain them; but with this difference, that in reality the value of the one is imaginary, and depends upon common estimation only; that of the other is intrinsic and substantial, and commonly rated as much lower, as the former is higher than it deserves to be; and that, as upon other accounts, so particularly because admitting (in compliance with the mistaken notions of the world) that each is a good one; yet, when taken at the very best, it is evident the one can be but short and perishing,—whereas the other is fixed and everlasting;—the one a *corruptible crown*, the other an *incorruptible*.

Of the former, the corruptible sort,—are plainly all those advantages of the present world, for which mankind so eagerly contend: they are fickle and fugitive; not only allayed by numberless abatements, which check our delights, and disturb our enjoyment, while we continue in possession of them; not only exposed to infinite accidents, perpetually conspiring to deprive us of them; but like the garlands here alluded to by St. Paul, which wither of themselves; in their own nature transient and fading, and such as it is not possible for the utmost art and care to preserve.—To spend time in proving this by descending to particulars, is needless: experience and common sense have done it amply to our hands, and we may appeal to any man alive whether this be not the case of all the most envied temporal privileges and conveniences of human nature.

Yet *these* are the prizes for which we see so much bustling and struggle in the world around us; these are the things upon which men think all the expence and hardships

CHAP. X.

The sacraments of the Jews are types of ours, and their punishments examples for us. We must flee from idolatry. We must not make the Lord's table the table of devils: and in things indifferent we must have regard for our brethren.

[Anno Domini 57.]

MOREOVER, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our

fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

2 And were all ^b baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

3 And ^c did all eat the same spiritual meat;

4 And ^d did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

^a Exod. 13. 21. & 14. 19-22. Num. 9. 17. & 33. 3. Deut. 1. 30. Neh. 9. 11, 12, 19. Joh. 4. 23. Pl. 66. 6. & 78. 13, 14. & 105. 19. & 136. 13, 14. 11. 13. 11-13. Heb. 11. 29. ^b Exod. 14. 31. ^c Exod. 16. 4, 14, 15, 35. Pl. 73. 24, 25. & 105. 40. Deut. 8. 3. Neh. 9. 15, 20. Joh. 6. 32-36. ^d Exod. 17. 6. Deut. 9. 21. Num. 20. 11. & 21. 16. Neh. 9. 15, 20. Pl. 78. 15, 20. & 105. 41. 11. 43. 20. & 48. 21. & 53. 45. Joh. 4. 10, 14. & 7. 37. Rev. 22. 17.

ships of long instruction and severe education in youth,—all the toil and danger of ripe and vigorous age,—laborious days and restless nights,—compassings of sea and land,—the caprice of courts,—the fatigues of camps, the trial of every element and climate;—in a word, ease, safety, health,—peace of body, and life, and too often conscience and the immortal soul, wisely laid out and employed.—Things they are, indeed, which have their comforts, when sought and used in due place and proportion; but when pursued and loved inordinately, they destroy the very purposes that they should serve; they are therefore most improper to be made the chief aim and end of living, and utterly unworthy even of a small part of that, which the generality of people are content to do and suffer for them.

But there is another discouragement behind, which, added to the former, one would imagine must damp the vehemence of these pursuits;—It is not the *difficulty* only, but the great *uncertainty* of compassing the prize they aim at. The numberless disappointments of men's expectations sufficiently demonstrate the fact, and might be a suitable check to their avidity, if any could avail;—nay, and thus our own reason will tell us it must be, where the advantage aimed at has so many seekers; where there is not enough in the things sought to satisfy all; where, of those pretenders, the *gain* of one must, generally speaking, be the diminution of that of another; and consequently, where every candidate finds it necessary for his private interest to outstrip, or to hinder others from making good their point, in order to secure and carry his own.

Such is the condition even of the best of those things, to which we can suppose the *corruptible crown* here mentioned is capable of being applied:—the riches,—the honours,—the pleasures of this life. The happiness and rewards of another, manifestly intended by the *crown incorruptible*, are great beyond expression, and their inconceivable excellence renders it impossible to give them a full or worthy representation. It may well suffice to observe, that the Apostle sets these in direct opposition to, and that they are in every particular just the reverse of the other:—A *crown* indeed;—as *that* denotes the highest honour, the greatest affluence, the firmest security; the only crown, whose splendour does not deceive with false ideas, as having no weight of cares to make it burdensome, no dangers to allay its glory, but all bright, stable, and permanent.

This crown, besides its own value, is the more worth our striving for, because it is not like all others, peculiar

to some one, exclusive of the rest who contend for and aspire after it; but capable of being attained by every one who seeks it: sufficient to answer, nay, infinitely to exceed, the largest wishes and expectations of them all; and so far from lessening the fruition to ourselves, by having partners in the bliss; that as no single person's endeavours shall meet disappointment, who seeks it regularly and faithfully, so the more zealously each labours to promote the happiness of his brethren, the more effectually does he establish and aggrandize his own. And this is a happiness not only exquisite in degree, and in its nature pure, satisfactory, and truly excellent; but for its duration, everlasting, always growing, always fresh; liable to no interruption, no abatement, no decay; a joy which no man can, a joy which God, who gives it, never *will* take from his glorified saints.

It is not perhaps easy to think of a more powerful incitement to quicken our pursuits after *heavenly* things, than the putting us in mind how we usually behave ourselves when we have *earthly* advantages in view. For, alas! what excuse can be found for a folly, which overlooks and slights a treasure certainly attainable, real, perfect, and everlasting, and lays out the whole of our time and pains upon shadows and bubbles;—things in comparison empty and imaginary, often sought in vain, deceitful when found, not worth our keeping when possessed, and not possible to be kept long, were we never so desirous to retain them?

The Apostle, by comparing the Christian's duty to a *race*, doubtless intended to insinuate what vigour, what regularity, and what perseverance is expected from us: and in regard that the prize is given by the Master of the race, this shews us the equity of submitting to his terms, the necessity of running in the way that he has drawn out for us, and not making to ourselves paths of our own desiring. This resemblance also teaches us the obligations that we are under to hold on our course with resolution, since nothing less than coming up to the goal can crown our endeavours.

How happy would it be for us, if the importance of the metaphor before us were considered as it ought to be! Men would not then, as Isaiah expresses it, *spend their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not*. They would not make religion a thing by the *bye*, and allow it so few even of their leisure hours;—so many fewer than they give even to the diversions and impertinencies of the world. They would not suffer the pains and expence which they are content to be at upon the occa-

5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 6 Now these things were our examples, to

* Num. 14. 23, 37. & 26. 64, 65. Pf. 106. 26. Heb. 3. 17—19. Jude, 5. Deut. 1. 34, 35.

† Gr. our figures. Ver. 11. Jude, 5—7.

sions and vanities of this life, so greatly to exceed those scanty droppings so hardly extorted from an over-grown treasure, to works of piety and charity. In a word, they would not appear so extremely solicitous about trifles; such prudent managers in affairs of little consequence, and so wretchedly cold and careless, languid and unthinking in their main, their eternal, their only concern.

Did they reflect at all, their own *example* would reproach them into better sense; their very *pleasures* would awaken a remembrance of their duty; and every *temporal race* would expose the absurdity of exerting all their powers to win a poor despicable prize, and of sitting still with their hands folded, when engaged in a course, whose end and prize is an immortal crown of glory.

From the figure used by the Apostle, we also learn, that it is the master's and judge's part to prescribe, and the runner's to submit and comply with the rules of the race. For want of this reflection, how is the face of the Christian world deformed with pernicious errors, wild enthusiasms, frivolous superstitions, and the religion of many compounded of monstrous absurdities, suited to each person's complexion or passion, humour or interest! How is the scripture racked and distorted to make it speak the sense of private opinions, or differing parties; and the belief and practice of many, no longer the gospel of Jesus Christ, but the dictates of daring men, presumptuous enough to pervert it; not building up the temple of the Lord, but erecting new schemes, and setting them upon sandy foundations of their own!

Well were it for mankind, if a remembrance of our life being a race would encourage the steadfastness, watchfulness, and perseverance even of those who have in a good measure escaped the pollutions of the world; who have detected the *cunning craftiness of them who lie in wait to deceive*, and have begun to run well. For if St. Paul,—if he who was *caught up into the third heaven*,—favoured with extraordinary visions and revelations, above the power of human tongue to utter,—entrusted with the conversion of so many nations, and indefatigably laborious in that ministry;—If he, notwithstanding all these advantages, found it necessary to *keep under his body, and bring it into subjection*; (ver. 27.) If he saw reason to fear, that otherwise, *after having preached to others*, he *should himself be a cast-away*; what care can be too great for us, whose attachments and zeal are so much less! How can we answer it to God, or to our own souls, if we so far forget our own sinfulness and frailty, as not readily to submit to every method of forwarding us in the race that is set before us, and if we make not a diligent thankful use of every advantage and defence in this spiritual contest!

REFLECTIONS.—It, It seems probable that the false teachers had raised some objection against St. Paul's authority as an apostle, because he had not asserted that right to a maintenance which was due to his office; and, waving

his privilege, had refused to be burdensome to his Corinthian brethren.

1. He vindicates his authority: if he had not insisted on a maintenance, it was for their sakes that he had waved this right. *Am I not an apostle*, because I have acted thus disinterestedly? *am I not free* to claim a subsistence, if I choose it? *have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?* and received my commission immediately from him? *Are not ye my work in the Lord?* the converts of my ministry, and the fruit of my labours in the gospel? *If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you*, who owe to me chiefly, as the instrument, all that you know and are: *for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord*; the Lord attesting the truth of my mission, by the success with which he blessed my ministry to your souls. Note, (1.) The best of men and ministers may expect to meet with malignant revilers. (2.) They who have been blest under our ministry, have in themselves the strongest proof that we are sent of God.

2. He asserts his right to all the privileges of an apostle. In answer to those who presumed to sit in judgment on his character, he replies, *Have we not power to eat and to drink?* have not Barnabas and I a claim upon you for a maintenance, though we have not exerted it? *Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife*, and to expect a provision for our families as we are travelling from place to place, *as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? Or I only and Barnabas*, who were particularly sent to the Gentiles, *have not we power to forbear working?* or are we alone obliged to earn with our hands that maintenance which the other apostles are entitled to for their work's sake? How absurd and unreasonable is such a supposition! *Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?* the soldier has his stipend and provisions. *Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?* the vine-dresser is fed with the produce of his toil: *or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?* If these are justly entitled to eat the labour of their hands, much more have the ministers of the gospel, who sustain all these characters, a right to a competent provision. *Say I these things as a man?* merely on the footing of equity? *or saith not the law the same also?* let even my judaizing opposers and maligners judge. *For it is written in the law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn*; but while he works, he shall be permitted to eat. *Doth God take care for oxen?* was this precept given merely with a reference to them? *or saith he it altogether for our sakes*, who labour in the gospel? *for our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he that plougheth, breaketh up the fallow ground of the sinner's heart, should plough in hope of a reasonable return; and that he that thresheth in hope, separating the chaff of corruption from the good seed of grace in the heart, should be partaker of his hope.* And as the ploughman and thresher eat the fruit of their toils, so much more should the laborious minister in God's spiritual husbandry have a just recompence of reward. *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great*

the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

7^h Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to

¹ Num. 11. 4—6, 33, 34. Pf. 106. 14. & 78. 30—33, 17—20.

² Ver. 14. ³ John, 5. 21. Ch. 5. 11. & 8. 7. with Exod. 32. 6. Gen. 26. 8.

great thing, or unreasonable for us to expect, or for you to give, that we should reap your carnal things, and have a maintenance, when the value between the spiritual blessings which we communicate, and the pittance that we should receive, is so disproportionate? If others be partakers of this power over you, and are supported at your expence, to whom you never were or can be so indebted as unto us; are not we rather entitled to a provision, if we chose to claim it? Nevertheless, we have not used this power, nor insisted on what we had a right to demand; but suffer all things, choosing to undergo any wants and hardships, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ, and raise a prejudice in your minds, that our views were mercenary. But do ye not know, that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar, and receive their maintenance from their share in the sacrifices and oblations? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel, should live of the gospel. So that it appears, (1.) In the very reason of the thing; (2.) From the law of Moses; (3.) From Christ's express institution, (Luke x. 7.) that the ministers of Christ have a right to be supported becomingly by those among whom they labour.

2dly. The Apostle mentions his own disinterested conduct; for nothing is more opposite to the character of a Christian minister, than the very shadow of mercenary views. I have used none of these things, nor ever claimed my right among you; neither have I written these things that it should be so done unto me on any future occasion: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void: I had rather wear out my body with labour to minister to my own wants, than not preach the gospel to you freely, and thereby cut off occasion from those, who, if I received any recompence, would thence take a handle to prejudice you against me. For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me, and I cannot but obey the Master's orders: yea, as is unto me, if I preach as the gospel; I must be exposed to the bitterest accusations of unfaithfulness, and justly sink under the heaviest vengeance. For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; the consciousness of disinterested zeal is a satisfaction to my own soul, and the Lord will remember and reward my labours of love: but if against my will I labour, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me, and I am bound to be faithful. What is my reward then? verily, that when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, shewing the disinterested fidelity with which I act, and approving myself to God, and to my own conscience, that I abuse not my power in the gospel, nor exact even what I have authority to demand, demonstrating to the people, that I seek not theirs, but them. Note, For the sake of Christ it is prudent often to forego our rights and privileges, and to waive the claims to that reward to which our office and labours may entitle us.

3dly. In other instances of Christian liberty, as well as the foregoing, the Apostle sets us a noble example of self-

denial. For though I be free from all men, and under no obligations to be subservient to their will or humour; yet have I made myself servant unto all, willing in all indifferent matters to conform to them, and deny myself, that thus engaging their affections and attention, I might gain the more, and win them over to embrace the doctrines and ways of the gospel. And for this purpose, unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; not refusing to observe those ceremonials in their worship, to which, though indifferent in themselves, they were still attached. To them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; submitting to many of its ordinances, to engage the affection of my Jewish brethren, who still maintain their veneration for the divinely instituted service of the sanctuary. To them that are without law, as without law; not urging on them circumcision, or any of the ceremonial institutions, as at all necessary to salvation; but insisting on the necessity of faith in Christ alone, (being not without law to God, as if the moral law was abrogated, as well as the ceremonial; but under the law to Christ, walking in faith and holiness, according to the obligations which the gospel lays upon me) that I might gain them that are without law, and lay no needless obstacles in the way of the Gentiles, but, preaching the simple gospel, might engage their hearts to Jesus and his blessed service. To the weak became I as weak, condescending to their infirmities, and abstaining even from things innocent and lawful, where their conscience was scrupulous, that I might gain the weak, and lead them on to farther attainments of knowledge and grace. In short, I am made all things to all men, studying to please every man for his good to edification, that I might by all means save some, and, through the blessing of the Redeemer, be made the instrument of their conversion. And this I do for the gospel's sake, if possible to remove all prejudice and objections, that I might be partaker thereof with you, and come to share with you in all its blessings and benefits. Note, It is highly our duty to avoid every unnecessary occasion of offence, and in all indifferent things to forego our own will and pleasure for the profit of our neighbour.

4thly. To quicken them to imitate his own example, and give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, he proposes to them the case of those who in the Isthmian games contended for victory. Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? the prize itself was in value trivial, though such pains were used to obtain it; and only one could there possess the honour. Here the prize is no less than eternal life, and all who run perseveringly, are sure to win: so run then with faith, patience, and perseverance, that ye may obtain the inestimable reward. And again, every man that striveth for the mastery, and would overcome, as wrestlers or boxers in the games, is temperate in all things, that by observing the most exact regimen, and bringing their bodies into the best order, they may be the better prepared for the conflict.

Now

eat and drink, and rose up to play.

8¹ Neither let us commit fornication, as

some of them committed, and fell in one day
three and twenty thousand.

¹ Ch. 6. 18. & 5. 11. with Num. 25. 1-9. Pf. 106. 28. Rev. 2. 14. Col. 3. 5.

Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, of withering leaves and flowers; but we have an incorruptible crown of glory in view, compared with which theirs is poor and trivial; and therefore how much more are we bound to deny our appetites; with how much greater earnestness ought we to contend for victory, where we are sure, if we fight manfully, to conquer, and the reward will be so unutterably and eternally glorious. *I therefore, in this view, so run with unwearied diligence my christian course, not as uncertainly, observing the prescribed path of duty. So fight I against the world, the flesh, and the devil, not as one that beateth the air, not merely exercising my arms as the boxers, that they might be ready for the combat; but I keep under my body, (ὑποπιεζω,) mortify its corrupt appetites, as the boxers, who beat their antagonists black and blue; and bring it into subjection, (δουλοῦμαι,) as the wrestlers, when their adversary was thrown under them; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others the necessity of such mortification, diligence, and self-denial, I myself, through negligence or unfaithfulness, should be overcome by my corrupted nature and spiritual foes, and be a cast-away at last, (ἀδίκιμος,) rejected by the great Judge, and counted unfit for the promised reward. And this holy jealousy which I feel for myself, I inculcate upon you, that in the use of all appointed means you may secure the glorious prize, and be approved of the Lord in the great day of his appearing. Note, (1.) In our Christian race and warfare, what diligence, constancy, and courage do we not need? blessed be God, there is help laid on one mighty to save; and looking to him, and perseveringly cleaving to him, we are sure to gain the prize. (2.) Our bodies are our great snare; and the mortification of sensual appetite is absolutely necessary in order to the salvation of the immortal soul. (3.) Holy jealousy over ourselves is the great preservative against apostacy. (4.) Many have appeared with zeal in the cause of Christ, and have been the means of saving others, who have perished themselves. Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*

CHAP. X.

THE Apostle's design in this chapter cannot be rightly understood, unless we suppose the Corinthians, in their letter, to have put three questions to him concerning meats sacrificed to idols. First, Whether they might innocently go with their heathen acquaintance into the idol's temple, and partake of the feasts on the sacrifices which were eaten there in honour of the idol? Secondly, Whether they might buy and eat meats sold in the markets, which had been sacrificed to idols? Thirdly, Whether, when invited to the houses of the heathens, they might eat of meats sacrificed to idols, which were set before them as a common meal?—To the first of these questions, the apostle answered chap. viii. That their joining the heathens, in their feasts on the sacrifices in the idol's temple, even on the supposition that it was a thing in itself innocent, might be

a stumbling-block to their weak brethren, in which case it ought to be avoided; but whether such a practice were a thing innocent or sinful in itself, he did not on that occasion consider. In this chapter, therefore, he resumed the subject, that he might treat of it fully, and answer the other questions proposed to him by the Corinthians relative to that matter.

The false teacher, to free the brethren from their scruples respecting the feasts on the sacrifices in the idol's temple, had I suppose told them, that their knowledge and profession of the gospel rendered them so much the objects of the favour of God, that he would not be displeased with them, if, to gain the favour of the heathens, and to save themselves from persecution, they partook of the heathen feasts in the idol's temple. He added, that whatever influence their eating of these sacrifices might have to pollute them, assuredly their baptism, but especially their eating the Lord's supper, would have a greater influence to sanctify them.

The confutation of these fallacious arguments, the Apostle brought from what happened to the Israelites, the ancient visible people of God. They were led out of Egypt under the cloud, and made to pass through the red sea in a miraculous manner, ver. 1.—By being in the cloud and in the sea, they were all baptized into the belief that Moses was commissioned by God to deliver them. ver. 2.—They all ate the same spiritual meat, and drank the same spiritual drink, ver. 3, 4.—In short, they enjoyed all the external privileges belonging to the people of God in those times. And, therefore, if external privileges could have secured those who possessed such advantages from displeasing God, the Israelites must always have continued the objects of his favour. Nevertheless, they refused to go into Canaan; for which sin God was so exceedingly displeased with them, that he destroyed them all in the wilderness, except Caleb and Joshua, ver. 5. To bring these things home to the Corinthians, the apostle told them, that the sins which brought destruction on persons so high in favour with God in respect to external privileges, are examples to mankind in every age, to prevent them from lusting after the pleasures of the table, as the Israelites lusted after the flesh-pots of Egypt, ver. 6.—and from becoming idolaters, as many of them became, when, dancing round the altar which Aaron had raised, they worshipped the golden calf in the frantic manner in which the heathens worshipped their idols, ver. 7.—and from committing fornication, as many of them did with the daughters of Moab, for which twenty-three thousand of them were slain in one day, ver. 8.—and from tempting Christ by distrusting his care, as the Israelites tempted God by speaking against him and against Moses, for bringing them out of Egypt to die in the wilderness; and for that great sin were destroyed by serpents, ver. 9.—and from murmuring at the restraints laid on them by the gospel, and at the sufferings to which they were exposed in their passage to heaven, as the Israelites murmured, on account of the difficulties they had to encounter

9¹ Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

10¹ Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

¹ Exod. 14. 12. & 17. 2, 7. & 23. 20, 21. If. 63. 9, 10. Num. 21. 5, 6. Deut. 6. 16. Pl. 78. 15, 16 & 95. 9. & 106. 14. Heb. 10. 26, 29.
¹ Exod. 15. 22. & 16. 2. & 17. 2. Num. 11. 1. & 14. 2, 27, 29. & 16. 41, 46, 49. Pl. 156. 16, 25. Heb. 10. 28. Phil. 2. 14. Jude, 16.

counter in taking possession of Canaan, and were destroyed, ver. 10.—All these things, the Apostle told the Corinthians, happened to the Israelites as examples, and are written for our instruction, that we may avoid courses which proved so destructive to them, ver. 11.—The fornication of the Israelites with the daughters of Moab, was mentioned to the Corinthians on this occasion with singular propriety, because the Moabitish women tempted the Israelites, by inviting them to partake of the sacrifices of their gods; the very thing which the Apostle was exhorting the Corinthians to avoid.

As the foregoing facts, recorded in the Scriptures, were set before the Corinthians, to shew them how dangerous it is for persons who enjoy great external privileges, to fancy that their sins are not displeasing to God, the Apostle drew this conclusion from the whole: *wherefore, let him who thinketh he standeth firm in the favour of God, take heed lest he fall*, ver. 12.—and by taking notice, that the Corinthians were exposed to none but common temptations, he insinuated that there was no reason for their being anxious to gain the favour of the heathens; especially as God, who has promised to assist his people, is faithful, and will not suffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear; or with the temptation will make a passage for them out of it, ver. 13.—In short, idolatry having proved so ruinous to the ancient Israelites, the Apostle earnestly exhorted the Corinthians to *flee from it*, ver. 14.

But the false teacher, it seems, had told the Corinthians, that their partaking with the heathens in their feasts on the sacrifices in the idol's temple, was not idolatry in persons who knew that an idol was nothing in the world, because to such it was only a common meal. In what follows, therefore, the Apostle proved, that such an action was a real worshipping of the idol, on whose sacrifice they feasted. And to draw the attention of the Corinthians to what he was going to say, he told them he would speak to them on that subject as to *wise men*, (an appellation of which the Greeks were exceedingly fond,) and desired them to judge impartially, of what he should say to them, ver. 15.—Do not we, said he, who are the disciples of Christ, consider our joint drinking of the cup in the Lord's supper, as a symbol of our joint partaking of the benefits procured by the shedding of the blood of Christ? And our joint eating of the loaf in the Lord's supper, as a symbol of our joint partaking of the benefits belonging to the body or church of Christ? ver. 16.—And because there is one loaf used in the Lord's supper, we the many who partake of it are thereby declared to be one body or society, under the government of one head, and to be animated by the same principles, and to follow the same practices, ver. 17.—The Jews, likewise, entertain the same sentiments, with respect to those who join in their religious services. Do they not hold, that the persons who eat of the sacrifices offered to the God of Israel, are joint partakers of his

altar; that is, join in the worship performed to him on the altar, and partake of the benefits procured by that worship? ver. 18.—By parity of reason, they who in the idol's temple eat of the sacrifices offered to the idol, are justly considered by the heathens as joining in the worship of their gods, and as declaring their desire, jointly to share with them in the blessings which their gods are supposed to bestow. Nay, they consider them as holding communion with them, both in their principles and practices. This application of the argument, indeed, the Apostle has not made; but in the following verse he supposes his readers to have made it: for he adds, what then do I affirm, namely, when I say that your eating the sacrifices of idols is a joint participation in their worship? Do I affirm that an idol is a God? or that the sacrifices offered to idols, are sacrifices to beings who are gods? ver. 19.—By no means. But I affirm that the sacrifices which the heathens offer, they offer to demons; that is, to the souls of dead men and to evil spirits, neither of which are gods; since they have no power in the government of the universe, as the heathens fancy. And I would not have you to be joint partakers with the worshippers of demons, either in their principles, their practices, or their expectations, ver. 20.—Besides, the worship of the true God is incompatible with the worship of demons; for it consists in holy dispositions, and virtuous actions. Whereas the worship of demons consists in vile affections, lewdness, and all manner of debauchery. Therefore, ye cannot consistently partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of demons, ver. 21.—Some of you pretend, that ye eat the sacrifices of idols, to shew your belief that an idol is nothing. But I reply, ye thereby provoke the Lord to jealousy, because by the heathens your eating of these sacrifices is considered as an honouring and worshipping of the idol. Now, before ye give the heathens reason to think that you pay to their idols the honour which is due to Christ, ye should know that ye are stronger than Christ, to defend yourselves against his wrath, ver. 22.

With respect to the questions, whether the meats sacrificed to idols, which were sold in the markets, might be eaten by Christians; and whether they might eat of these meats in the houses of the heathens, when set before them as a common, not as a religious meal, the Apostle observed, first, that although under the Gospel all meats are lawful to every person, all meats are not expedient for every person. And even in cases where they are expedient, the eating of them may not tend to the edification of others, ver. 23.—Secondly, that in the use of meats, we ought to study not our own advantage only, but the advantage of our neighbour also, ver. 24.—And having laid down these principles, he desired the Corinthians to eat whatever was sold in the shambles, without inquiring whether they had been sacrificed to idols or not; because they

11 Now all these things happened unto them for * ensamples: and ^m they are written for our admonition, upon whom ⁿ the ends of the world are come.

* Or types.
5. 15, 16.

^m Ver. 6. Rom. 15. 4. Ch. 9. 10.

ⁿ Ch. 7. 29. Phil. 4. 5. Heb. 10. 25, 27. 1 Pet. 4. 7. 1 John, 2. 18. Eph.

they knew that idols have no dominion over the world, but that the earth is the Lord's, and all that it contains, ver. 25, 26.—And if a heathen invited them to his house, and they were inclined to go, they were to eat whatever was set before them, asking no questions for conscience sake; because by no reasonable construction could that action be considered as a worshipping of idols, even though the meat they were going to eat, had been sacrificed to an idol, ver. 27.—But if, on such an occasion, either a heathen, or a Jew, or a weak Christian, should say to them, this is meat sacrificed to an idol, they were to abstain from it, on account of the weak conscience of him who shewed it; because by shewing it, he declared that he considered the eating of that meat as a partaking in the worship of the idol to whom it had been offered, ver. 28.—If thou reply, why should my liberty be governed by another's opinion? and, seeing God hath allowed me to eat all kinds of meat, why should I be blamed for eating any particular meat, for which I give God thanks? ver. 29, 30.—My answer is, for the very reason, that by the free gift of God all his good creatures are bestowed on thee, thou art bound in eating and drinking, as in all thy actions, to consult the glory of God, who has commanded thee, even in indifferent actions, to consider what may be good for the edification of others, ver. 31.—I therefore exhort you, in using your Christian liberty, to become no occasion of stumbling, either to the Jews, or to the Gentiles, or to the church of God, ver. 32.—This is the rule I myself follow; not seeking my own advantage only, but the advantage of others also, that they may be saved, ver. 33.—And ye should become imitators of me in this disinterestedness, even as I also am therein an imitator of Christ, chap. xi. 1.—By telling the Corinthians that he followed this rule, and that in following it, he imitated the disinterestedness of Christ, he insinuated, that the behaviour of the false teacher was of a different kind. He regarded only his own gratification and profit, and had no regard to the advantage of others.

Ver. 1. Moreover, brethren.] It seems, from what is said in this chapter, as if the Corinthians had told St. Paul that the temptations and constraints they were under, of going to their heathen neighbours' feasts upon their sacrifices, were so many and so great, that there was no avoiding it; and therefore they might go to them without any offence to God, or danger to themselves. To which St. Paul answers, that eating of things which were known and acknowledged to be offered to idols, was partaking in the idolatrous worship; and therefore they were to prefer even the danger of persecution to such a compliance; for God would find a way for them to escape, ver. 1—22. See Locke.

I would not that ye, &c.] St. Paul had just before expressed his ideas of the possibility of becoming a cast-away, even under the highest dispensations of religion: here, he endeavours to excite in the *Corinthians* a sense of

their danger in this respect, by reminding them that the Jewish, as well as the Christian church, had received great tokens of divine favour. Such were to the *Jews* their passage through the Red Sea, under the conduct of the miraculous cloud, Exod. xiii. and their supernatural sustenance in the wilderness. Such, and analogous to these, are the Christian sacraments. As the former did not secure the *Jew* from apostacy, so neither will the latter the *Christian*. By baptized unto *Moses*, the Apostle means, "initiated into that kind of purification, which is proper to the law," here called *Moses*; as the Gospel-state is often expressed by the name of *Christ*, and the state of depraved nature by the name of *Adam*. See Heylin, and the next note.

Ver. 2. And were all baptized unto Moses] The Apostle is here warning the Corinthians against the commission of some vices, from too great a dependance on their Christian privileges. And this he does by reminding them of the Israelites; many of whom, though they enjoyed similar privileges, yet by their sins fell under the displeasure of God. The like expression is used by our Apostle in speaking of Christian baptism, Gal. iii. 27. where he says, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ;" which in Acts, viii. 16. is expressed by "being baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," that is, into his doctrine. Moses was a legislator appointed by God to introduce a new institution of his worship among the Jews. And in this respect, Heb. iii. he is compared with Christ, though in a lower degree, as the Christian institution is of a more excellent and spiritual nature. Wherefore as baptism is the initiatory ordinance of the Christian profession, and the Israelites, at their passage through the Red Sea, were entering upon their new establishment, under the conduct of Moses; the Apostle calls what then happened to them, in a similar manner, by the word *baptism*. The character of legislator is given only to Christ and Moses, as each of them promulgated a divine institution, though in many respects of a very different nature. And therefore persons were never baptized in the name of any other divine instructor. Hence the Apostle puts this question to the Corinthians, ch. i. 13. "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" Some propose to read, *All, even to Moses*; that is to say, all, not excepting Moses, were baptized. See Heinsius, Ward, &c.

Ver. 3, 4. Spiritual meat—spiritual drink] It is not necessary to understand by *the same meat and drink*,—the same by which genuine Christians are supported; for that could not properly be said of any Israelites who were not true believers: but the meaning is, that they all, good and bad, shared the same miraculous supply of food and drink, which was πνευματικόν, signifying somewhat *spiritual*. It is observable, that St. Paul, speaking of the Israelites, uses the word *all* five times in the compass of the foregoing verses; besides that, he carefully says *the same meat*, and *the same drink*, which we cannot suppose to be done by chance; but emphatically to signify to the Corinthians, (who probably presumed too much upon their baptism,

12 Wherefore ° let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

13 There hath no ^p temptation taken you but ^{*} such as is common to man : but ^u God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will with the temptation ¹ also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

^o Luke, 22. 32. Rom. 11. 20. 1 Thes. 5. 4. ^p Jam. 1. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. & 4. 12. ^{*} Or moderate. ^u Ch. 1. 9. 2 Thes. 3. 3. Gen. 19. 20, 21. Exod. 13. 17. Ps. 125. 3. & 103. 12, 17. Is. 37. 7. 1 Thes. 5. 24. ¹ 2 Cor. 12. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 9. Jer. 29. 11. John, 16. 33. 16. 40. 4. 2 Cor. 1. 10. Heb. 12. 4. ¹ Ver. 7. Ch. 8. 15. 2 Cor. 6. 17. 1 John, 5. 21. Rev. 2. 14. Exod. 20. 3-6. ¹ Ch. 1. 5. & 8. 1. & 2. 15. & 11. 13. Ma. 13. 9. 1 Thes. 5. 21. ^u Mat. 26. 26-28. Luke, 22. 19. 20. Ch. 11. 23-29. Acts, 2. 42, 46. & 20. 7.

14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

15 I speak as to ¹ wife men : judge ye what I say.

16 ^u The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

and eating of the Lord's supper, as if that would recommend them to God) that though the Israelites, all to a man, ate the very same spiritual food, and drank the very same spiritual drink, yet they were not all to a man preserved; but many of them, notwithstanding, sinned, and fell under the avenging hand of God in the wilderness. The Jews have a tradition, that the water which issued from the rock in Horeb, Exod. xvii. 6. followed the Israelites through the wilderness: it has been objected, however, that this stream did not constantly follow them; for in that case they would have had no temptation to have murmured for want of water, as we know they did at Kadesh in the circumstances so fatal to Moses; nor would they have had any occasion to buy water of the Edomites, as they proposed to do, Deut. ii. 6. To this Mr. Mede replies, That perhaps the streams from the first rock at *Kephidim* failed, for a further trial of their faith; and at *Kadesh* God renewed the like wonder: but that, likewise, might probably fail, when they came into the inhabited country of the Edomites, which was not till near the end of their wanderings. But it should be observed, that the Apostle does not speak of the real, but the *spiritual rock*; namely, *Christ*; whom that rock in the wilderness signified. The word *was* frequently bears this import; and instances of the like use of it every where abound in Scripture. This rock was indeed a striking representation of Christ, the rock of ages, the sure foundation of his people's hopes; from whom they derive those streams of blessings, which *flow* and minister to them through all this wilderness of mortal life, and will end, for every faithful soul, in rivers of pleasure at the right hand of God for ever. See Locke, Hammond, and Mede's *Diatrib.* on the place.

Ver. 5. *But with many of them*] *But with the greater part of them.*

Ver. 6. *Evil things*] The fault of the Israelites here referred to seems to be, their longing after flesh, Numb. xi. which cost many of them their lives; and therefore that which he guards the Corinthians against must be, their great propensity to the pagan feasts upon their sacrifices. See Ps. lxxviii. 30, 31. Locke and Clarke.

Ver. 7. *To play*] Παίζω signifies to dance: feasting and dancing usually accompanied the heathen sacrifices. See Hammond, Whitby, and Elfner.

Ver. 8. *Neither let us commit fornication*] This was common at the many idolatrous feasts among the heathen; and it was the more proper for the Apostle to caution these

Christians against it, as it was proverbially called "the Corinthian practice." See the *Introduction* to and *Inferences* on ch. i.

Ver. 9. *Neither let us tempt Christ*] *To tempt* signifies to disbelieve, after tokens sufficient to command our faith, and engage our obedience through grace. Though the word *him* be not in the second clause, (*some of them also tempted*) it seems plainly to be implied.

Ver. 10. *Of the destroyer*] The Jews generally interpret this of him, whom they stile "The danger of death," under the name of *Sammael*. See Exod. xii. 23. Heb. xi. 28. Locke and Hammond.

Ver. 11. *Now all these things happened, &c.*] It is to be observed, that all these instances mentioned by the Apostle, of the destruction which came upon the Israelites, who were in covenant with God, and partakers of those typical sacraments, were occasioned by their luxurious appetites about meat and drink, and by fornication and idolatry; sins to which the Corinthians had a great propensity, and against which he therefore the more carefully guards them. Τέλη αἰώνων, rendered *the ends of the world*, properly signifies *the ends of the ages*: that is, the concluding age, or the last dispensation of God to mankind; which we must assuredly conclude that it is, if we believe the Gospel to be true. See Locke.

Ver. 13. *Common to man, &c.*] Ἀνθρώπων, — which may signify, *proportionable to human strength*, as well as *frequent to human creatures*. God encourages his people to hope for his presence and help in pressing danger. See ch. i. 9. Doddridge and Mintert.

Ver. 16. *The cup of blessing, &c.*] The Jews used to conclude the feast whereon the paschal lamb was eaten, with a *cup of wine*. This they called *the cup of blessing*, and *the cup of praising*, because at the time of drinking it, they sung a hymn of praise. We should likewise recollect, that in the early ages of the world, when victims made so great a part of the religion, not only of the Jews, but even of the Gentiles, the sacrifice was followed by a religious feasting on the thing which had been offered; the partakers whereof were supposed to become partakers of the benefits of the sacrifice. Well, therefore, might the Apostle argue against the Corinthians, who ate of the sacrifices of the Gentiles, and communicated with the Christians, as in the verse before us; whence we may collect, that *the cup of blessing, &c.* is not merely a general commemoration of Christ's death and passion; *it is the spiritual communion*

H b

munion

17 For ^a we, *being many*, are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that ^b one bread.

18 Behold Israel ^c after the flesh; ^d Are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

19 What say I then? ^e that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?

20 But *I say* that ^f the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should

have fellowship with devils.

21 ^g Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

22 ^h Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

23 ⁱ All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

24 ^j Let no man seek his own, but every man another's *wealth*.

25 ^k Whatsoever is sold in the shambles,

^a Acts, 2. 41, 42, 47. Rom. 12. 5. Ch. 12. 10, 27. Gal. 3. 26—28.

^b Lev. 7. 3. & 7. 15. 1 Sam. 1. 4, 5. Ch. 9. 13. ^c Rom. 14. 14. Ch. 8. 4. Tit. 1. 15. Pl. 96. 5. ^d Deut. 32. 17, 18, 37, 38. Judg. 2. 12. Jer. 2. 13. 2 Cor. 6. 15, 16. Mat. 6. 24. ^e Deut. 32. 21. Job, 9. 4, 19. & 37. 23. & 40. 2. Ezek. 22. 14. ^f Ch. 6. 12. & 8. 8. & 14. 26. Ver. 24. Rom. 14. 7, 19—21. ^g Mat. 16. 24. Rom. 9. 3. & 15. 1, 2. Ch. 13. 5. & 9. 19—23. Phil. 2. 4, 20. Ver. 33. ^h 1 Tim. 4. 4. Tit. 1. 15. Ch. 9. 3, 4.

ⁱ Ver. 3. John, 6. 31—57.

^j Rom. 9. 6, 8. & 4. 12. Gal. 6. 16.

^k Lev. 17. 7. Deut. 32. 17. Pl. 106.

munion of the blood of Christ. See Cudworth on the Sacrament.

Ver. 17. For we, being many, &c.] This verse is still a further proof that *the cup of blessing, &c.* is not, as some would urge, merely a commemoration of a deceased benefactor; but a commemoration of Christ's death and passion. In this verse the Apostle alludes to the Jewish custom of having but one loaf at the passover, which was not divided, till broken in order to be distributed; he says, therefore, that the partaking of one bread, made the receivers of many to become one body:—A just inference, according to the idea that we have affixed to this rite; for then the communion of the body and blood of Christ helps to unite the spiritual and sincere receivers into one body, by an equal distribution of one common benefit; or, in the elegant words of the liturgy of the church of England, "Then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us."

Ver. 21. Ye cannot drink the cup, &c.] There still remains one more sense of the Lord's supper, which is, that it was a foederal rite or covenant: this is grounded upon the Apostle's reasoning in this and the preceding verses: "Those who eat of the sacrifices, says he, are partakers of the altar: ver. 18." Now a sacrifice at the altar, was a foederal rite or covenant; consequently the feast upon that sacrifice, became a foederal rite and covenant likewise. It is easy to shew that the demons were considered as present at the heathen sacrifices, and as partakers with the worshippers in the common feast; and that by these means friendship, brotherhood, and familiarity, were imagined to be contracted between them, because they all ate at one table, and sat down at one board. The *Lord's table*, and the *table of devils*, therefore, being both foederal rites or covenants, the same person could not be a partaker of both; because no man can execute two foederal rites or covenants which mutually destroy each other. See Cudworth's "True notion of the Lord's supper," ch. i. and v. Elfner and Lowman's Heb. Ritual, p. 54.

Ver. 22. Do we provoke the Lord, &c. ?] This alludes to

the idea under which idolatry is represented as a kind of spiritual adultery, which moved the jealousy of God; though every deliberate sin is, in effect, a daring of his omnipotent vengeance. See Doddridge and Locke.

Ver. 23.] The Apostle here proceeds with another argument against things offered to idols, wherein he shews the danger which might be in it, from the scandal it might give, supposing the thing lawful in itself. He had formerly treated on this subject, (ch. viii.) so far as to let them see, that there was *no good* or *virtue* in eating things offered to idols, notwithstanding they knew that idols were nothing, and they might think their free eating without scruple shewed that they knew their liberty in the Gospel,—that idols were in reality nothing, and therefore they slighted and disregarded them and their worship as nothing; but the Apostle informs them, that there might be great *evil* in eating,—by the offence it might give to weak Christians, who had not that knowledge. He here takes up the argument of offence again, and extends it to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, ver. 32; shewing that it is not enough to justify us in any action, that the thing we do is in itself lawful, unless we seek in it the glory of God, and the good of others, ver. 23, to ch. xi. 1.

All things.] The word *all* is here to be limited to such things as are the subject of the Apostle's discourse; and his meaning is,—“Supposing all these things be lawful; supposing it lawful to eat things offered unto idols; yet things that are lawful are not expedient: all things that are lawful for *me*, may not tend to the edification of others, and so ought to be forborne.” See Locke and Doddridge.

Ver. 24. Let no man seek his own.] This precept cannot be taken in a strict and literal sense, but should be interpreted comparatively, so as to understand the Apostle as exhorting them not to seek their own advantage entirely, or not so much as that of others. Mr. Locke's paraphrase is, “No one must seek barely his own private particular interest alone, but let every one seek the good of others also.”

Ver. 25. Whatsoever is sold in the shambles.] Herodotus informs us, that the Egyptians, when they had cut off the head

that eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

26 For ¹ the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

27 If any of them ^k that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

28 But, if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, ^m eat not, for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: For ⁿ the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

29 ^o Conscience, I say, not thine own, but

of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

30 ^p For, if I by ^{*} grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?

31 ^q Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

32 ^r Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the [†] Gentiles, nor to the church of God.

33 ^s Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

¹ Exod. 19. 5. & 9. 29. Deut. 10. 14. Pf. 24. 1. & 50. 12. Job, 41. 21. Ver. 28. 1 Tim. 4. 4. & 6. 17. ^k Ch. 7. 12—15. 2 Pet. 3. 1. Luke, 10. 7. Ch. 8. 7. Ver. 25. ^m Ch. 8. 10, 11. Rom. 15. 16. ⁿ Deut. 10. 14. 1 Exod. 19. 20. & 10. 5. Pf. 24. 1. & 50. 12. Ver. 26. ^o Rom. 14. 15, 16, 20, 21. Ch. 8. 9—14. Ver. 32. ^p 1 Tim. 4. 3, 4. Rom. 14. 6. ^q Gr. thanksgiving. ^r Zech. 7. 6. 1 Chr. 17. 24. Rev. 11. 5. Song. 7. 13. Col. 3. 17. Mat. 5. 16. John. 15. 8. Rom. 11. 26. & 14. 8. Prov. 16. 4. 1 Th. 5. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 12. & 4. 11. ^s 1 Cor. 6. 2. Ch. 8. 13. Rom. 14. 13. Phil. 1. 10. 1 John. 2. 10. [†] Gr. Greeks. ^{*} Rom. 15. 2. Ch. 9. 19—23. 2 Cor. 11. 25, 29. & 11. 19. Ver. 24.

head of the victim, used to carry the carcase to market, and sell it to the *Greeks*, if they could find any to purchase; if not, they threw it into the river, judging it unlawful to eat it themselves. Though the Grecian priests had no such scruples, yet, as they had often more flesh of the sacrifices than they and their families could consume, it was natural for them to take this method of disposing of it to advantage; and at times of extraordinary sacrifice, it is probable the neighbouring markets might be chiefly supplied from their temples. See Doddridge and Raphelius.

Ver. 26. *For the earth is the Lord's, &c.*] For as God is the great Creator, Proprietor, and Disposer, sovereign Lord and Governor of the whole earth, and of all its fruits and products, (Pf. xxiv. 1.) so he has given them for the service of men; and all their rich variety, for necessity and chaste delight, are sanctified to the believer's use; inasmuch, that he may lawfully eat of them under the Gospel dispensation, which has abolished the ceremonial distinctions of them, that were of a typical nature under the law, (see 1 Tim. iv. 4.) and in which Christ, as Mediator, is Lord of all.

Ver. 29. *For why is my liberty judged of*] Some think that the meaning is, "Why should I use my liberty so, as to offend the conscience of any?"—Others think it is an objection in the mouth of the Corinthians, and to be thus understood: "But why should I suffer myself to be thus imposed upon, and receive law from any, where Christ has left me free?" Rather, perhaps, this and ver. 30. are to be considered as coming in by way of parenthesis, to prevent the Corinthians from extending the former caution beyond what the Apostle designed by it; as if he had said, "as to what immediately lies between God and my own soul, why is my liberty to be judged, arraigned, and condemned at the bar of another man's conscience?—I am not in such cases to govern myself by the judgment and apprehension of others; nor have they any

"authority to judge or censure me for not concurring with them in their own narrow notions and declarations." See Doddridge, Locke, and Whitby.

Ver. 30. *For, if I, &c.*] *For, if I eat or partake with thanksgiving.*

Ver. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat*] "Therefore on the whole, to conclude this discourse, since no one particular rule can be laid down to suit all the diversities of temper and apprehension which may arise; instead of uncharitable contentions with each other, or any thing which looks like mutual contempt, let us take all the pains we can to meet as in the centre of real religion. See to it then, that whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever else ye do, in the common as well as sacred actions of life, ye do all to the glory of God; pursuing the credit of the Gospel, and the edification of the church, that God may be honoured in the happiness of his creatures, and more universally acknowledged as the author of all good." See Doddridge, and more on this subject in the *Inferences*.

Ver. 32. *Neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles*] As these are both opposed to the church of God, it is reasonable to conclude, that the Apostle speaks of *unconverted Jews and Greeks*, and refers to the danger there might be of prejudicing them against Christianity, by the indulgencies against which he cautions them. See Doddridge, Calmet, and on the next chapter, ver. 1.

Inferences.—The design of the Apostle in this chapter is, to press upon Christians the great obligations they are under to walk worthy of their holy vocation; to be solicitous above all things to promote the glory of God, and the salvation of man; to bring over unbelievers to the acknowledgment of the truth, and to prevent, as far as possible, those who believe from being offended and discouraged in their duty, or by any means tempted and seduced into sin.

CHAP. XI.

He reproveth them, because in holy assemblies their men prayed with their heads covered, and women with their heads uncovered: and because generally their meetings were not for the better, but for the worse; as namely, in profaning with their own feasts the Lord's supper: lastly, he remindeth them of the first institution thereof.

[Anno Domini 57.]

BE ye ^a followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ.

^a Ch. 4. 16. Eph. 5. 1. Phil. 3. 17. 1 Thes. 1. 6. 2 Thes. 3. 9. ^c Eph. 1. 10, 22, 23. & c. 23. Rom. 14. 9. Phil. 2. 10, 11. Acts. 10. 36. Col. 3. 18. ^e John. 14. 28. Ch. 15. 27, 28. & 3. 23. Rom. 8. 3. 6. 1. 3. John. 4. 34. ^f Ch. 12. 10. & 14. 1-33. Ver. 14. 2 Sam. 15. 30. & 19. 4.

2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ^b ye remember me in all things, and keep the ^{*} ordinances as I delivered *them* to you.

3 But I would have you know that ^c the head of every man is Christ; and ^d the head of the woman *is* the man; and ^e the head of Christ *is* God.

4 Every man praying or ^f prophesying, having *his* head covered, dishonoureth his head.

^b Ch. 4. 17. & 15. 1. 2 Thes. 2. 15. & 3. 6. ^c Or traditions. ^d Gen. 3. 16. 1 Pet. 3. 1, 6. Eph. 5. 22, 24. Gal. 4. 4. Phil. 2. 7-9. 16. 42. 1, 6, & 49. 3, 6. & 52. 13. & 55. 4. & 15. 30. & 19. 4.

The greatest temptation in the Apostle's days was, that of relapsing into idolatry; either directly into gross acts of this sin, through fear of persecution; or consequentially into the snare of a defiled conscience, by presumptuously misunderstanding the true bounds of what was lawful and innocent. Against both these he exhorts the Corinthians in the chapter before us,—against falling into *direct* idolatry through fear of persecution, he cautions them, ver. 13—21. against the next danger,—the falling *consequentially* into the snare of a defiled conscience, by presumptuously misunderstanding the true bounds of what is lawful and innocent,—he cautions them in the remaining part of the chapter.

The words contained in the 31st verse, hold forth a doctrine of the highest importance in religion. By the *glory of God* is originally meant, 1. His *essence*, person, or majesty. 2. The *manifestation* of his perfections or attributes in the external exercise of them towards his creatures. And hence, 3. The return and *acknowledgment* which his creatures make again *to God*, for this manifestation of his goodness to them.

To *give glory to God*, is to promote his *honour* in the world, or to contribute what we can towards the keeping up in our own and all men's minds a just sense of him, and a regard to him. And this is done particularly by worshipping him with constant and perpetually-returning acts of solemn public devotion:—By thanks particularly returned for special mercies or benefits received, whereby we profess our sense of God's being the author of them;—by the acknowledgment of his government and supreme dominion in the world;—by confession of past offences, with true humiliation, and a just sense of the unworthiness and ungratefulness of *sin*;—and by actual repentance and forsaking of *sin*, accompanied with real, constant, habitual amendment of heart and life. In short, whatever tends to the true honour of religion, and to the establishment of holiness, virtue, and goodness among men, this is one of those things which truly promote the *glory of God*.

Hence then we see what is required of men to practise, in the several cases and circumstances of life, in order to their satisfying the precept in question.—He that will in all things promote the glory of God, must not only be constant in acts *immediately* and *directly* religious; but he must

also resolve, in the strength of divine grace, against being at any time guilty of any action which is *irreligious*. Whoever is sincerely desirous of *doing all things to the glory of God*, as he will be heartily sorry for all his *own* sins and offences, so he will really endeavour, as much as in him lieth, to prevent the sins of *others*. He will avoid every thing which may lead them into sin. He will set them an *example* of holiness and virtue in the practice of his own life: he will recommend to them, in his discourse upon all fair occasions, the excellency and the reasonableness of religion: he will rejoice to see virtue, righteousness, and universal love prevail and prosper in the world; will wish, with Moses, *that all the Lord's people were prophets*, and contribute all in his power towards enabling them to be such.

But further, in all great actions,—actions of moment in the main course of human life, though they may not be *directly* religious, he ought expressly to intend the *glory of God*, as his chief and main end: for whatever is therefore *chosen* from sincere and pure motives, because it tends to the promoting of *holiness*, *virtue*, and *goodness*, is in the Scripture sense done *for the glory of God*; and whatever is in like manner *avoided*, because it has a tendency to *evil*, is avoided *for the glory of God*.

Now there is no considerable action in any man's life, no action of consequence and importance in the world, but which, even though it has not any direct relation to religion, yet some way or other has, on the whole, a tendency to promote the cause of virtue or of vice. Such, for instance, is a man's choosing his profession, or manner of life in the world. Whatever profession,—though not directly unlawful,—leads men into many and strong temptations to sin, will always, if possible, be avoided by a man who is sincerely desirous of doing all things to the glory of God. Every innocent profession may equally and indifferently be chosen by any good man; but yet, even in that choice, his main and ultimate end will be the exercise of right and truth. Profit, reputation, and the like, may very innocently and very justly be aimed at, by men in any business or employment whatever; but then these things must always be desired, with a due subordination to the interests of holiness and virtue, which is the glory of God, and the only true and final happiness of men.

—Who

5 But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with *her* head uncovered dishonoureth *her* head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

* Luke, 2. 38. Acts, 2. 17. & 21. 9.

—Whoever, in the great lines and main course of his life, aims merely or principally at worldly ends,—in the attainment of those ends, *he has his peculiar, his only reward.*

Once more, as in all *great actions* a good Christian ought actually, so in all, even the *smallest* and most inconsiderable actions of life, he ought habitually to intend the *glory of God.* The royal prophet, in Pf. cxlviii. 2, &c. represents all, even the *irrational*, nay, the very inanimate creatures, as *glorifying God by fulfilling his word*, by acting regularly according to the nature that he had given them. Much more then may even the most common actions of *men* be justly said to be *done to the glory of God*, when they are done, from gracious principles, decently and soberly, regularly and innocently, as becomes Christians,—such as have upon their minds, even when they are not directly thinking of it, an *habitual* regard to God and religion. In a *journey*, to a diligent man, and one whose mind is really bent upon his journey's end, every thing he does, as well as his actual travelling, tends truly to the same end. His rest, and sleep, his stops and refreshments, nay, his very digressions, still tend uniformly towards enabling him to arrive at his intended home. And thus likewise, in the course of a religious life, to a man sincerely virtuous and truly holy, every action of his life promotes the glory of God; every thing he does, is sanctified by a habit of piety; his worldly *business* and *employments*, by justice and charity running uniformly through all the parts of it;—the *common actions* of his life by decency and inoffensiveness, and all his relaxations by genuine simplicity and right intention. In a word, whatever he is doing, he still always habitually remembers the end; and therefore, while in this spirit, through the grace of God, he never does amiss.

The uses naturally arising by way of reflection from what has been said, are as follow:

1. We may learn hence, how severe a reproof those persons justly deserve, who, far from doing all things, as the Apostle directs, to the *glory of God*, do on the contrary, by profaneness, unrighteousness, and debauchery, directly dishonour him whom they profess to serve; bringing a reproach and infamy upon our most holy religion, and causing the name of God and the doctrine of Christ to be, through their means, blasphemed in the world.

2. Those deserve, in the next place, to be rebuked sharply, who, though they do not dishonour God by acts directly *irreligious*, yet are careless and negligent in matters of religion: not much regarding whether truth or error prevails in the world; not being solicitous to do honour to their religion, and to promote the spreading of the Gospel of Christ, by shewing its reasonableness, by preserving its simplicity and purity, and by exhibiting its beauty to all mankind.

3. After these, such are the objects of censure, who have indeed a zeal for religion, but *not according to knowledge*; placing the main stress of religion in forms and ceremonies unworthy of God, or in opinions and notions, which either through their obscurity, or their disagreement

with the everlasting Gospel and the divine perfections, hinder instead of promoting the glory of God.

4. Even the best of men have need to be admonished and put in remembrance, that they *stir up the gift of God which is in them*, that so they may be more and more diligent in all their actions, to do every thing to the glory of God; not with a superstitious anxiety, or a burdensome preciseness in things of little moment, but with a cheerful application of every occurrence of life to the promoting of truth and right, of holiness and virtue among men:—Rejoicing in the glory of God, and in the establishment of his kingdom of righteousness, as that wherein consists the happiness of mankind, both in this world, and in that which is to come.

Lastly, we may learn hence to comfort and satisfy the minds of weak Christians, who, not having a right notion what the *glory of God* is, are not able to assure themselves that they are true promoters of it.—A Christian's duty, of doing all things to the glory of God, signifies plainly and simply *this*—“That he ought always to prefer the interests of religion, holiness, and virtue, and to promote and establish them in himself and in the minds of his fellow-creatures, at all times and in all places, before all worldly considerations whatsoever.”

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Apostle returns to the subject of eating the sacrifices offered to idols.

1. He reminds the Corinthians of the distinguished privileges, and fatal overthrow of the Israelites in the wilderness. *Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea*, led by divine protection, covered from the heat by day, and cheered by the light of fire by night; preserved amid the watery walls, and safely traversing the ocean's bed; *and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea*, sprinkled with some drops from the cloud, or from sprays of the dashing waves; and were all brought under the Mosaic law, as we by baptism are visibly admitted into the church of Christ, and devoted to his service: *and did all eat the same spiritual meat*, the manna which fell around their tents, the figure of Christ, the true bread which came down from heaven, on whom his believing people sacramentally feed to the end of time; *and did all drink the same spiritual drink*; for they drank of that *spiritual rock* that followed them, and that rock was Christ. Through all the desert the living streams gushed forth to slake their thirst; and that divine Redeemer, whom the rock, the fountain of living waters, and the streams from Lebanon prefigured—he, by his gracious presence, was in the midst of them, as he is still in the hearts of all his believing people. *But*, though all enjoyed these distinguishing privileges, *with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness*; and, for their disobedience and rebellions, were not suffered to enter into the land of promise, the type of the heavenly Canaan; but their carcases fell in the desert. Note: It is not out-ward

6 For, if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: ^a but, if it be a shame covered, for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

^a Num. 5. 18. Deut. 22. 5.

ward privileges enjoyed, but inward grace possessed, which alone can bring us to the eternal inheritance, and the rest which remaineth for the people of God.

2. From their examples, the Apostle warns the Corinthians not to be secure, notwithstanding their distinguished privileges, lest, imitating their sins, they should be exposed to like punishment. (1.) He cautions them against the indulgence of their appetites. Dissatisfied with the manna, the Israelites lusted after flesh to eat. Against such luxury they must beware, and particularly avoid the idol feasts or sacrifices, which could not but have the most fatal consequences. *Note*; To please the palate, how many have plunged both body and soul into hell! (2.) He warns them against idoltry, such as the Israelites committed, when, having offered their sacrifices to the calf, they sat down to feast upon them, and, according to the heathen custom, rose up to dance around the calf, to do him honour; but they severely suffered for their abominations, Exod. xxxii. 10. 28. (3.) He admonishes them against fornication, such as the Jews committed with the daughters of Moab, and to which they were led at their idol feasts; the dire consequence of which was, that in one day three-and-twenty thousand were cut off by the immediate judgement of God. With such an instance of divine vengeance before them, they had need tremble for themselves in a city so abandoned to lewdness as Corinth was, knowing that none of their privileges could protect them, if they sinned, but that whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. (4.) He warns them against all dishonourable distrust of the power and grace of Christ to carry them through their difficulties, remembering the vengeance inflicted upon those of old, who tempted and provoked God by their unbelief, Numb. xxi. 6. and were destroyed by the fiery serpents. *Note*; When unbelief prevails, then the old serpent, the devil, resumes his dominion over the soul. (5.) He cautions them against all discontent under their sufferings or trials, and to beware of those who would instigate them to murmur against him, and against the other ministers of Christ for what they delivered from him. Thus murmured the Israelites against Moses and Aaron, on account of the difficulties which they apprehended, and were destroyed by the angel's hand. These things were all recorded for the admonition of the church; and what befel God's professing people of old, should be a warning to us at present, who live under the last dispensation which God will ever grant, that, having their fearful punishment in view, we might avoid the like provocations. *Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth secure and immoveable, take heed lest, puffed up with high imaginations of his own sufficiency, he fall, as the Israelites did of old.* *Note*; (1.) The falls of others should be our warnings. (2.) Distrust of ourselves, and dependance upon the power and grace of the Redeemer, are our great stability.

3. He encourages the truly pious among them, under all their trials, to trust and not be afraid. *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man, such as*

you might expect from the world around; or such as is incident to human nature; or at least, none so grievous but you may well bear up under it. *But however severe your temptations may be, God is faithful to his promises, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it*; and if you trust in him, he will support you while it lasts, and in his good time give you deliverance from it; so that you shall neither be drawn into sin, nor faint under your sufferings. *Note*; (1.) We must not think our trials singular, and murmur, however severe they may be: others have felt the same before us. (2.) God's faithfulness to his promises should be the anchor of our hope. (3.) Our Redeemer is mighty; we may safely trust him. (4.) God knows best what afflictions we need, and how long we should be exercised with them. To him let us always refer ourselves, casting our care upon him.

2dly, From the foregoing premises the Apostle returns to urge the necessity of shunning idolatry, in its most distant approaches, knowing the dreadful consequences of it on the one hand, and the divine assistance promised on the other. He therefore, with warm affection, warns them as *dearly beloved, to flee from idolatry*; and, as to *wise men*, whether really possessed of spiritual wisdom, or vainly puffed up with their fancied high attainments, he appeals to them for the reasonableness of what he advanced.

1. He instances in the case of the Lord's supper. *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? Do we not therein profess to hold communion with Christ in all his saving blessings? Do we not therein acknowledge our obligations to him, as bought with a price, to glorify him in our bodies and our spirits, which are his? The bread, or loaf, which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? Does not our feeding upon it signify our communion with him who is the living bread? And do we not hereby profess our solemn devotedness to him, and union with each other? For we, being many, are one bread, as the different corns of wheat are moulded into one loaf, and intimately united in one body, of which Christ is the living head; for we are all partakers of that one bread, feasting together upon the sacrifice of Christ, herein shadowed forth; partakers of all the benefits obtained by his one oblation once offered; and thereby united to him in love, and to one another.*

2. The case is the same with regard to the Jewish sacrifices. *Behold Israel after the flesh, in their observance of the ritual services; are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? When they feasted upon the remainder of the peace-offerings, they profess communion with, and subjection to that God, on whose altar they offered their sacrifice.*

3. He applies what he had said to the point in hand. *What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is sacrificed to idols is any thing? No, I have declared the contrary, chap. viii. The idol is nothing, and the meat in its nature*

7 For a man, indeed, ought not to cover his head, inasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.

¹ Gen. 1. 26, 27. & 5. 1. & 9. 6. Jam. 3. 9. Pl. 8. 6. ^{*} Gen. 3. 16. & 2. 23.

nature not altered. *But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God.* The dæmons whom they worship, are wicked and fallen spirits, with whom, in these sacrifices, they maintain communion, and to whom they pay divine honours. *And I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils, as by parity of reason, considering the foregoing cases, you must, if you feast with the idolaters on their sacrifices. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, the symbol of his blood, and the cup of devils, the libations consecrated to these dæmons; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils; there is an utter inconsistency in such a conduct; Christ and Belial can have no communion. To feast, therefore, in idol temples, is to renounce Christianity, its sacraments, and privileges. Do we provoke the Lord Jesus to jealousy, by such idolatry, in direct opposition to his holy law? Exod. xx. 3—5. Are we stronger than he? and do we defy the wrath of the Almighty? Surely destruction must be the consequence. Note; When we have to do with a jealous God, how careful should we be that no idol in our hearts, as well as no outward object of idolatry, rob him of his peculiar honour!*

3dly, The Apostle,

1. In general warns them against every abuse of their Christian liberty. *All things are lawful for me, and these meats offered to idols are not thereby defiled; but all things are not expedient.* There are circumstances, in which it would be duty to abstain from what is in its own nature innocent and indifferent: *all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not; and therefore, if eating these sacrifices gave offence to a weak brother, it would be then my duty to abstain, however clear I might be in the lawfulness of the thing.* And this is a rule applicable to many other cases; therefore, generally, *let it be your practice that no man seek his own will, humour, or benefit; but every man another's wealth,* ready to deny himself, in order to promote the advantage and edification of others.

2. He shews in what particular instances the meat offered to idols might be safely eaten. (1.) If it was exposed in the public market to be sold, then they need not make any inquiries, *for conscience sake,* whence it came, but buy, and use it for common food. *For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;* and all the creatures are good, when used to his glory. (2.) If any heathen acquaintance bid you to a feast, and you have any inducement or obligation to go, whatever the table affords may be eaten without scruple; but if any person at the table suggests, *this is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not, for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake,* bearing your testimony thereby against all such impious honours offered to dæmons, and keeping your conscience void of offence. *For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;* and he has provided sufficiency of other food, without our dishonouring him by the least thing which might seem to countenance idolatrous worship. *Abstain for conscience sake, I say, not thine own,*

but of the other, who informed you, and might be grieved or stumbled by your example.

3. He answers an objection which might be raised. *For why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?* His conscience is not to be the rule of my conduct. *For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?* In answer, he replies, that the following rules must be applied to all particular circumstances. Some understand the Apostle, not as speaking in the person of an objector, but as declaring what he did in such a case; and intimating how imprudent it would be to give others occasion to pass a wrong judgement upon him; for however lawful it might be for him to eat the meat which had been offered to idols, yet he was, for the sake of his influence and usefulness, to take care, that *his good might not be evil spoken of,* Rom. xiv. 16. and therefore he would obtain: two general rules he prescribes,

[1.] *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God,* making that the ultimate end of all your actions.

[2.] *Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.* Do nothing which should grieve or stumble them; particularly, avoid the meat offered to idols, which the Jews abominated, and might prove a snare to the weaker Gentile converts. And what he recommended to them, he practised himself: *even as I please all men in all things, as far as I lawfully can, not seeking mine own profit, humour, or inclination, but the profit of many, that they may be saved;* solicitous, by every means, to win souls to the adored Redeemer, and to lead them in the ways of everlasting life.

C H A P. XI.

FROM the things written in this chapter, and in chap. xiv. ver. 34, 35, 36. it appears that some of the Corinthian women, on pretence of being inspired, had prayed and prophesied in the Christian assemblies as teachers: and while performing these offices, had cast off their veils, after the manner of the heathen priestesses in their heathen extasies. These disorderly practices, the false teacher, it seems, had encouraged, ver. 16. from a desire to ingratiate himself with the female part of the Corinthian church. But the Apostle's adherents, sensible that it did not become the women to be teachers of the men, had restrained them. And this having occasioned disputes between the church and the faction, the church, in their letter, applied to the Apostle for his decision.—In answer, he first of all commended them for having held fast his ordinances concerning the public worship of God, ver. 2. Next, he explained the foundation on which his ordinances relating to the public worship were built, namely, the subordination of all men to Christ, the subordination of woman to man, and the subordination of the human nature of Christ to God. For by this subordination, the behaviour both of men and women in the public assemblies was to be regulated,

8 For ¹ the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.

9 ^m Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.

¹ Gen. 2. 21, 23. 1 Tim. 2. 13.

^m Gen. 2. 18—23.

gulated, ver. 3.—Every man, says the Apostle, who prayeth or prophesieth in public with his head veiled, dishonoureth Christ his head; who having given man authority over woman, is dishonoured when the man renounces that authority, by appearing veiled in the presence of the woman as her inferior, ver. 4.—On the other hand, every woman who prays or prophesies in public with an unveiled head, dishonours the man her head. Because the wearing of a veil, being an expression of inferiority, by appearing in public unveiled, she renounces her subjection to the man her superior, and sets herself on an equality with him. Besides, for a woman to throw off her veil in public, was the same kind of indecency as to appear with her head shaven, ver. 5.—Wherefore, says the Apostle, if it be a shame for a woman to appear in public shorn or shaven, let her be veiled, ver. 6.—Farther, the different mental and bodily accomplishments of man and woman shew that, in the public assemblies for worship, men ought not to be veiled, nor women unveiled, ver. 7.—The subjection of woman to man, appears even from the man's being first made, and from the woman's being made for the man, ver. 8, &c.—For which reason, the woman ought to have a veil on her head in the church, as a mark of her subjection.—In the mean time, that women might not be too much humbled by what he had said, he observed that in the method of salvation, man is not regarded separately from woman, nor woman separately from man; but the same way of salvation is appointed for both sexes, and the same blessings are promised to both, in the Gospel, ver. 11.—Besides, as the woman springs from the man, so the man is born into the world of the woman; and both, by the power of God, ver. 12.—Next, to shew the impropriety of women's praying in public unveiled, and of men's praying veiled, the Apostle appealed to the feelings of the Corinthians, ver. 13.—and asked them whether reason and experience did not teach them, that if a man suffers his hair to grow long for an ornament to him, as women's hair is to them, it is a disgrace to him? Because men, being designed for laborious occupations, long hair is extremely inconvenient, especially in warm climates, and therefore is used only by the effeminate, ver. 14.—But women being formed to sweeten the toils of men by their beauty, if they have long hair it is a glory to them; their hair being given them as a veil to heighten their charms, ver. 15.—His discourse on this subject, the Apostle concluded with telling the faction, that if any teacher contentiously insisted that women might pray and prophesy in the church unveiled, he ought to know that the Apostles allowed no such custom, neither was it practised in any of the churches of God, ver. 16.

The Corinthians had likewise been guilty of great irregularities in celebrating the Lord's supper. For the Apostle told them, that though he praised them for observing his precepts in general, he did not praise them for this, that they came together in their religious meetings, not for the better, but for the worse; making these meetings the occa-

sion of strengthening the discord that had taken place among them, ver. 18, 19.—For when they came together in the church to eat the Lord's supper, they formed themselves into separate companies. Perhaps those who had been baptized by the same teacher, sat down by themselves at separate tables. Or, as violent contentions about different matters had arisen among the Corinthians, probably they were so displeased with one another, that neither of the factions would allow any to join them, except their own adherents. To correct these unchristian practices, the Apostle told them, that their coming together into one place was not all that was necessary to the right eating of the Lord's supper. They ought to have eaten it together in a body, as jointly bearing witness to the truth of Christ's death and resurrection, and in testimony of their love to one another as his disciples, ver. 20.—They had erred likewise in another respect. The different companies first took their own supper, of victuals which they brought into the church ready prepared; and joined thereto the Lord's supper, making it a part of a common meal or feast. And many of them sinned against the poor who had no supper to bring, by excluding them from partaking with them, not only of the previous feast, but of the Lord's supper itself: so that some were hungry on these occasions, while others were plentifully fed, ver. 21.—What, said the Apostle to them sharply, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? Or, by making the church of God a place of feasting, do ye mistake it for a heathen temple, and put your poor brethren to shame who have no supper to eat? ver. 22.—These feasts, previous to the Lord's supper, seem to have been introduced by the Jewish Christians, who, because Christ instituted his supper, after he had eaten the passover, might think themselves warranted to sup together, before they ate the Lord's supper. To the previous supper or feast, the Gentile converts had no objection, as it had some resemblance of the feast on the sacrifice in the idol's temple, to which, in their heathen state, they had been accustomed. And viewing it in that light, we may suppose they invited their heathen acquaintance to partake both of the previous feast, and of the Lord's supper itself, in return for the feasts on the sacrifices to which the heathens had invited them.

To remedy these great disorders in the celebration of the Lord's supper, and to shew the Corinthians how much they had corrupted that holy service, the Apostle repeated the account which he had formerly given them of its institution, according as he had received it of the Lord by revelation, ver. 23—26.—From his account we learn, that the Lord's supper is not a common meal designed for the refreshment of the body, but a religious service instituted to keep up the memory of Christ's death till he return. Having given this view of the true nature of the institution, the Apostle shewed them the sin of performing it in an improper manner, ver. 27.—directed them to prepare themselves for that service by self-examination, ver. 28.—and declared the punishment to which they subjected themselves,

10 For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head, because of the angels.

11 Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.

* That is, a covering, in token that she is under the power of her husband. Gen. 24. 65. Eccl. 5. 6. with Mat. 18. 10. Heb. 1. 14. Eph. 3. 10. * Gen. 2. 18-24. & 3. 16. Ch. 12. 20-22.

selves, by performing it unworthily, ver. 29—32.—Then concluded by ordering them to celebrate the Lord's supper together, ver. 33.—and to eat at home if they were hungry. The rest of their irregularities respecting that matter, he promised to rectify when he came to Corinth, ver. 34.

Ver. 1. *Be ye followers of me, &c.*] This verse seems to belong to the preceding chapter, where the Apostle had proposed himself as an example, and therefore it should not be separated from it. From what St. Paul says in this and the preceding verse, taken together, we may collect that he makes some reflection on the false Apostle; at least it is no small proof of St. Paul's integrity and humility, that he proposes himself to be followed no further, than as he sought the good of others, and not his own, and as he had Christ for his pattern. See ch. iv. 16. and Rom. xv. 3.

Ver. 2.] St. Paul commends the Corinthians for observing the orders he had left with them, and uses arguments to justify the rule he had given them, that women should not pray or prophecy in their assemblies uncovered; concerning which, it seems, there was some contention, for the resolution whereof they had appealed to St. Paul, ver. 2—16.

Ver. 3. *And the head of Christ is God*] When God is said to be the head of Christ, it relates to office constitution; and we can no more infer thence, that they are not partakers of the same divine nature, than that man and woman are not of the same human nature, when the man is said to be the head of the woman: but as there is a difference in order and authority between the man and the woman; so there is between God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, in that constitution, by which he, in his office capacity, is both head and Lord of all.

Ver. 4. *Disbonoureth his head*] It was the custom among the Greeks and Romans, as well as the Jews, to appear in places of worship with their heads covered; and it is certain that the Jewish priests wore a kind of turban, when ministering in the temple: but it seems that the Corinthian men wore a veil, out of regard to a Pharisaical institution, and in imitation of the custom observed in the synagogues, of which the Apostle therefore disapproves. The priests and prophetesses of the Gentiles had their faces uncovered, when they were under a holy rapture, and delivered their oracles; and at this time the hair of the priestesses was generally dishevelled: as the Corinthian women, when under the divine inspiration, wore their hair in the same fashion, it made them too much resemble the pagan priestesses; and for this reason, amongst others, the Apostle, with great propriety, discourages the practice. See Mele's 16th discourse, Whitby, Hammond, Elfner, and the foregoing note.

Ver. 5. *But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth*] Because they who gave thanks, and praised the Lord with

musical instruments, are said, 1 Chron. xxv. 1, 2. to *prophesy with harps, &c.*; and because the priests of Baal, who prayed and sang hymns to that idol in the contest with Elijah, are said, 1 Kings, xviii. 29. to have *prophesied till the time of the evening sacrifice*, many, by the women's *praying and prophesying*, understand their joining in the public prayers and praises, as a part of the congregation. Yet, as it is reasonable to think that *this praying and prophesying* of the women, was of the same kind with the praying and prophesying of the men who acted as teachers, mentioned ver. 4. we may suppose that the Corinthian women affected to perform these offices in the public assemblies, on pretence of their being inspired; and though the Apostle in this place has not condemned that practice, it does not follow that he allowed it, or that it was allowed in any church. His design here, was not to consider whether that practice was allowable, but to condemn the indecent manner in which it had been performed. For the women, when they felt, or thought they felt, themselves moved by the Holy Spirit in the public assemblies, throwing away their veils, prayed and prophesied with their heads uncovered, and perhaps with their hair dishevelled, in imitation of the heathen priestesses in their heathen raptures. See Virgil Eneid. lib. vi. l. 48. *Non compta mansere comæ, &c.* This indecency in the manner of their praying and prophesying the Apostle thought proper to correct before he prohibited the practice itself, because it gave him an opportunity of inculcating due subjection to the men, which is their duty, though some of them are unwilling to acknowledge it. Women's praying and prophesying in the public assemblies, the Apostle afterwards condemned in the most express terms, chap. xiv. 34. See the note there. We have an example of the same method of teaching, 1 Cor. viii. where, without considering whether it was lawful to join the heathens in their feasts on the sacrifice in the idol's temple, the Apostle shewed the Corinthians, that although they thought it was lawful because they knew an idol was nothing, yet the weak, who had not that knowledge, but who believed the idol to be a real, though subordinate god, might, by their example, be led to join in these feasts, and thereby be guilty of direct idolatry. This evil consequence the Apostle thought proper to point out before he determined the general question: because it afforded him an opportunity of inculcating the great Christian duty, of taking care never to lead our brethren into sin, even by our most innocent actions. See the note on Rom. xvi. 1.

Ver. 7. *Glory of God*] The word rendered *glory* signifies both a *beam or irradiation*, and a *likeness*. But I apprehend, that here the word must be taken in the latter sense. As a man ought not to have his head covered, as being the immediate image and glory of God, made in his likeness, as the first copy of his kind, before woman was created; it is therefore decent that he should appear with the marks of that superiority which he bears. But the woman should

I; forbear

12 For as the woman *is* of the man, even so *is* the man also by the woman; but ^p all things of God.

13 ^a Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair ^r it is a shame unto him?

15 But if a woman have long hair, it is a

glory to her: for her hair is given her for a ^{*} covering.

16 But ^r if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

17 Now in this that I declare *unto you* ^r I praise *you* not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.

18 For first of all, when ye come together

^p Prov. 16. 4. Rom. 11. 36. Heb. 1. 2, 3. Pf. 119. 91. ^a Ch. 10. 15. John, 7. 24. Luke, 12. 57. ^r Thes. 5. 21. ^r Ch. 14. 35.
^{*} Or veil. ^r 1 Tim. 6. 3, 4. Ch. 14. 33. ^r 2 Tim. 4. 2. Lev. 19. 17. Prov. 27. 5. Gal. 2. 11, 14. ^r 1 Tim. 5. 20. Rev. 3. 19.

forbear it; and it is enough to say of her, that she is the glory of the man, to whom God hath done no inconsiderable honour, as well as favour, in making so excellent and amiable a creature for his comfort. Yet still her state of subjection to him should be remembered; and it is very expedient that she should appear in public with some tacit acknowledgments of it. See Hammond, Locke, Elstner, and Calmer. Theodoret observes, that man is here styled the image and glory of God, neither as to his body, nor as to his soul; for in respect of the soul the woman is equally the glory of God, as to spirituality and immortality, and so is equally said to be *made after his image*. See Gen. i. 26, 27.

Ver. 10. For this cause ought the woman to have power, &c.] Mr. Locke acknowledges, with a modesty which does him much honour, that he did not understand this text,—and many seem to have darkened it by their attempts to explain it. The chief difficulty does not lie in the word *power*, which undoubtedly must be understood of the veil worn on their heads by married women, as a token of subjection to their husbands; (see Gen. xxiv. 65.) and some suppose that the veil was in Hebrew called רדד redid, from the root רדד reded, which signifies *subjection*: So that the veil was as it were the habit by which the woman shewed that she considered herself as in subjection: and Chardin observes, that the married women in Persia wear a peculiar habit to the very same purpose. It is more difficult to understand the meaning of the clause, *because of the angels*,—διὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων. It seems neither reasonable nor decent to understand this of *young ministers*, as if they were in peculiar danger of being ensnared by the beauty of women; and it is more grossly absurd still, to suppose with Tertullian, that there was any room to apprehend it could be a snare to *celestial spirits*:—a mistake which seemed to be grounded on the wild interpretation of Gen. vi. 2. so generally received among the fathers. Dr. Whitby understands it of *evil angels*, and thinks it refers to the punishment which Eve incurred, Gen. iii. 16. for hearkening to the suggestions of Satan. Mr. Gough, in a dissertation on the place, by ἄγγελοι understands *spies*, who he supposes came into Christian assemblies to make ill-natured remarks, and so would be glad to blaze abroad any indecencies which they might observe there. Others suppose that the presence of *good angels* is implied; and they understand the passage thus, [observing that the presence of angels in religious assemblies is favoured by Eccles. v. 6.

and the figures of the cherubim in the tabernacle and temple:] “The woman ought to have upon her head a veil, as a token of her being under the power and subjection of the man; and so much the rather ought she to wear it in religious assemblies, because of the *angels*; who are especially present there, and before whom we ought to be exceedingly careful that nothing pass which may be indecent and irregular, and unlike that perfect order and profound humility with which they worship in the divine presence.”

It is not for *me* to determine amid this variety of opinions; I shall therefore only add, that the reader will find in the note on Rom. xvi. 1. an explanation of this passage, which appears to me as satisfactory as any other; and by referring to Gough’s Dissertation at the end of his sermons, he will meet with copious matter for inquiry on the subject. See on Numb. vi. 7. The word ἐξουσία, rendered *power*, is used by Lucian, in his “Βίον παρσις,” for a *veil*.

Ver. 15. But if a woman have, &c.] This should be read with an interrogation, connecting it with the former verse, —But that if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her?—For, &c.

Ver. 16. But if any man seem to be, &c.] Be, or is disposed to be, &c. “If any one, from a love of disputing, or from his own different views of what is naturally decent, should controvert what I advance, I shall not contend further; but content myself with saying, that we have here no such custom, for women to appear with their heads uncovered; neither do I know of its prevailing in any other of the churches of God, whether planted by me, or any of my brethren. I think, therefore, that it ought to be avoided, as a singularity which may appear like affectation, and give offence, even if it be not judged a natural indecorum.” See Doddridge and Calmer.

Ver. 17.] We may observe from several passages in this epistle, that many Judaical customs had crept into the Corinthian church: this church being of St. Paul’s own planting, who spent two years at Corinth in forming it, it is evident that these abuses had their rise from some other teacher, who came to them after St. Paul’s leaving them, which was about five years before he wrote this epistle. These disorders therefore may, with reason, be ascribed to the head of the faction which opposed St. Paul, and who, as has been remarked, was a Jew, and probably judaized; and this, it is likely, was the foundation of the great opposition

in the church, I hear that there be ^u divisions among you; and I partly believe it.

19 For there must be also ^z heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

20 When ye come together therefore into one place, ^{*} *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper.

21 ^y For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and

another is drunken.

22 What! ^z have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame [†] them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not.

23 For ^a I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, ^b That the Lord Jesus, the *same* night in which he was betrayed, took bread:

^u Or *schisms*. Ch. 1. 10—12. & 3. 3. Heb. 10. 25. Tit. 3. 10. 1 Tim. 4. 1, 2. 2 Pet. 2. 1. 1 John. 2. 19. 29. 7. Jam. 2. 6.

[†] Or *them that are poor*.

^a Mat. 16. 26—28. Mark, 14. 22—25. Luke, 22. 19, 20.

^z Or *sects*. Deut. 13. 3. Mat. 10. 34. & 18. 7. Luke, 17. 1. & 2. 35. Acts, 20. 30. * Or *ye cannot eat*. ^y 2 Pet. 2. 13. Jude, 12. ^b Ver. 34. Lev. 19. 30. Pf. Ch. 15. 3. & 4. 2. 2 Tim. 2. 2. Ezek. 3. 17. Mat. 28. 20. Deut. 5. 32. & 12. 32. Ch. 10. 16, 17. Acts, 20. 7.

position between him and St. Paul, and the reason why St. Paul laboured so earnestly to destroy his credit among the Corinthians; this sort of men being very busy, very troublesome, and very dangerous to the Gospel, as may be seen in other of St. Paul's Epistles, particularly that to the Galatians.—The celebrating the passover among the Jews, was plainly the eating of a meal distinguished from other ordinary meals by several peculiar ceremonies. Two of these ceremonies were, eating of bread solemnly broken, and drinking a cup of wine, called "the cup of blessing." These two our Saviour transferred into the *Christian* church, to be used in their assemblies, for a commemoration of his death and sufferings. In celebrating this institution of our Saviour, the judaizing Corinthians followed the Jewish custom of eating their passover. They ate the Lord's supper as a part of their meal, bringing their provisions into the assembly, where they ate, divided into distinct companies, some feasting to excess, whilst others, ill provided, were in want. Their eating thus in the public assembly, and mixing the Lord's supper with their ordinary meal, as a part of it, with other disorders and indecencies accompanying it, is the subject matter of what remains in this chapter. The Apostle tells them, that he blames them for these innovations as much, as in the beginning of the chapter he commends them for keeping to his directions in other particulars.

Ver. 18. For *first* of all, &c.] To understand this, we must observe, *first*, that they had meetings sometimes on purpose only for eating the Lord's supper, ver. 33. *Secondly*, That to those meetings they brought their *own* supper, ver. 21. *Thirdly*, That though every one's supper was brought into the common assembly, yet it was not to eat in common, but every one fell to his own supper apart, as soon as it was ready, without staying for the rest of the company, or communicating with them in eating, ver. 21—23. In this St. Paul blames three things especially. *First*, That they ate their common food in the assembly, which was to be eaten at home in their houses, ver. 22—24. *Secondly*, That though they ate in their common meeting-place, yet they ate separately, every one his own supper apart; so that the plenty and excess of some shamed the want and penury of others, ver. 22. Hereby also the *divisions* among them were kept up, ver. 18. they being as

so many separated and divided societies, not as one united body of Christians, commemorating their common Head, as ought to have been the case in celebrating the Lord's supper, ch. x. 16, 17. *Thirdly*, That they mixed the Lord's supper with their own, eating it as a part of their ordinary meal; where they made not that discrimination between it and their common food, which they ought to have done, ver. 29.

Ver. 19. *There must be also heresies*] *There must be even heresies*. Hence it seems evident, that *heresy* is spoken of as something worse than the *schisms* or *divisions* mentioned ver. 18. but whether it be an evil entirely of a different kind, or only of a higher degree, is not so clear from this passage. The word *Aiōris* may probably here signify a party of people separated from their brethren, and forming what is called a distinct denomination; whereas there may be a *schism* without separation, if the people assembling together have uncharitable contentions with each other; which was the case with these schismatical Corinthians. See Doddridge.

Ver. 21. *Every one taketh before other, &c.*] This circumstance of their rapacious and indecent behaviour at their feasts is finely illustrated by a passage from Xenophon, *Memorab.* lib. iii. c. 41. in which he observes, that Socrates was much offended with the Athenians for their conduct at their common suppers, as some prepared delicately for themselves, while others were but slenderly provided for: he endeavoured to shame them out of this low taste, by offering his provisions to all the company. Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian, speaks of some Egyptians living near Alexandria, who partook of the sacrament in a very particular manner, much, as it seems, after the Corinthian fashion; introducing it with a jovial feast, in which they regaled themselves with all kinds of food. It may be proper just to observe, that many well-disposed Christians being deterred from communicating at the Lord's supper, by passages in this chapter, particularly ver. 27 and 29. they have no need to fear the unworthy receiving so strongly condemned here by St. Paul; since the abuses which crept into the Corinthian church are such, as can never be admitted in ours, upon the present mode of receiving the sacrament.

Ver. 22, 23. *Shall I praise you, &c.*] The Apostle plainly refers

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, ' Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do * in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is ^d the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

^c John, 6. 33—57. Prov. 9. 1—5. Pf. xxii. lxix. If. liii. Dan. 9. 24. ^e Or for remembrance. ^d Heb. 9. 15—18. Acts, 10. 43. ^f Num. 9. 2 Cor. 1. 20. [†] Or shew ye. ^c Heb. 9. 28. John, 14. 2, 3. Acts, 1. 11. & 3. 19. 1 Thef. 4. 16. Rev. 20. 11, 12. & 22. 20. ^f Num. 9. 10, 11. John, 6. 51, 63, 64. & 13. 27. Ch. 10. 21. Mat. 22. 11. 2 Chr. 30. 18. Heb. 10. 29. ^g Lam. 3. 40. 2 Cor. 13. 5. Gal. 6. 4. Zech. 2. 1. Num. 9. 13.

refers here to what he had said ver. 2. where he *praised* them for remembering him in all things, and for retaining what he had delivered to them. This commendation he now retracts; for in this matter of eating the Lord's supper they did not retain what he had delivered to them, ver. 23. which therefore, in the immediately following words, he repeats to them again. It is very remarkable, that the institution of the ordinance of the Lord's supper should make a part of that immediate revelation with which our Lord honoured this great Apostle; and it affords a strong argument for the perpetuity of it in the church: for had others of the Apostles (as Barclay presumes to insinuate) mistaken what had happened at the last passover, and founded the observation of the Eucharist on that mistake, surely Christ would rather have corrected this error in his new revelation to St. Paul, than have administered such an occasion of confirming Christians in it. See Locke, Doddridge, Barclay's Apol. prop. 13. and the notes on the parallel places.

Ver. 24, 25. *And when he had given thanks, &c.*] This is a remarkable instance, among a thousand, to prove the authenticity of St. Luke's Gospel. The Apostle, finding it necessary to reprove the Corinthians for their behaviour at the Lord's supper, labours to convince them of the heinousness of their conduct, by shewing how unsuitable it was to the nature and end of that solemn institution: but when he comes to explain the institution itself, though he acquired the knowledge of it by immediate revelation, yet it is very remarkable that he expresses himself in the words of the Evangelist, Luke, xxii. 19, 20. intending, it should seem, by this quotation, to make them sensible, that though they might plead the frailty of their memory, in excuse of their forgetfulness of what himself had delivered on this subject by word of mouth, they were nevertheless extremely culpable, in not attending to the information of the Gospel that they had then in their hands; which, if duly regarded, would have effectually restrained them from such infamous proceedings. If this be allowed, and St. Paul had actually an eye to St. Luke in this passage, we have seen a pretty clear proof that his Gospel was written before this 1st Epistle to the Corinthians; that is, before the year fifty-seven, and may thence conclude, that we cannot be far distant from the truth in fixing the date of its publication to the year fifty-three. See Owen's Observations on the four Gospels, p. 47, &c. The word *γὰρ*, for,

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, † ye do shew the Lord's death ^c till he come.

27 Wherefore ^c whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But ^e let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.

ver. 26. has the force of an *illative* particle; accordingly we may read it *therefore*. Instead of *testament*, some read *covenant*.

Ver. 26. *As often as ye eat this bread*] It is no wonder that a text, in which this element is so plainly called *bread*, after consecration, should be urged against the popish doctrine of *transubstantiation*: it signifies little for the favourers of that opinion to plead, that the Scriptures sometimes call things changed by the name of the thing out of which they were made, (as Adam is called *dust*, Gen. iii. 19. Aaron's serpent a *rod*, Exod. vii. 12.) or call them according to their sensible appearance (as Joshua, v. 13. Mark, xvi. 5.); for these instances rather turn against them, by proving that where the literal interpretation is evidently absurd, we must have recourse to the figurative. Nothing can be more unreasonable than to refer the last clause of this verse, as the Quakers do, to the time when Christ should come, by his spiritual illumination on their minds, to take them off from carnal ordinances; for, not to insist upon it, that we have at least as much need of the Lord's supper as the primitive Christians had,—not having many advantages which they had, such as the miraculous gifts, &c.—it is evident that the grand coming of Christ by the Spirit was, when it was poured out on the day of Pentecost; an event many years prior to the date of this Epistle. See Doddridge, Stillington, and Tillotson.

Ver. 27. *And drink*] The original is, *or drink*. Our Saviour, in the institution of the Lord's supper, tells the Apostles, that the bread and the wine were sacramentally his body and blood, and that they were to be eaten and drunk in remembrance of him; which, ^{ver. 26.} St. Paul interprets it, was to *shew forth his death till he come*. Whoever, therefore, ate and drank them so as not solemnly to shew forth his death, followed not Christ's institution, but used them *unworthily*; that is, not to the end for which they were instituted. This makes St. Paul tell them, ver. 20. that their coming together to eat as they did, namely, the sacramental bread and wine, promiscuously with their own food, as a part of their meal,—and that, though in the same place, yet not all together, in one company,—was not the eating of the Lord's supper. *Shall be guilty of the body, &c.* means, "shall be liable to the punishment due to one who makes a wrong use of the sacramental body and blood of Christ in the Lord's supper." What that punishment was, see ver. 30.

Ver. 28.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh ^h damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

30 For this cause ⁱ many are weak and sickly

among you, and many sleep.

31 For ^k if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, we are

^h Or judgment. Ver. 30. 32, 34, 37. Rom. 13. 2. Ch. 10. 21. Mat. 22. 11. 2 Chr. 30. 18. II. 27. 11. & 32. Heb. 11. 6. Rev. 3. 19.

ⁱ Amos, 3. 2. Pl. 78. 30, 31.

^k Pl. 32. 5. Prov. 18. 17. Jer. 6. 8. & 31. 18—20. & 3. 12, 13.

Ver. 28. *But let a man examine himself*] St. Paul, as we have observed, tells the Corinthians, ver. 20. that to eat it after the manner they did, was not to eat the Lord's supper. He tells them also, ver. 29. that to eat it without a due and direct imitating regard had to the Lord's body, (for so he calls the sacramental bread and wine, as our Saviour did in the institution) by separating the bread and wine from the common use of eating and drinking for hunger and thirst, was to eat unworthily. To remedy these disorders herein, he sets before them Christ's own institution of this sacrament, that in it they might see the manner and end of its institution, and by that every one might examine his own comportment herein, whether it were conformable to that institution, and suited to that end. In the account that he gives of Christ's institution, we may observe, he particularly remarks to them, that this eating and drinking was no part of common eating and drinking for hunger and thirst; but was instituted in a very solemn manner, after they had supped, and for another end, viz. to represent Christ's body and blood, and to be eaten and drunk in remembrance of him; or as St. Paul expounds it, to shew forth his death. Another thing which they might observe in the institution was, that this was done by all who were present, united together in one company, at the same time. All which put together, shews us what the examination here proposed is. For the design of the Apostle being to reform what he found fault with in their celebrating the Lord's supper, it is by that alone that we must understand the directions he gives them about it, if we would suppose that he talked pertinently to this captious people, whom he was very desirous to reduce from the irregularities they were running into in this matter, as well as several others. And if the account of Christ's institution be not in order to their examining their carriage by it, and adjusting it to it, to what purpose is it here? The examination therefore proposed was no other but an examination of their manner of eating the Lord's supper by Christ's institution, to see how their behaviour herein comported with the institution, and the end for which it was instituted. Which further appears to be so by the punishments annexed to their miscarriages herein, which were infirmities, sickness, and temporal death, with which God chastened them, that they might not be condemned with the unbelieving world, ver. 30—32. For if the unworthiness here spoken of, were either unbelief, or any of those sins which are usually made the matter of examination, it is to be presumed the Apostle would not wholly have passed them over in silence: this at least is certain, that the punishment of these sins is infinitely greater than that which God here inflicts on unworthy receivers, whether they who are guilty of them received the sacrament or not. The words *Kai εως*, as to the letter, are rightly

translated *and so*; but that translation leaves generally a wrong sense of the place in the mind of an English reader. For, in ordinary speaking, these words, *let a man examine himself, and so let him eat*, are understood to import the same with these, *let a man examine himself, and then let him eat*; as if they signified no more, but that examination should precede, and eating follow; which I take to be quite different from the meaning of the Apostle here, whose sense the whole design of the context shews to be this: *I here set before you the institution of Christ; by that let a man examine his carriage; και εως, and according to that let him eat; let him conform the manner of his eating to that.*

Ver. 29. *Unworthily*] See ver. 27. To receive for the purposes of intemperance or of faction, was certainly receiving very *unworthily*. The sense of the Apostle's expression, however, may be extended to every manner of receiving contrary to the nature and design of this solemn ordinance, and consequently to the case of doing it *merely in a secular view*, which it is heartily to be wished that all concerned in it would seriously consider. It is perhaps one of the most unhappy mistakes in our version of the Bible, that the word *κριμα* is rendered *damnation*. It has raised a dread in tender minds, which has greatly obstructed the comfort and edification that they might have received from this ordinance. As the word signifies only that the unworthy receiver is guilty of sin, and may expect such punishment as is mentioned in the next verse; so, in conformity with the whole context, it should have been rendered *judgment*. The Apostle afterwards says, *we are judged, κενωμεθα*, that is, "we are chastened or corrected, that we may not be condemned," — *κατακριθωμεν*; which plainly shews, that the judgment spoken of might be fatherly chastisement. It should likewise be observed, that St. Paul does not say, *Whosoever shall eat this bread, being not worthy of it*; but whoever eats it in such an unworthy or irreverent manner as he describes above; and therefore the text in this view certainly ought not to discourage Christians at present from approaching the Lord's table. See Wall, Locke, Doddridge, and the next note.

Ver. 31. *For if we would judge ourselves, &c.*] In ver. 29. the Apostle uses the word *διακρίνω*, — *μη διακρίνων*, — "Not discriminating, or not putting a difference between the sacramental bread and wine, which St. Paul, with our Saviour, calls *Christ's body*, and other bread and wine, in the solemn and separate use of them." The Corinthians, as has been remarked, ate the Lord's supper at and with their own ordinary supper, whereby it came not to be sufficiently distinguished (as became a Christian and religious observance so solemnly instituted) from common eating for bodily refreshment; nor from the Jewish paschal supper, and the bread broken, and the cup and blessing used in that: nor did it in this way of eating shew forth the Lord's

¹ chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

¹ Ver. 30. Deut. 8. 2, 3. Pf. 89. 32. If. 27. 9. Jer. 24. 7. & 31. 18. Amos, 3. 2. Heb. 12. 5—10. Rev. 3. 19. Pf. 94. 12—14. Job, 5. 17, 18. with Hof. 4. 14, 17. ^m Ver. 21, 22. ⁿ Or judgment. ^o Tit. 1. 5. Ch. 7. 1. & 4. 19.

Lord's death, as it was designed to do by the concurrence and communion of the whole assembly of Christians, jointly united in the partaking of bread and wine in a way peculiar to them,—with reference solely to the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what St. Paul calls *eating unworthily*: to avoid which, he exhorts them to *judge themselves*, or rather (in plain allusion to this *not discriminating the Lord's body*) to *distinguish* or *discriminate* themselves; for *διακρίνειν* means the same here as it does ver. 29. and is never used to signify *judge*. He is little versed in St. Paul's writings, who has not observed how frequently he uses the same word that he had used before, to the same purpose, though in a different construction; as here he applies *διακρίνειν* to the persons discriminating, as in the 29th verse, to the thing to be discriminated; though in both places it be put to denote the same action.

Ver. 32. *We are chastened*] The word *παιδιωμεθα* properly signifies to be *corrected*, as scholars are by their masters for their good. Some render the verse, *But when we judge NOT ourselves, we are chastened by the Lord, &c.*

Ver. 33, 34. *Tarry one for another, &c.*] Some would read this passage thus, *Wait one for another, (and if any man hunger, let him eat at home) THAT ye may not come together to your guilt.* See Musculus and Bengelius.

Inferences.—It is the duty of Christians frequently to remember the honourable relation in which they stand to Christ, as their head; and as beyond all doubt, *under his mediatorial character*, he is most willingly and joyfully subject to God, we should learn to imitate him in that cheerful and entire subjection, out of love and reverence to him; guarding against whatever is unbecoming, lest he be dishonoured thereby, ver. 3, 4.

When in any act of divine worship we have the happiness to approach the blessed God, let us reverence his awful presence.

What St. Paul observes of the mutual dependance which the sexes have on each other, should dispose them to mutual candour and respect; avoiding the cruel tyranny or the vain affectation which often arms them on either side with ungenerous reflections; and as all things are of God, it should be our concern that all things be faithfully employed for his glory. Whatever comforts we receive in relative life, (which are indeed many and important) should lead us to adore the wisdom of the divine constitution, in the original formation of our nature, and the secret influence and conduct of his providence in the regulation of our respective circumstances and affairs, ver. 11, 12.

We see from ver. 14—16. the force of *custom* for determining in many respects what is decent, and what is otherwise. We ought to maintain a proper regard to this, lest, through our imprudence, *even our good should*

34 And if any man hunger, ^m let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto ^{*} condemnation. ⁿ And the rest will I set in order when I come.

be evil spoken of, and all our infirmities magnified into crimes.

What just matter of thankfulness to our blessed Redeemer does that account of the institution of his sacred supper afford, which St. Paul assures us he received immediately from him! Let us reflect, that it was in *that very night* in which he was *betrayed*, that his thoughts were so compassionately employed for our comfort and happiness;—a time when it might have been imagined that his mind would be entirely possessed with his personal concerns, with the doleful scene of his approaching sufferings, ver. 23. We learn from this account the perpetuity as well as the great leading design of the ordinance,—*We shew forth the Lord's death*, and we shew it forth *till he come*, ver. 26. If we do, indeed, desire to preserve the memory of our dying Saviour's love in the world, if we desire to maintain it in our own souls,—we must constantly and regularly attend this blessed institution, endeavouring, by the lively exercise of faith and love, to discern, and in a spiritual sense to feed upon the Lord's body. Nor let any humble and upright soul be discouraged by these threatenings of judgment to those profane sinners, who offered such gross affronts to this holy solemnity; a fronts which none of us are in danger of repeating. Their scandalous excesses, when they pretended to be worshipping God on this awful occasion, might justly provoke the eyes of his holiness, might awaken the arm of his indignation; yet even these sinners were *chastised*, that they might not be finally and for ever condemned, ver. 29—32.

Let not any then be terrified, as if every soul that approached the ordinance without a proper penitential spirit, must by necessary consequence seal its own *damnation*. Thus to attend the table of the Lord is indeed a sin; but, blessed be God, not a sin too great to be forgiven. Those therefore who, though they feel in their hearts a reverential love to Christ, yet have hitherto refrained from attending this feast of love, should, from these considerations, be engaged to attend it;—to attend it with repentant spirits. Then may they with the most hearty welcome from the great Lord of the feast eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, receiving it as the memorial of Christ's body broken, and of his blood shed, for the remission of sins. Through that Blood alone may we seek this invaluable blessing, without which, indeed, nothing can be a solid and lasting blessing to us! May we, on every occasion, treat our brethren with a tenderness and respect becoming those, who consider ourselves and them as redeemed by that precious Blood, and indebted to it for the hopes of everlasting salvation!

In a word, let us never rest in the external rites or exercises of worship, how decently and regularly soever performed; but look to our inward temper, and the conduct

CHAP. XII.

Spiritual gifts are diverse, yet all to profit withal; and to that end are diversely bestowed: that by the like proportion, as the members of a natural body tend all to the mutual decency, service, and succour of the same body; so we should do one for another, to make up the mystical body of Christ.

[Anno Domini 57.]

NOW concerning ^aspiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

^a Ver. 4, 8—10, 28. Ch. 14. 1. Eph. 4. 11. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. Jam. 1. 17. ^b Ch. 6. 11. Eph. 2. 11, 12. & 4. 17—19. Tit. 3. 3. 1 Pet. 4. 3. ^c Pl. 114. 5. Hab. 2. 18. If. 44. 9—20. 1 Thel. 1. 9. Mat. 15. 14. ^d Mark, 9. 39. * Or *ararkema*. ^e Mat. 16. 17. John, 13. 13. & 15. 26. Ch. 8. 6. 2 Cor. 3. 5. & 11. 4. 1 John, 4. 2. Gal. 2. 10, 20. 4. 11, 4. Jam. 1. 17.

2 Ye know that ye were ^bGentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

3 Wherefore I give you to understand, ^dthat no man speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus ^eaccursed: and *that* ^cno man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

4 Now ^fthere are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

^f Rom. 12. 6, 8. -Ver. 8—10, 28. 1 Pet. 4. 10. Heb. 2. 4. Eph.

duct of our minds, if we desire to maintain their peace, and that our coming together should be for the better, and not for the worse, ver. 17.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Apostle had proposed to his Corinthian brethren, in the conclusion of the former chapter, his own example; and he here exhorts them, *be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ*. He copied after his divine Master, and therefore could speak freely, when his own practice was so eminently a comment on his discourses.

1. To introduce with greater efficacy the reproofs which he was constrained to give, he commends them for what was praise-worthy among them. *Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you*; at least, the main body of the church loved, honoured, and respected him, and were observant of his instructions.

2. He lays a foundation for the rebuke which he was obliged to give, in reminding them of the superiority of the man over the woman. *I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ*; he is the Creator and Governor of all, and in a peculiar manner the head of his church: *and the head of the woman is the man*, who has by creation and nature the superiority, and therefore the woman should be in subjection: *and the head of Christ is God*, considered as Mediator; and, in his human nature, he is inferior to the Father; though, in his Godhead, co-equal and co-eternal.

3. The thing that he blames is, that their men prayed and prophesied *covered*, the women *uncovered*. Veiling the head, in the Eastern countries, was regarded as a token of modesty and subjection in the woman; and having the head uncovered, betokened the superiority of the man: when therefore any man prayed or prophesied with a covering on his head, he dishonoured Christ his head, who had given him the superiority; on the contrary, if any woman, under extraordinary inspiration, prayed or prophesied with her head uncovered, she dishonoured the man who is her head, by such an affectation of appearing like him; and, instead of modest subjection, pretended to an equality with him; and she might, with equal decency, cut her hair short, and wear it in the form peculiar to men, as thus appear unveiled. But if such a sight would appear

shocking and highly immodest, then *let her be covered*. *The man ought not to cover his head*; it would be to debase his dignity, *forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God*, invested with the supreme dominion; *but the woman is the glory of the man*, who has the honour of being placed in the rank of creation above her, and has a becoming dominion over her. *For the man is not of the woman*, created from her substance; *but the woman of the man*, from his rib. *Neither was the man created for the woman*, seeing he was in being before her, *but the woman for the man*, to be his helpmate; and therein was implied a reasonable subjection to him. *For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head*, and to be veiled, in token of her subjection, *because of the angels, or messengers of Christ*, who should preside in the assembly; and it would be highly arrogant to affect equality with them. *Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord*, both sexes partaking alike of that common salvation which is in Jesus Christ; so that though subjection be due, the woman is not to be tyrannized over as a slave, but to be cherished with the warmest affection and becoming respect. *For as the woman is of the man*, taken from his side, *even so is the man also by the woman*, springing from her; *but all things of God*, who hath placed each in their respective stations; which, therefore, for conscience sake, they should fill up. *Judge in yourselves; is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered*, affecting to be like the men, and inverting the established order of God? *Doth not even nature itself teach you*, that a distinction should be observed in the dress of the different sexes? And as it is the custom of the country where you live, to cut the hair short, it is regarded as a token of great effeminacy to appear otherwise. *So that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him*. *But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her*, comely, and becoming her sex; *for her hair is given her for a covering*, and should be managed so as to avoid all confusion of dress between the sexes. *But if any man seem to be contentious*, and disposed to vindicate such a preposterous practice, *we have no such custom, neither the churches of God*, where every appearance of a contentious spirit is condemned, and all such indecent affectation discountenanced.

2dly, Shocking abuses early crept into the Corinthian church,

5 And there are ^e differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

6 And there are ^h diversities of operations, but it is ⁱ the same God which worketh all in all.

^e Rom. 12. 4—8. Eph. 4. 5, 11. Ch. 8. 6. Ver. 28.
10. 23. Ch. 3. 7.

^h Ver. 8—10, 28, 30. Eph. 4. 11—13.

ⁱ Ver. 9, 10.

ⁱ Deut. 6. 4.

John, 10. 25, 37. & 14. 10. Ch. 8. 6. Eph. 1.
1 Ch. 1. 5. & 2. 6. & 13. 2, 8. & 14. 6. 2 Cor.

church, some of which the Apostle mentions; and sharply rebukes the offenders. Though he would praise them (ver. 2.) in general, there were some among them who were a dishonour to their holy profession; who met with them, *not for the better*, to receive edification, *but for the worse*, growing more corrupt, even in the very use of holy ordinances.

1. *When ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you, one being for Paul, and another for Apollos, and the church thus torn with factions; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you; such is the corruption of man's nature, and the craft of the wicked one, that tares will be sown among the wheat; and for wise purposes God permits it should be so, that they which are approved, may be made manifest among you, their faith tried, and their sincerity evidenced. Note; (1.) Nothing is more fatal to the church of Christ, than uncharitable divisions and discords between the members. (2.) God can over rule even the wickedness of apostates, to the furtherance of his believing people in faith and holiness.*

2. Some of them committed the most scandalous irregularities at the Lord's table. *When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper, the method in which you proceed being utterly subversive of the very intention of that holy ordinance; for in eating, every one taketh, before other, his own supper, as if it was a mere common meal; and what is still worse, one is hungry, the poor man goes away without any refreshment, the bread and wine being devoured by those who came first; and another is drunken, the rich indulging themselves to excess. What a scandalous abuse! Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in, when you want to nourish your bodies? or despise ye the church of God, and put contempt on the poor members of it, and shame them that have not, have no houses of their own, nor ability to provide the elements for themselves? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this, thus to form parties even in the church, and devour the provision of which the poor should partake? No, assuredly, I praise you not; I blame you exceedingly.*

3dly, To rectify these gross abuses which he reprehended, the Apostle sets before them,

1. The true nature of the sacred institution, as he received it from the Lord, and had faithfully delivered it unto them. *The Lord Jesus, the king of his church, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this bread is the symbol and representation of my body, which is broken for you, and offered upon the cross in your stead; this do in remembrance of me; continue, in this ordinance, a constant memorial of my dying love, and of the benefits which you receive thereby. After the same manner, also, he took the*

7 But the ^k manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8 For to one is given by the Spirit ^l the word of wisdom; to another the word of

cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament, or covenant, in my blood, which is now ratified by the blood-shedding of the Mediator, and all the inestimable privileges contained in it are secured to every faithful soul. This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me, frequently meeting to celebrate this sacred feast, remembering therein my matchless grace, manifest in those precious and plenteous drops of blood shed for your redemption; for as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come, declaring your dependence thereon, as the ground of all your hope towards God, and openly professing your faith in a crucified Redeemer, as all his people are called upon to do, until the day comes when his faithful saints shall appear with him in glory.

2. He warns them of the danger of an irreverent use of this holy ordinance, *wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, in such a scandalous, factious, and sensual manner, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, incurring the heavy guilt of treating with contempt the Blood of the covenant. But let a man examine himself, with regard to the truth of his faith, love, and conversion to God, and his knowledge of the design of this sacred institution; and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup, to his soul's edification and comfort. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, in the shocking manner before described, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, provoking some temporal judgment of God upon him; not discerning the Lord's body, nor making a difference between the sacred symbol thereof, and common food. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep, God visiting in sickness, disease, and death, your provocations. For if we would judge ourselves, and seriously examine into our conduct, that with real penitence we might return unto God, we should not be judged with such heavy providential afflictions. But when we are thus judged, we are chastened of the Lord in mercy, that we should not be condemned with the world, left to go on securely, and perish in our sins. Note; None should be discouraged from the Lord's table, who, on examining themselves, can say, that in simplicity they desire to approve themselves to him.*

3. He directs them how to celebrate this sacred ordinance. *Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another till all are assembled, and you can eat together, as children of one family, at the table of the Lord. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home, this being not designed as an ordinary meal; that ye come not together unto condemnation, provoking God by your irreverence, dissensions, or excess. And the rest, if there be any thing further amiss, respecting the proper discipline to be observed, will I set in order when I come.*

CHAP.

knowledge by the same Spirit ;
 y To another ^m faith by the same Spirit ; Spirit ;
 to another ⁿ the gifts of healing by the same

• Mat. 17. 20. Ch. 13. 2. Act, 14. 9. Heb. 12. 33. • Mark, 16. 17, 18. Jam. 5. 14. Mark, 6. 13. Act, 3. 6. & 19. 11, 12. & 28. 8.

CHAP. XII.

THE spiritual men * at Corinth having had great dissensions among themselves about the comparative excellency of their several gifts, and the honour which was due to each on account of his particular gift, the Apostle's adherents, we may believe, in their letter, had requested his opinion and direction concerning these matters. In compliance, therefore, with their desire, and because it was of great importance that mankind, in future ages, should have a just idea of the supernatural gifts with which the Christian church was at first enriched, the Apostle, in this and in the following ninth chapter, treated largely of these gifts, and of the persons who possessed them.

His discourse on these subjects he introduced with telling the Corinthians, that he wished them not to be ignorant of the offices of the spiritual men, and of the excellency of their gifts, ver. 1.—And to make them sensible of the honour which the church derived from the gifts of the spiritual men, he put the brethren at Corinth in mind that, before their conversion, they worshipped idols, who, being themselves dumb, could not impart to their votaries instantaneously the faculty of speaking foreign languages, as Christ had done to many of his disciples, ver. 2.—Next, because there were in that age impostors, who said they were inspired, and because the persons who possessed the gift of discerning spirits were not always at hand to examine them, the Apostle gave the Corinthians a rule, by which they might judge with certainty of every one who pretended to be inspired. No teacher, said he, speaks by the Spirit of God, who calls Jesus *accursed*, that is, who affirms that Jesus was justly punished with the accursed death of the cross. Probably some of the heathen priests and priestesses, in their pretended fits of inspiration, had spoken in this manner of Jesus. On the other hand, every teacher speaks by the Spirit of God, who acknowledges Jesus to be Lord, and endeavours to persuade men to become his disciples, ver. 3.

Having thus directed the Corinthian brethren to judge of the inspiration of the teachers who came to them, by the nature and tendency of the doctrine which they taught, the Apostle proceeded to that which he had chiefly in view, namely, to remove the dissensions which had taken place at Corinth among the spiritual men. For such of them as possessed inferior gifts, envying those whose gifts were of a superior kind, and the latter behaving with insolence towards the former, the Apostle, to allay their animosities, explained, in this chapter, the nature and difference of the spiritual gifts; discoursed concerning

their comparative excellency, and concerning the purposes for which they were bestowed, and the different offices allotted to the persons who possessed them; then gave directions concerning the manner and order in which these gifts were to be exercised.

And first he observed, that there were diversities of gifts, but one Spirit from whom they all proceeded, ver. 4.—That there were diversities of ministries, or offices, in which those who possessed the spiritual gifts were employed, but one Lord whom they all served, ver. 5.—And that there were differences of in-workings in the spiritual men, but it was the same God who wrought inwardly in them all, ver. 6.—Next, he enumerated the spiritual gifts in the order of their dignity; and from his account it appears, that these gifts were various in their nature, and were bestowed on the spiritual men in the greatest plenty, ver. 7—10.—Now all these, said he, one and the same Spirit of God worketh, distributing to each according to his own pleasure, ver. 11.—But, however different in their nature the spiritual gifts might be, he told them they were all so distributed, as to render the church one body. For as the human body, though it consists of many members, is but one body, so also is the body of Christ, the true christian church, ver. 12.—All the individuals of which the church is composed, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, slaves or freemen, through their being baptized into one Spirit, are formed into one body or society, ver. 13.

Having thus compared the church to the human body, the Apostle carried on the allegory, by observing, that since the human body does not consist of one member, but of many, ver. 14.—if the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am no part of the body, is it for this not a member of the body, and free from doing its office in the body? ver. 15.—And if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, &c. ver. 16.—If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? and if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? ver. 17. His meaning is, that the inferior members should not decline their particular functions, because they are not the superior.—But now, says he, God hath assigned to every one of the members its own place and office in the body, because if all were one member, there would not be a body, ver. 18.—Whereas, by the union of many members, there is one body formed, to the existence of which the service of all the members is necessary, ver. 20.—So that no one member can say to another, I have no need of thee, ver. 21.—Nay, the members which seem to be more feeble, are more necessary to the preservation of the body than even those that are more strong and active, ver. 22.—The same may be said of those members which we think feeble and less honourable; on which account we are at the greatest pains to protect and adorn them, ver. 23.—But our comely members, being strong, have no need of protection and ornament.—Besides, God hath knit the body together, by means of these weak and uncomely members on which he hath bestowed more abundant honour, through their greater efficacy in nourish-

* By *spiritual men* I here mean only men endowed with *supernatural gifts*. The *graces* of many who possessed not any of the *supernatural gifts* might have been far superior to the *graces* of some who did possess them. The Apostle's mode of expression in this chapter appears to me to justify the expression which I here use.

10 To another the ° working of miracles; to spirits; to another ° divers kinds of tongues; to another ° prophecy; to another ° discerning of to another ° the interpretation of tongues:

° Acts, 5. 5. & 17. 11 & 11. 10. & 20. 12. & 19. 12. John, 14. 12. P Ch. 14. 1, 3. Acts, 11. 27, 28. & 21. 9, 11. Rom. 12. 6. Joel, 2. 18.
 1 John, 4. 1 Rev. 2. 2. Acts, 5. 3, or Ch. 14. 29. Ch. 13. 1. & 14. 5, 39. Acts, 2. 4. & 19. 6. Ch. 14. 26—28. Ver. 30.

ing and preserving the body, ver. 24.—That there may be no mutiny in the body, but that all the members may anxiously care for one another, ver. 25.—So that when any member is diseased or disabled, the rest suffer with it. Or if any member is properly clothed, defended, and gratified, the rest partake of its joy, ver. 26.

The application of this beautiful allegory the Apostle made in a few words, by telling the believers among the Corinthians, that, in their collective capacity, they, with the other believers, were the body of Christ; and that each of them was a particular member of that body, ver. 27.—Wherefore, from what he had said concerning the human body and its members, three things followed, though he has not mentioned them:—First, that such of the Corinthians as were destitute of the spiritual gifts, or whose gifts were of the inferior sort, were not on that account to fancy themselves no members of the church, nor peevishly to decline the offices of their station. Neither were they to envy those who were placed in higher stations, or who possessed the best gifts, but were to be contented with their own place and office in the church, however humble it might be.—Secondly, that such of them as possessed the more excellent gifts, and were placed in superior stations, or who were in the vigour of life, were not to despise those whose gifts were less excellent, and whose stations were inferior. Neither were they to think those useless, who, being incapacitated by disease, or debilitated by age, could not discharge active offices in the church as formerly. By their passive virtues of patience and resignation, and willingness to leave the world, they were still necessary to the perfection of the body or church, as examples and directors to the younger members of the church.—Thirdly, that real Christians being all members of one another, ought to have the greatest love for and care of each other, especially when in distress, through poverty, sickness, or age. In a word, they were all bound to promote each other's welfare on every occasion.

With respect to the precedence claimed by the spiritual men, on account of the comparative excellence of their gifts, the apostle told the Corinthians, that God had placed the spiritual men in the church in the following order: First, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after them, those who communicated spiritual powers to others; then those who possessed the gifts of healing diseases; helpers; directors; last of all, those who spake foreign languages, and who interpreted what was spoken by others in foreign languages. And by thus ranking the spiritual men in their proper order, he settled the precedence of each, ver. 28.—At the same time, to extinguish in the minds of the spiritual men all envy, and to put an end to their strifes, he told them, it was no more possible to make all the members of the church apostles, or prophets, or teachers, &c. than to make all the members of the human body an eye, or an ear, &c. ver: 29, 30.—because in either case there would be no body.

Ver. 1.] The Corinthians seem to have inquired of St. Paul, what order of precedency and preference men were to have with respect to their spiritual gifts; nay, if we may guess by his answer, the question they seem more particularly to have proposed was, whether those who had the gift of tongues ought not to take place, and speak first, and be first heard in their meetings? Concerning this there appears to have been some strife, maligning, and disorder among them, as may be collected from ver. 21—25. ch. xiii. 4, 5. xiv. 40. To this St. Paul answers in chapters xii. xiii. xiv. *First*, that they had been all heathen idolaters, and so, being deniers of Christ, were in that state none of them spiritual; but that now, being Christians, and owning Jesus to be the Lord, in an experimental sense, (which could not be done without the Spirit of God) they were all πνευματικοί, *spiritual*, and so there was no reason for one to undervalue another; as if he were not spiritual as well as himself, ver. 1—3. *Secondly*, that though there be a diversity of gifts, yet they are all by the same Spirit; from the same Lord, and the same God; working them all in every one according to his good pleasure: so that in this respect also there is no difference or precedency; no occasion for any one's being puffed up, or affecting priority, upon account of his gifts, ver. 4—11. *Thirdly*, That the diversity of gifts is for the use and benefit of the church, which is Christ's body, wherein the members, as in the natural body, of *meaner* functions, are as much parts, and as necessary in their use to the good of the whole, and therefore to be honoured as much as any other. The union they have as members in the same body, should make them all equally share in each other's good and evil; should give them a mutual esteem and concern one for another; and should leave no room for contests or divisions among them about their gifts, or the honour and place due to them on that account, ver. 12—31. *Fourthly*, That though gifts have their excellence and use, and those who have them may be zealous in the use of them, yet the true and sure way for a man to excel and be preferred above others, is, by enlarging himself in Christian love, and excelling in that, without which a Christian, with all his spiritual gifts, is nothing, ch. xiii. *Fifthly*, In the comparison of spiritual gifts, he gives those the precedence which edify most, and in particular prefers *prophesying* to *tongues*. See ch. xiv.

Concerning *spiritual gifts*.] Mr. Locke would render this, as to *spiritual men*, or men assisted and actuated by the Spirit; and we are warranted, he says, in this version, by a like use of the word in several places of St. Paul's epistles; as ch. ii. 15. and xiv. 37. of this epistle, and Gal. vi. 1. And the context obliges us so to understand it; for if we will have it mean *gifts*, and not persons, the sense and coherence of the first three verses will be very hard to make out. Besides, there is evidence enough, in several parts of it, that the subject of St. Paul's discourse here is, πνευματικοί, "persons endowed with spiritual gifts," contending for precedence,

11 " But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

rally as he will.

12 " For as the body is one, and hath many

Ch. 7. 7. Rom. 12. 3. Eph. 4. 7. 2 Cor. 10. 13. Matt. 20. 13, 15. Eph. 4. 4, 16.

Heb. 2. 4. Jhn, 3. 8. Joel, 2. 28, 29.

Song 5. 9. Rom. 12. 4. 5.

precedency, in consideration of their gifts; (see ver. 13) and to what else does he say, ch. xiv. 5. *Greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues?* Others, however, suppose, that if the second and third verses are read in a parenthesis, the connection of the first with the fourth verse will prove that the addition of *gifts* is very proper. The church of Corinth was foolishly elated by spiritual pride, which St. Paul endeavoured to mortify and humble; and, in applying his remedy, he begins with reckoning up those various graces, the credit of which they had abused by their indulgence of this unhappy temper. See Locke and Doddridge.

Ver. 3. No man, speaking by the Spirit—calletb Jesus accused.] "No man that is inspired by the Spirit of God, can speak evil of Jesus; and no man cometh to him, and heartily owns him for his Lord, except God draweth him by his Spirit," which he is willing to do for all. Some think that these words refer in general to the tests put on Christians by their persecutors, that they should not only deny, but likewise blaspheme Christ: others think, that they rather refer to the Jews, who, while they uttered blasphemies against Christ themselves, and endeavoured to extort them from his disciples, pretended to the gifts of the Spirit, and undertook to cast out devils. Such a caution might therefore be very useful. See 1 John iv. 1—3. St. Chrysostom well observes, that the phrase of saying that *Jesus is the Lord, or the Messiah*, must be supposed to proceed from true faith in him; and the expression is used to import a man's being a true Christian, because such strong temptations lay against professing Christ under that character, that they who maintained this doctrine must have been true believers, though there might have been a few exceptions. This seems as plain a proof as could be desired, that true faith is the work of the Spirit of God upon the heart. See Owen on the Spirit, p. 3. and Doddridge's third Letter to the Author of Christianity not founded on Argument, p. 34. &c.

Ver. 5. Differences of administrations.] Diversities of offices. These offices are reckoned up, ver. 28; &c. The calling them *administrations*, or *offices*, was a gentle manner of reminding the Corinthians of the great design of these gifts; and so, of repressing those who perverted them to contrary purposes. See Doddridge and Benson.

Ver. 6. Of operations.] What these were, we learn from ver. 8—11. They are very properly called *ἐνεργηματα*, *in-workings*, because they were above all human power. Men of themselves could do none of them at all; but it was God, as the Apostle tells us here, who, in these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, did all that was done: it was the effect of his immediate operation, as St. Paul assures us in that parallel place, Philip. ii. 13. in which chapter, ver. 3 and 14. we find that the Philippians stood a little in need of the same advice which St. Paul presses here at large upon the Corinthians.

Ver. 7. But] or Novo.

Ver. 8. The word of wisdom.] Lord Barrington, Dr. Benson, and many others, understand by the *word of wisdom*, that extensive plan of Christianity which was revealed to the apostles by the Holy Spirit; and by the *word of knowledge*, an extraordinary ability to understand and explain the Old Testament, and especially its prophecies. See *Miscel. Sacr.* essay i. p. 39. and Benson's *Propagation of Christianity*, vol. i. p. 40. &c. where the reader will find a large and minute detail of these spiritual gifts: concerning which we may observe, with a candid expositor, that there are, perhaps, few texts in the New Testament more difficult than some in this and the 14th chapter, relating to the extraordinary gifts then in the church, which were at that time so well known as to need no explication; and it is a noble instance of the genuine simplicity and modesty of the Apostle, that he did not expatiate on so grand a subject with any unnecessary parade.

Ver. 9. Faith by the same Spirit.] In the following chapter, where these gifts are again mentioned, the Apostle explains the nature of the faith here reckoned among the gifts of the Spirit, by calling it a faith which could *remove mountains*, or such a faith as was attended with a power of controlling nature; alluding to that want of faith with which Jesus upbraids his disciples, where he says, "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." Matth. xvii. 20. The two next gifts, of *healing* and *working miracles*, ver. 10. are two species of the foregoing genus. By *healing* is meant, that salutary assistance administered to the sick, in a solemn office of the church, as directed by St. James, v. 14. *Is any sick among you, let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith*, that is, the faith mentioned just before, *shall save the sick*, &c. By *working miracles* is meant, a more extemporaneous use of the same power, though less confined in its objects. The gifts of *healing*, *χαρισμα ιλαρω*, properly express gifts belonging to the church as such; and the working of *miracles* *ἐνεργηματα δυναμων*, implies virtue residing in or immediately given to, the individual or particular agent. Besides, we may observe that *gifts of healing* was a less degree of miraculous power than the *working of miracles*, and is expressly intimated to be, ver. 28.

Ver. 10. Prophecy.] This plainly signifies, foretelling the future fortunes of the church, to the comfort and edification of the assembly, as St. Paul expresses it, ch. xiv. 3. and the effects generally attending the act of prophecy in a little time assumed its name. But the proper sense of *prophecy*; and that in which it is here to be understood, is the *foretelling things to come*. See on Rom. xii. 6. The next gift is the *discerning of Spirits*. The reputation attending the exercise of these extraordinary endowments would be a strong temptation to impostors to mimic and bely their powers, as we see it was in the case of Simon

members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13 ^a For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or ^{*} Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body *were* an eye, where *were* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *were* the smelling?

18 [†] But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

19 And if they were all one member, where *were* the body?

20 But now *are they* many members, yet but one body.

21 ^a And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, much more those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary:

23 And those *members* of the body, which we think to be ^a less honourable, upon these we [†] bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness.

24 For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked:

25 That there should be no ^b schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

26 ^c And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

^a John, 3. 6, 26. Rom. 6. 5, 6. Eph. 5. 26. & 4. 5. & 2. 12, 13, 14, 16, 19—21. & 3. 6. Gal. 3. 26—28. Col. 2. 11, 12. & 3. 11. Ch. 10. 2—4. Matt. 3. 11. John, 6. 63. & 7. 37, 38. Joel, 2. 28. If. 44. 3—5. ^{*} Gr. *Greeks*. [†] Ver. 28. Rom. 12. 3—8. Eph. 4. 11. Ver. 4—11. ^b Num. 10. 31. Job, 29. 15. 1 Sam. 25. 32. ^c Ch. 1. 26—28. Jam. 2. 5. Pf. 68. 10. [†] Or *put on*. ^b Or *division*. Ch. 1. 10—12. & 3—8. John, 17. 21—23, 26. 2 Cor. 13. 11. ^c Heb. 13. 3. Rom. 12. 15. Gal. 6. 2. 2 Cor. 12. 23, 29.

the magician. It graciously pleased the Holy Spirit, therefore, amid the bounty of these gifts, to bestow one, whose property it was to bring all the others to the test, by the virtue which the possessor of it had of distinguishing between true and false inspiration, where accidental ambiguity, or designed imposture, had made the matter doubtful or suspected. See Barrington, Benfon, and on ch. xiv. 28.

Ver. 11. *But all these worketh, &c.] But one and the same Spirit effecteth all these things, distributing to each man in particular, according to his will.* Heylin.

Ver. 13. *For by one Spirit, &c.]* “For all of us, who are “endued with the gifts and graces of one and the self-same “Spirit, (ver. 11.) are thereby incorporated into one spiritual body, according to what was signified by our being “baptized with water, and *that* without any preference “of one to another, whether we be *Jewish* or *Gentile* believers, and whatever our civil station be in the world, “whether that of masters, or servants, and bond-slaves: “for we are *all one in Christ Jesus*, alike entitled to all the “privileges and benefits of his church, as *Abraham’s seed*, “and heirs according to the promise. (Gal. iii. 28, 29.) And “we have all been nourished and refreshed by further participations of that one divine Spirit, who invigorates, “strengthens, and comforts us, and causes us to be of one “heart and soul in things pertaining to God, according to “what is signified by our visible Communion with Christ,

“and with each other, as one body, in our drinking of “the cup of blessing at the Lord’s supper.” See ch. x. 16, 17.

Ver. 15. *Is it therefore not of the body?]* It is not for that reason *no part of the body*. Bengelius and Wetstein.

Ver. 17. *If the whole body were an eye.]* The Apostle by this intends probably to insinuate, that were there no other gifts in the church but those which they so much extolled: in some of their teachers, it would be of very great disadvantage to the body. See Doddridge and Benfon.

Ver. 22. *Nay, much more those members, &c.]* Some think that in the words *which seem to be more feeble*, St. Paul refers to the *brains* and *bowels*, which are very tender, and liable to many disorders. Others understand it of the least muscular parts, *veins*, *arteries*, and other minute channels in the body, the least obstruction in some of which would be fatal. If *more feeble* be put for *less noble*, it suggests a very obvious and important sense, relating to the channels nature has provided for throwing off the dregs, which, dishonourable as they may seem, are so necessary, that if they be obstructed, intense torment and inevitable death must ensue. Doddridge.

Ver. 23. *Which we think to be less honourable.]* It seems as if he had said, “The face, in which the image of God “is particularly stamped, we leave uncovered; but as for “those parts which decency or custom teach us to conceal, we contrive not only to cover, but also, as far as

27 'Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

28 And 'God hath set some in the church, first Apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, * diversities of tongues.

29 'Are all Apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all † workers of miracles?

30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

31 'But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

^a Ch. 3. 16. Rom. 12. 5. Eph. 1. 23. & 4. 12. & 5. 23, 30. Col. 1. 24. & 2. 19. ^c Mat. 9. 38. Acts, 13. 2. 3. & 20. 28. Rom. 12. 6—8. Ver. 7—11, 13. Ch. 14. 33. Eph. 2. 20. & 4. 11. & 3. 11. 1 Tim. 5. 17. Heb. 13. 17, 24. * Or kinds. † Ver. 4—11. † Or powers. ^b Ch. 8. 1. & 13. 1. & 14. 1, 39. Phil. 4. 8.

"we conveniently can, to adorn by covering." The force of the original in the next clause is, *These are surrounded with more abundant honour.* See Doddridge and Elser.

Ver. 27. *Now ye are the body of Christ.*] Dr. Heylin renders this, *Thus ye are the body of Christ; each being a particular member, which God has placed in the church;* (ver. 28.) *as, first, apostles, &c.* Others read it, *Ye are in some sort the body and members of Christ,—aliquatenus,—in part, not, as our version, in particular.* See Castalio.

Ver. 28. *God hath set some, &c.*] "As God hath placed some members in more eminent stations in the body, so also some Christians in the church. He hath placed in the first rank *Apostles*, who are honoured with an office of the highest distinction, and furnished with endowments peculiar to themselves. In the 2d place are ranked *prophets*, whose business it is to foretel future events, or to speak by immediate interpretation, for the edification of the church. In the 3d, *teachers* of a more ordinary kind; afterwards *those who are endued*, upon some particular occasion, *with miraculous powers*; then the *gifts of healing* diseases, by anointing the sick with oil, and praying for their recovery. Besides these, he has endowed some with such extraordinary activity and faculty, as may fit them to be *helpers* in the management of charities: others are qualified by their prudence to be appointed to *governments*, that by their advice the affairs of societies may be steered and conducted in the safest and happiest manner. There are also wonderful operations, whereby men are taught *different kinds of tongues*, which they had never learned by any human methods." Monsieur Amyraut is of opinion, that the persons might possess many of these gifts, and sustain several of these characters, who did not fill stated distinct offices; and might be called *helpers*, in reference to their great dexterity and readiness to help those who were in distress; and *governments*, in regard to that genius for business, sagacity in judging the circumstances of affairs, and natural authority in the councils and resolutions of societies, which rendered them fit to preside on such occasions. See Doddridge, Barrington, Benson, and Markland.

Ver. 29. *Are all Apostles?*] It appears that this invidious temper was not extirpated from among the Corinthians, even by this just and lively expostulation: for Clements Romanus, writing to them many years after, complains of its continued prevalence, as leading them to neglect a due regard for those presbyters who were fixed by the divine direction among them, and to throw them out

of their episcopal office. See his epistle to the Corinthians, sect. 44.

Ver. 31. *But covet earnestly the best gifts.*] *But ye contend earnestly about the best gifts.* "Ye contend one with another whose particular gift is best, and most preferable; but I will shew you a more excellent way; namely, mutual good-will, affection, and charity;" or, in one word, LOVE. That this is the Apostle's meaning is plain, in that there was an emulation among them, and a strife for precedency, on account of the several gifts they had, which made them in their assemblies desire to be heard first. This was the fault which the Apostle was here correcting, and it is not likely he should exhort them all promiscuously to seek the principal and most eminent gifts, at the end of a discourse wherein he had been demonstrating to them, by the example of the human body, that there ought to be *diversities of gifts* and functions in the church; but that there ought to be no *schism*, emulation, or contest among them upon account of the exercises of those gifts; that they were all useful in their places, and no member was at all to be the less honoured or valued for the gift he had, though it were not one of the first rank. And in this sense the word ζηλον is taken in the next chapter, ver. 4. where St. Paul, pursuing the same argument, exhorts them to mutual love, good-will, affection, and charity, which he assures them is preferable to any gifts whatever. Besides, to what purpose should he exhort them to *covet earnestly the best gifts*, when the obtaining of this or that gift did not at all lie in their desires or endeavours, the Apostle having just before told them, ver. 17. that the *Spirit divides those gifts to every man severally, as he will*, and those to whom he wrote had their allotment already?—He might as reasonably, according to his own doctrine in this very chapter, bid the *foot* covet to be the *hand*, or the *ear* to be the *eye*. Let it be remembered, therefore, to rectify this, that St. Paul says, ver. 17. of this chapter, *If the whole body were the eye, where were the hearing, &c.* This great writer is not used to cross his own design, or contradict his own reasoning.

Inferences.—We thankfully acknowledge thy goodness, Sovereign Disposer of all Events, that we have not been led on, after the example of our Pagan ancestors, to the vain worship of *dumb*, of stupid *idols*; but have been taught from our infancy to adore the living Jehovah. May we, in the most solemn and consistent manner, say, that *Jesus is the Lord*; and while our actions speak our regard to him as such, may it appear that all our hearts are under the

C H A P. XIII.

All gifts, how excellent soever, are nothing worth without love; the praises thereof, and preference to faith and hope.

[Anno Domini 57.]

THOUGH I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity,

I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

² ^b And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

^a 1 Tim. i. 5. Rom. xiv. & xiii. 8—10. Ch. 8. 1. Ver. 2, 3. Ch. 14. 6—9. & 8. 1.

^b Ch. 12. 8—10, 23. Luke, 17. 6. Mat. 17. 20. & 7. 22, 23. & 21. 21.

the influences of the Spirit of God, by which alone men are brought to that divine temper, ver. 2, 3.

We should frequently reflect upon those glorious attestations, which were given to the truth of our holy religion, by that *diversity of gifts and operations*, with which its first teachers were furnished and adorned; thankfully receiving their testimony, and thereby setting to our seal that God is true. A view to that great design, in which all these wonderful things centre, should engage us to study more and more an union of heart with all, who in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In *him* Greeks and barbarians, bond and free, are united; all therefore should unanimously seek his glory; and while his name is *blasphemed* by the ignorant and malicious, who cannot bear the purity of that religion which he teaches, may it be so *defended by us*, as at the same time to be *exemplified* and adorned, ver. 4—14.

The wisdom and goodness of God, as displayed in the formation of the human body, is a subject which well deserves our attentive reflection, and humble acknowledgment. All its several parts are useful to the whole, and the most noble cannot upbraid the meanest as an incumbrance. Each has reason to rejoice in its own situation, as well as in the addition of all the rest; and were the lowest place made higher than it is, it would become useless and burdensome. The same divine wisdom is visible, and ought to be acknowledged, in the subordination appointed in civil societies, and in the Church of Christ.

Let no man, therefore, be discouraged at the low station wherein he is fixed! but rather let all acquiesce in the wise and gracious disposal of the supreme Lord, and apply themselves to their proper functions. Let each member consider all the rest with pleasure, and rejoice with thankfulness in the health and vigour of the other parts, making the proper use of them, and communicating in return its proper services; or, if any be weak, let all strengthen it. And, upon the whole, so far as we can prevent it, *let there be no schism in the body*: Alas! that there should be so many breaches and contentions. While we sincerely lament them, we should each, in his place, endeavour to heal them, and unite in a sympathizing care one of another. So shall we, in the remotest consequences, best consult our own interest and honour, ver. 15—25.

Blessed be God, that he hath in his church given not only *Apostles and prophets*, but also *pastors and teachers*. Adored be that bounty with which he has scattered down his *gifts*, whether ordinary or extraordinary, on the children of men. May we use them, not to the purposes of

ostentation, but of edification; and may we be truly desirous of those whereby we may bear most of the image of Christ, and best promote the great design for which he visited our world, and was pleased to unite his church unto himself, and its several members to each other, in such dear and invaluable bonds.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The church of Corinth was greatly enriched in spiritual gifts, and these had been sadly abused, and made the occasion of much pride and contention. The Apostle therefore leads them to consider the author, nature, design, and use of the extraordinary powers which were given them.

1. He reminds them, for their humiliation, of their former state. *Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led*, hurried on blindfold to worship these senseless stocks and stones. *Wherefore I give you to understand*, now that God hath brought you out of darkness into his marvellous light, *that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed*, it being a sure proof that both the Jewish exorcists and the heathen diviners who pretend to such inspiration, blaspheme him from whom the Spirit proceeds, are lyars, and of their father the devil; and, on the other hand, *no man can say that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Spirit of God*: to discover his all-sufficiency for the work of redemption, and his suitability to every necessity of our souls, we need a divine illumination: and though we may confess him to be the Christ with our lips, ye we can never experimentally know him to be *our* anointed Saviour, till it please God to reveal his Son in us. And all the miracles which are wrought in confirmation of this truth, are by the power of the Holy Ghost, who intends thereby to glorify Christ. Let a man pretend to what he will; if he does not know and love the Lord Jesus, he must be destitute of the Spirit; but if he does, then, however low his gifts may be, he has an assured interest in the Saviour.

2. He directs them in the proper *use* of the spiritual gifts which they enjoyed. *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit*, who bestows them in all their variety on private Christians, or ministers; *and there are differences of administrations*, of offices and services, some superior to others; *but the same Lord* appoints to each his employment, and they act under his authority. *And there are diversities of operations*, and miraculous powers; *but it is the same Lord which worketh all in all*, by whose mighty energy alone they are performed. *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal*; whatever gifts or powers that

3 'And though I bestow all my goods to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth
 feed the poor, and though I give my body to me nothing.

Prov. 25. 21. Rom. 12. 2, 20. & 5. 7. Mat. 6. 1, 2. John, 15. 13. 1 John, 3. 16.

that manifest the presence and energy of the Holy Ghost, he is endowed with, they are designed to promote the edification of the body of Christ, and to advance his glory. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, a clear understanding of the great doctrines of the Gospel, and ability to express them with judgment and eloquence; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, an insight into the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, and a readiness to explain and apply them. To another, faith by the same Spirit, that supernatural courage which Christ promised to infuse into his disciples, Mat. x. 19, 20. Luke, xxi. 15. for the purpose of enabling them to preach the Gospel, not only in the presence of kings and magistrates, but before the most enraged enemies; and also that firm persuasion of the power and veracity of God, which led many of the spiritual men, without hesitation, to attempt the working of miracles, when they felt an inward impulse to do so. See Mat. xvii. 20. 1 Cor. xiii. 2. To another the gifts of healing, by the same Spirit, all manner of bodily diseases, by a word or touch instantaneously. To another the working of miracles, in mercy or judgment, (See Acts, v. 5. 10.) To another, prophecy, or the power of foretelling future events; to another, the discerning of Spirits, under what influence, divine or diabolical, men act, what are their real designs and qualifications, and who are fit to be publicly employed in the church; to another, divers kinds of tongues, so as to understand and speak fluently languages which he had never learnt; to another, the interpretation of tongues, the ability of rendering with exactness and propriety a foreign tongue, which the congregation may not understand, into their own native language. But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally, as he will. Note; (1.) The Holy Ghost is a divine person; he acted with sovereignty in the distribution of his supernatural gifts; and in energy and operation is one with the Father and the Son. (2.) All our gifts are bestowed for service, not to advance our own honour and interest, but the glory of God and the salvation of men's souls.

2dly, The Apostle represents the union subsisting between genuine believers, who partake of the several gifts and graces of the Spirit, under the similitude of a human body consisting of many members: it is but one, though composed of various parts, which have each their particular function for the good of the whole. So also is the mystical body of Christ: though consisting of different persons, with different gifts, and appointed to different stations, yet all who are vitally united to him compose but one spiritual body, into which all, whether Jews or Gentiles, who have been baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, are by faith incorporated, and are nourished by that one divine Spirit which resides in all his fulness in Christ, and is from him diffused through the several members, who thereby maintain communion with the exalted Head. Now in the natural body, (1.) Each member con-

stitutes a part of the whole, and the meanest are needful: the foot and the ear, though less useful perhaps than the hand and eye, are yet equally parts of the body. The meanest believer is dear to the Saviour, and regarded by him as a member of his body. (2.) There is a beauty in the variety of the different members: if the body were all eye or all ear, it would be defective and monstrous. Thus the diversity of offices and gifts in the church displays a beautiful symmetry. (3.) As in the body natural God gives, as he pleases, to every member its proper office; so, in the body mystical, the Lord appoints to each his station, and furnishes him with gifts, which he is bound to receive with thankfulness, to use with diligence, and neither to murmur against the Giver, nor envy the superiority of others. (4.) Every member of the body contributes to the good of the whole. The eye wants the hand, the head the feet,—even the feeblest members are necessary. Thus do those who are in the most exalted stations in the church need the inferior members, and must not despise them as insignificant or useless. (5.) In the body we shew peculiar regard to our uncomely parts, covering them with proper cloathing, which our comely parts do not need; and thus hath God ordered it, that we should give more abundant honour to the part which lacketh. In like manner ought the more eminent in gifts and abilities in the church to hide the infirmities of their weaker brethren; not to reproach or despise them, but treat them with kindness and regard, and desire to make them appear in the most respectable manner. (6.) In the body the suffering of one member gives pain to the whole, and all the members share in the honour conferred on any particular part: such a mutual sympathy prevents all schism in the body, and obliges the members to have the same care one for another. The like fellow-feeling should every Christian have for his brother: we should tenderly sympathize with the afflicted in body or soul; and their temporal or spiritual prosperity, far from being the occasion of our envy, should be matter of our sincerest joy. All coldness and distance is as unnatural as a schism between the members, and should be shunned as the most dangerous evil.

3dly, The Apostle particularly applies the case in hand. Now ye are the mystical body of Christ, and members in particular, each being a part of the whole. And God, in infinite wisdom and with admirable propriety, hath set some in the church in one office, and some in another, appointing one to a higher, another to a lower station. In the first rank stand the Apostles, who received their commission immediately from Christ himself: secondly, prophets, who are endued with the gift of foretelling future events: thirdly, teachers, who labour in the word and doctrine, and are the ordinary ministers of the Gospel: after that, miracles, which some are endued with the power of working: then gifts of healing the sick: helps, such as are assistant to the superior ministers: governments, those who preside over the affairs of the church: others are endued with diversities of tongues, the

4^d Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity * vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5^e Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

^d Prov. 10. 12. Num. 12. 3. Pl. 35. 13, 14. Jam. 3. 14—18. Col. 3. 12—14. Phil. 2. 1—5. Eph. 4. 11, 32. 1 Pet. 4. 8 with ch. 1. 11. & 3. 3. & 4. 8. & 5. 7. * Or it not *is*. ^e Ch. xi. & 14. 40. Phil. 2. 4. & 4. 8. Rom. 15. 1, 2. & 12. 19. Ch. 10. 23, 24. Deut. 1. 36. & 9. 7, 19. & 29. 29. 2 Cor. 12. 15.

the ability to speak or interpret them. *Are all Apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?* No. Each has his appointed station and peculiar gifts; wherein the highest are not to be envied, nor the lowest to be despised. *But covet earnestly the best gifts.* It may be regarded as his advice; or it may be read as an assertion, *ye do covet the best gifts*, and blameably desire to excel in these extraordinary endowments; or as an interrogation, *Do ye covet earnestly the best gifts? and envy each other's superior attainments? Yet shew I unto you a more excellent way:* a spirit of love, which prompts to every good word and work for the glory of God and the profit of men's souls, is far better and more desirable than the most shining gifts. *Note;* (1.) Gifts, when valued because of the esteem which they procure us, more than for their use to the souls of men, prove the most fatal snares to the soul. (2.) One spark of Godlike charity, or genuine love, is infinitely preferable to all the glare of the most eminent titles or abilities.

CHAP. XIII.

THAT the Corinthians might be persuaded to lay aside their emulations and strifes, and be contented each with his own gifts and office in the church, the Apostle, after discoursing concerning the spiritual men and their gifts, told the brethren, that no doubt they all earnestly desired to possess the best gifts. Yet he would shew them a more excellent way of attaining eminence in the church; namely, by acquiring a greater measure of that love, which ought to subsist among the members of Christ's body, ch. xii. 31. —That verse, therefore, being an introduction to the Apostle's beautiful discourse concerning love, contained in the present chapter, it ought to have been placed at the beginning of it.

The more excellent way of attaining eminence in the church being that of *love*, the Apostle, by personifying this divine virtue, and by ascribing to it the qualities and actions of a person, has set forth its beauties and excellencies in the brightest colours, that the contentious among the Corinthians, by comparing themselves with his description, might be sensible of the deformity of their own temper, as it appeared in their divisions, emulations, and strifes.—His account of love he began with affirming that it is a quality more excellent than the faculty of speaking all kinds of languages, of foretelling future events, of understanding the mysteries contained in the ancient revelations, and of working miracles; in short, more excellent than all the endowments which men covet most. The reason is, none of these endowments are of any value, if love be wanting in the persons who possess them, to direct them in the use of them. It is a more excellent virtue, than even the giving of all one's goods to feed the poor; nay, than the giving

of one's body to be burned for his religion, if these things are done not from *love* to God and man, but from vain-glory; or, rather, alms-giving and zeal, without this principle of love, are no virtues at all: for, however beneficial these actions may be to mankind, they will be of no real advantage to the vain-glorious hypocrite himself, ver. 1, 2, 3.

Farther, still more effectually to display the excellence of this noble grace, the Apostle described its influence upon the temper and conduct of the person who possesses it, ver. 4—7.—and by comparing it with the gifts of tongues, of prophecy, and of knowledge, and even with its sister graces, faith and hope, he has shewn it to be more excellent than them all; chiefly because their existence and usefulness take place in the present life only, whereas love will subsist in Heaven, ver. 8—13.

In this eulogium, it is observable that all the properties of *love* mentioned by the Apostle, belong more especially to the *love of our neighbour*; unless we suppose, with some, that the three properties mentioned, ver. 7. belong also to the *love of God*. However, although the whole were confined to the love of our neighbour, it would not follow, that the Apostle has excluded the love of God from his idea of love: on the contrary, all the exercises of love which he has so beautifully described, pre-suppose the love of God as their true principle; for it is well known, that we cannot love man aright, unless we love God also, 1 John, iv. 20.

Ver. 1. Though I speak, &c.] St. Paul having told the Corinthians, in the last words of the preceding chapter, that he would shew them a more excellent way than the emulous producing of their gifts in the assembly, he informs them in the present admirable chapter, that this more excellent way is *love*, which he explains at large. The word *ἄγαπῃ* is certainly rendered *charity* very improperly; for being in our language almost confined to the sense of *alms-giving*, it has led many into gross errors on this subject. The original must here be taken in the noblest sense, for “such a love to the whole church, and the whole world, as arises from principles of true piety, and ultimately centres in that God who is *love*.” See ver. 3. As a *cymbal* was made of two pieces of hollow brass, which being struck together made a tinkling with very little variety of sound, St. Paul chose to instance in this, rather than a harp or flute, or any other more harmonious instrument. It appears from many passages, both of Josephus and of the Jewish rabbies, that each of the things which St. Paul speaks of in this and the following verses as absolutely of no avail without *love*, was regarded in the highest degree by the Jews.

Ver. 2. All mysteries, and all knowledge] Any predictions relating to our Saviour or his doctrine, or the times of the Gospel contained in the Old Testament, in types, or figurative

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth
* in the truth ;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things,
hopeth all things, endureth all things.

^f Rom. 1. 2. & 12. 9. ^{Pf.} 10. 3. & 15. 4. ^{Exod.} 18. 9. ^{Phil.} 1. 18. ² John. 4. * Or with the truth. ² Prov. 10. 12. ^{Rom.} 15. 1, 2. ^{Gal.} 6. 4. with ^{Lev.} 19. 17. ^{Rev.} 2. 2. ^{Ch.} 5. 4, 5, 7, 13. ^{Ch.} 9. 19—23. ¹ Pet. 4. 8. ² Tim. 2. 10, 24, 25.

figurative and obscure expressions, not understood before his coming, and being then revealed to the world, St. Paul calls *mysteries*, says Mr. Locke, as may be seen all through his writings; so that *mystery* and *knowledge* are terms here used to signify truths concerning Christ to come, contained in the Old Testament; and *prophecy*, the understanding of the types and prophecies containing those truths so as to be able to explain them to others. See on chap. xii. 8. By *faith to remove mountains*, or to do that which is impossible, except by a miracle, must be meant the miraculous *faith* spoken of ch. xii. 9. and as it is here supposed that this faith might in fact be separated from love, it cannot signify the same as in the Epistle to the *Romans*, where it is "such an assent to a divine declaration, as produces a suitable temper and conduct."

Ver. 4. Charity suffereth long] The Apostle here proceeds to give us sixteen characters of *divine love*;—upon which, if the compals of our work allowed, it would be well worth time to expatiate. 1st, *Love suffereth long*,—is long-suffering or patient towards all men: it suffers all the weakness, ignorance, errors, infirmities, all the forwardness and littleness of faith in the children of God; all the malice and wickedness of the children of the world;—*feeding our enemy when he hungers*; if he *thirsts*, still *giving him drink*: thus continually heaping coals of fire, of melting love, upon his head: and in every step endeavouring to overcome evil with good. 2dly, It is *kind*,—*χρησεύεται*,—a word not easily translated:—It is soft, mild, benign; it stands at the utmost distance from moroseness, from all harshness, or sourness of spirit; and inspires the sufferer at once with the most amiable sweetness, and the most fervent and tender affection. Consequently, *love*; 3dly, *Envieth not*:—It is impossible it should; it is directly opposite to that baneful temper; it cannot be that he who has this tender affection to all, who earnestly wishes all temporal and spiritual blessings, all good things in this world and the world to come, to every soul that God has made, should be pained at his bestowing any good gift on any child of man. If he has himself received the same, he does not grieve, but rejoice, that another partakes the common benefit. If he has not, he blesses God that his brother, at least, has, and is therein happier than himself: and the greater his love, the more does he rejoice in the blessings of all mankind; the more is he removed from every kind and degree of envy towards any creature. 4thly, *Love vaunteth not itself*;—*δὺ ἀετιπρεβεται*,—is not rash or hasty in judging: it will not hastily condemn any one; it does not pass a severe sentence upon a slight or sudden view of things; it first weighs all the evidence, particularly that which is brought in favour of the accused. A true lover of his neighbour is not like the generality of men, who see a little, presume a great deal, and so jump to the conclusion. No: he proceeds with wariness and circumspection, taking heed to every step, willingly subscribing to that rule of the ancient heathen, "I am so far

" from lightly believing what one man says against another, that I will not easily believe what a man says against himself; I will always allow him second thoughts, and many times counsel too." 5thly, *Love is not puffed up*; it does not incline or suffer any man to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but rather to think soberly; yea, it humbles the soul into the dust; it destroys all high conceits engendering pride, and makes us rejoice to be as nothing. They who are *kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love*, cannot but in *honour prefer one another*. Those who, having the same love, are of one accord, do in lowliness of mind each esteem others better than themselves. See Wesley, Stanhope, Clarke, and Bengelius.

Ver. 5. Doth not behave itself unseemly] This is the sixth character, and implies that love is not *rude*, or willingly offensive to any. It renders *to all their due*; *fear to whom fear*, *honour to whom honour*; courtesy, civility, humanity, to all the world, in their several degrees honouring all men. Good breeding, nay, the highest degree of it, politeness, is defined to be "a continual desire to please, appearing in all the behaviour;" If so, there is none so well-bred as the Christian,—a lover of all mankind; for he cannot but desire to please all men for their good to edification: and these desires cannot be hid; they will necessarily appear in all his intercourse with man; for his love is without dissimulation: it will shew itself in his whole conversation and actions; yea, and will constrain him, though without guile, to become all things to all men, if by any means he may save some. And in the becoming all things to all men, *love*, 7thly, *Seeketh not its own*: In striving to please all men, the lover of mankind has no immediate eye to his own temporal advantage: he covets no man's silver, or gold, or apparel; he desires nothing but the salvation of their souls; nay, he may be said not to seek his own spiritual any more than temporal advantage; for while he is on the full stretch to save their souls from death, he, as it were, forgets himself, he does not think of himself, so long as that zeal for the glory of God swallows him up. See *Exod.* xxxii. 31, 32. *Rom.* ix. 3. No wonder that such *love*, 8thly, *is not provoked*;—*ὀραροζύεται*,—The word *easily* is not in the original. St. Paul's words are absolute, *love is not provoked*; it is not provoked to unkindness towards any one. Occasions indeed will frequently occur, outward provocations of various kinds; but love does not yield to provocation; it triumphs over all, never exasperated and thrown into bitter and implacable resentments: in all trials it looks unto Jesus, its great exemplar, and is more than conqueror in his love. And it prevents a thousand provocations, which would otherwise arise, because, 9thly, it *thinketh no evil*. Indeed the merciful man cannot avoid knowing many things that are evil; he cannot but see them with his own eyes, and hear them with his own ears; for love does not put out his eyes, so that it is impossible for him not to see that such things are done; neither does it take

8^b Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

^b Ver. 10. with 2 Pet. 1. 19. Ch. 7. 30, 31.

away his understanding any more than his senses; but λογίζεται τὸ κακόν, it does not infer evil, where it does not appear; or reason out, or suppose what it has neither seen nor heard. This is what true love absolutely destroys; it tears up root and branch,—all imagining of what we have not known; it casts out all jealousies, all evil surmises, all readiness to believe evil; it is frank, open, unsuspecting; and as it cannot design, so neither does it fear evil.

Ver. 6. Rejoiceth not in iniquity] This is the 10th character of love, that it rejoiceth not in iniquity—common as it is even for those to do so who bear the name of Christ. The true Christian, however, is so far from this, that he laments over either the sin or folly of an enemy; takes no pleasure in hearing or repeating it; but rather desires that it may be forgotten for ever. Nay, 11thly, He rejoiceth in the truth, wherever it is found; in the truth which is after godliness, bringing forth its proper fruit, holiness of heart and conversation. He rejoices to find, that even those who differ from or oppose him, whether with regard to opinions, or some points of practice, are nevertheless lovers of God, and in other respects irreproachable. He is glad to hear good of them, and to speak all the good he can of them consistently with truth and justice. Indeed, good in general is his glory and joy, wherever diffused through the race of mankind. As a citizen of the world, he claims a share in the happiness of all the inhabitants of it. Because he is a man, he is not unconcerned in the welfare of any man; but enjoys whatever brings glory to God, and promotes peace and good-will among men.

Ver. 7. Beareth all things, &c.] The twelfth character of love is, that πύλα σέβει, it coveteth all things, as the word should undoubtedly be translated; for otherwise this character would be the very same with the last in this verse, πύλα ὑπομένει, endureth all things. See 1 Pet. iv. 8.—Because the merciful man rejoiceth not in iniquity, neither does he willingly make mention of it. Whatever evil he sees, hears, or knows, he nevertheless conceals, so far as he can, without making himself partaker of other men's sins. Wherever, or with whomsoever he is, if he see any thing which he approves not, it goes not out of his lips unless to the person concerned, except where the interests of the church of Christ essentially require it,—if haply he may gain his brother. So far is he from making the faults or failings of others the matter of his censure or conversation, that of the absent he will say nothing at all, if he can say nothing good. A tale-bearer, a backbiter, a whisperer, an evil-speaker, is to him like a murderer. He would just as soon take away his neighbour's life as thus murder his reputation: just as soon would he think of diverting himself with setting fire to his neighbour's house, as of thus scattering abroad arrows, fire-brands, and death, and saying, Am I not in sport? He makes only one exception. Sometimes he is convinced, that it is for the glory of God, or, which comes to the same, the good of his

neighbour, that an evil should not be covered. In this case, for the benefit of the innocent, he is constrained to declare the guilty; but he always in this instance acts with the greatest care and caution, lest he should transgress the law of love by speaking too much, more than he would have done by not speaking at all. 13thly, Love believeth all things. It is always willing to think the best; to put the most favourable construction on every thing: it is ever ready to believe whatever may tend to the advantage of any one's character: it is easily convinced of what it earnestly desires,—the innocence or integrity of any man; or at least of the sincerity of his repentance, if he has once erred from the way. It is glad to excuse whatever is amiss; to condemn the offender as little as possible; and to make all the allowance for human weakness which can be done, without betraying the truth of God: and when it can no longer believe, then, 14thly, love hopeth all things. Is any evil related of any man? Love hopes that the relation is not true; that the thing related was never done. Is it certain that it was?—But perhaps it was not done with such circumstances as are related; so that, allowing the fact, there is room to hope it was not so bad as it is represented. Was the action, apparently, undeniably evil?—Love hopes the intention was not so. Is it clear the design was evil too?—Yet it might not spring from the settled temper of the heart, but from a start of passion, or from some vehement temptation, which hurried the man beyond himself; and even when it cannot be doubted that all the actions, designs, and tempers, are equally evil; still love hopes that God will at last make bare his arm, and get himself the victory; and that there shall be joy in Heaven over this one sinner that repenteth. Mean time, 15thly, it endureth all things; whatever the injustice, the malice, the cruelty of men can inflict, love is able to endure. It calls nothing intolerable; and never says of any thing, "This is not to be borne." A true believer can not only do, but suffer all things, through Christ that strengtheneth him.

Ver. 8. Charity never faileth] This is the sixteenth and last character of love: It never faileth. It accompanies and adorns the faithful to all eternity, and makes a very essential part of their preparation for the heavenly world: in which it has an apparent advantage over many of those gifts which some are so ready to emulate and pursue, to the neglect and injury of this all-important love. But whether men admire prophecies, it is fit they should know, that these shall be abolished, when the faith of God's people shall no longer need to be encouraged, nor their devotion to be assisted by such exhortations and instructions as are necessary now: or, whether they boast themselves of the variety of tongues, they shall cease in those celestial regions. One speech and one language shall prevail among all the blessed inhabitants, and the languages of earth be forgotten, as too low and imperfect: yea, a great deal of that knowledge which we now pursue with the utmost eagerness, and which is very conducive to our present usefulness among mankind, shall then be abolished and superseded, as referring

9 For ¹ we know in part, and we prophesy things in part.

10 But ² when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11 ¹ When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I ^{*} thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish

things.
12 ^m For now we see through a glass, † darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

13 And now ⁿ abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but ^o the greatest of these is charity.

¹ Pl. 73. 22. Prov. 30. 2, 3. Phil. 3. 12, 13. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11. ^{*} Jer. 31. 34. 2 Cor. 5, 7. 8. 1f. 60. 17, 19, 20. ¹ 1f. 28. 11. Ch. 3. 1, 2. & 14. 10. ⁿ Or *reasoned*. ^m 2 Cor. 3. 13. & 5. 7. Phil. 3. 12, 13. Exod. 33. 11. Numb. 12. 8. Rom. 8. 18. 1 John, 3. 2. Mat. 18, 10. Rev. 22. 4. † Cr. in a riddle. ¹ 1 John, 3. 9. 2 Pet. 3. 18. 1 Tim. 1. 5. 2 Tim. 1. 5. ^o Ver. 4-8. 1 Tim. 1. 5. Rom. 13. 8-10. Mat. 22. 37, 38. Eph. 5. 2. Ch. 16. 14.

to things altogether antiquated and passed away; or swallowed up in discoveries so much clearer, stronger, and more important, that it shall appear, in comparison of them, as nothing. As star-light is lost in that of the mid-day sun, so shall our present knowledge be lost in the glorious light of eternity. Instead of *they shall fail*, some read, *shall be out of use, or done away*.

Ver. 9, 10. For we know in part, &c.] The wisest of men have here but short, narrow, imperfect conceptions even of the things round about them; and much more of the deep things of God: and even the prophecies which men deliver from God, are far from taking in the whole of future events, or of that wisdom and knowledge of God, which is treasured up in the Scripture revelation. But when we are arrived at that perfect and heavenly state—both that poor, low, and glimmering light, which is all the knowledge we can now attain to, and all the present slow and unsatisfactory methods of obtaining it, shall be exchanged for the more extensive views of whatever it can be desirable to know; opening upon the mind in the most easy, clear, and delightful manner.

Ver. 11. When I was a child] “The future shall indeed be like a state of adult age, when compared with that of feeble infancy; just as when I was a child, I spake as a child would naturally do, a few imperfect words, hardly at first articulate and intelligible, and often in themselves unmeaning. I was affected as a child; thrown into transports of joy or grief upon trifling occasions, which manly reason soon taught me to despise. I reasoned as a child, in a weak, inconclusive, and sometimes ridiculous manner; but when my faculties ripened, and I became a man, I put away the things of the child, and felt sentiments, and engaged in pursuits, correspondent to such advancements of age and reason. Such shall be the improvements of the heavenly state, in comparison with those which the most eminent Christian can attain here.”

Ver. 12. For now we see through a glass darkly] For now we see in an ambiguous manner, by means of a mirror; ^{δ. π. ο. x.} The LXX. use this word for the women’s looking-glasses, or mirrors of metal, out of which Moses made the laver, Exod. xxxviii. 8. It is well known that the use of *dioptric* glasses in telescopes did not prevail till many ages after the date of this Epistle. The meaning of the verse is, “We now see the most noble objects of our intellectual view in an ambiguous and obscure manner; as we discern distant objects by means of a glass or mir-

ror, which reflects only their imperfect forms; so that, as when *riddles* are proposed to us, our understandings are often confounded with the uncertain and indeterminate appearances of things.—But then we shall see, not the faint reflection, but the objects themselves, face to face, in as distinct a manner as we could wish.—Now I know but in part; and though the light of an immediate revelation from heaven has been imparted to me in many instances, and in an extraordinary manner, I am sensible how great a part is still kept under the veil. But then it shall be taken off, and I shall know, even as I also am known, in an intuitive and comprehensive manner: so that my knowledge shall bear some infinitely faint but fair resemblance to that of the Divine Being, which, while our notices of things hover about the surface, penetrates to the very centre of every object, and sees through my soul and all things as at one glance.”

Ver. 13. And now abideth faith, &c.] “There are, then, only these three things which last, in opposition to the spiritual gifts before spoken of, which were to be of short continuance in the church. Faith, hope, love, are the sum of perfection on earth; love alone is the sum of perfection in Heaven: nay, it is Heaven itself; for

“ — In obedience to what Heaven decrees,
“ Knowledge shall fail, and prophecy shall cease;
“ But lasting charity’s more ample sway,
“ Nor bound by time, nor subject to decay,
“ In happy triumph shall for ever live,
“ And endless good diffuse, and endless praise receive.”

See Mr. Prior’s paraphrase of the whole chapter.

Inferences.—How ambitious should we be of abounding in every exercise of so amiable a grace, as brotherly Christian love, which results from faith in Christ, and from love to him, and to God through him! What are all miraculous gifts of tongues, of prophecy, of immediate revelations, of working wonders, and of a firm assent to the great truths of the Gospel, whereby we might be fitted for service in the church? And what are all external acts of the most generous liberality to the poor, and suffering martyrdom itself for our profession of Christ’s name, without a principle of grace in the heart, and particularly the grace of love, to animate, spiritualize, and improve them for the glory of God, and our own and other’s good? They may

C H A P. XIV.

Prophecy is commended, and preferred before speaking with tongues, by a comparison drawn from musical instruments. Both must be referred to edification, as to their true and proper end. The true use of each is taught, and the abuse censured. Women are forbidden to speak in the church.

[Anno Domini, 57.]

FOLLOW after charity, and ^b desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.

^a Mat. 22. 37, 38. Rom. 13. 8—10. Eph. 5. 2. Deut. 23. 49. 1f. 36. 11. Acts, 2. 4. & 10. 16. & 19. 6. ^b Acts, 10. 44. & 16. 14. & 13. 15. Rom. 12. 8. & 15. 4.

^c Ch. 12. 28. 31. Num. 11. 25, 29. Rom. 12. 6. Ver. 3—5. ^d Gen. 11. 7. & 42. 27. ^e Gr. beareth. ^f Pl. 49. 3, 4. & 78. 2. Mat. 13. 11. Mark, 4. 33. Ver. 29.

appear with specious and noisy pomp; but, without love, will be of no saving advantage to us, and will leave us miserable creatures for ever. How admirable is evangelical love in its benevolent temper and behaviour, meekness, patience, humility, and forbearance; in its candour, and willingness to believe and hope the best; in its sympathy, disinterestedness, and generosity; and in its tender, touching, and friendly care, for the welfare of others! And of how much longer duration is this excellent grace in the faithful saints of God, than all spiritual gifts, which may be lost, even here below, and will have their period with this world at farthest, and be useless in the next; and which at best leave us very imperfect in our knowledge, like children in understanding, while we are here! And though faith and hope may abide with us, and are as necessary as love, during our continuance in this world; yet love is the most eminent of these graces, as on many other accounts, so especially, because it will abide, and be consummately perfected in the saints, together with their knowledge of divine things, in Heaven; where, not only all spiritual gifts, but faith and hope themselves, in their present use and exercise, as well as several other graces, that are suited to this state of warfare, shall cease; and they shall have no further occasion for them, to all eternity.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The more excellent way, which the Apostle had been recommending, he here describes; and that is love, which is the greatest of graces, shall endure for ever, when gifts are vanished away; and without which they are nothing worth.

1. *Though I speak with the tongues of men, in all the various languages of the globe, or even of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal* (so inharmonious), and a mere empty noise. Little reason, therefore, had the Corinthians to value themselves upon the gift of tongues, when, through their abuse of that excellent gift, it afforded them too much occasion for pride and contention. *And,*

2. *Though I have the gift of prophecy, can foretell future events, and understand all mysteries, through divine illumination discovering the meaning of the most abstruse prophecies and figures; and have all knowledge, such as never mortal man attained before, and have not love, it signifies*

2. *For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man * understandeth him; howbeit ^d in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.*

3 *But ^c he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.*

4 *He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.*

nothing to my salvation. Such light would only be sufficient to lead me into eternal darkness.

3. *And though I had all faith, to work the most stupendous miracles, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing in God's account, and utterly destitute of the spirit of vital Christianity.*

4. *And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, it would be utterly unprofitable to myself, if divine love was not the principle from which my alms-giving proceeded. Note; Many give largely to the poor, who never did a truly charitable act in their lives.*

5. *And though I give my body to be burned for my profession of the Gospel, and have not love to God, and to men for his sake, it profiteth me nothing.* The affectation of leaving a great name, or the conceit of the meritoriousness of such a sacrifice, may even lead a man to a stake. He may burn for Christ, and yet be disowned by him, if this genuine mark of discipleship be wanting.

2dly, We have the true properties of that most excellent of graces, *love.*

1. *It suffereth long, patiently enduring provocation, unruffled with affronts, passing by offences, and suppressing every motion of resentment which would rise within the soul.*

2. *It is kind, courteous, affable, benevolent, and opens the lips, the hand, and heart, to every good word and work.*

3. *Love envieth not* the superior gifts, graces, attainments, honours, or affluence, which others enjoy; but takes due pleasure in them as if they were her own.

4. *Love vaunteth not itself,* is not ostentatious of any excellencies or superior advantages; does not treat inferiors with contempt and insolence, nor rashly or perversely utter any thing to a brother's disadvantage.

5. *It is not puffed up,* does not fill the mind with vain conceits of man's importance, nor suffer us to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think.

6. *It doth not behave itself unseemly,* admits of no conduct unsuitable to the age, station, or circumstances, of the person; suffers nothing mean, indecent, or dishonourable, to enter the mind, or be carried into act.

7. *Seeketh not her own,* is influenced by no mercenary motives, nor pursues any private ends, inordinately craving honour, gain, or applause; but is generous, noble, and

5 I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied : for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with

tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

6 Now, brethren, ⁵ if I come unto you

¹ Ver. 3, 4, 6. Num. 11. 25, 29.

² Ch. 11. 34. Eph. 1. 17. Ver. 26.

and disinterested, sacrificing her own advantage for the good of others.

8. It is *not provoked*; but, under the most exasperating insults, can preserve a holy serenity; and even be angry, and not sin; displeased at the sin, yet pitying the sinner; always restraining just resentment within bounds, and ready to be reconciled.

9. It *thinketh no evil*, never seeking to pry into the conduct of others to discover faults, but ever ready to put the best construction on their words and actions; entertains no undue suspicions; and is willing to forget as well as forgive every injury.

10. It *rejoiceth not in iniquity*, looks not, but with grief and sorrow, on the sins, perverseness, and infirmities of others. *But,*

11. *Rejoiceth in the truth*, glad of the success of the Gospel; pleased with beholding its influence, wherever it appears; and ever delighting to bear testimony to the truth, and speaking from the heart.

12. It *beareth all things*; covers men's faults with the mantle of love; pities their weakness, and suffers without the thought of retaliating their perverseness.

13. It *believeth all things*; willing to entertain the most favourable opinion of all, averse to every ungrounded suspicion, and candidly disposed to receive the excuse and explanation where any thing may have been mistaken.

14. It *hopeth all things*; where matters appear dark, and cannot but raise doubts, still Christian love will not despair but that they can yet be cleared up satisfactorily, or, where the evil is evident, that the fault will be repented of and amended.

15. It *endureth all things*, with unshaken fortitude bearing up under every affliction, temptation, and persecution, and for the sake of Christ and his people ready to undergo any sufferings.

Such is the transcendent grace of love: in the glass of which we should often look, compare our features with this perfect pattern, and daily seek that we may grow more like him whose nature and name is Love.

3dly, The Apostle proceeds in his commendation of love, not only as superior to all gifts, but as the chief of all graces.

1. *Love never faileth*. All gifts must quickly have an end; *whether there be prophetes*, the gift of foretelling future events, or interpreting the Scriptures, *they shall fail*, and be of no farther use in the eternal world; *whether there be tongues, they shall cease*, when they have answered their present use of spreading the Gospel through the world; and in Heaven the faithful shall have but one language; *whether there be knowledge*, the extraordinary insight into divine truth, *it shall vanish away*; in glory this knowledge will be no longer needed; all will be intuitively clear.

2. All gifts are suited only to a state of imperfection; when we arrive to maturity in glory we shall be above

them. *For we know in part, and prophecy in part*, our greatest attainments are at present defective; *but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away*; and the nature of the saints of God being exalted to the highest pitch of which it is capable, all imperfection will be swallowed up in the utmost perfection of knowledge and holiness, absolute and everlasting. Our present and future state differ as much as manhood does from infancy. *When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child*; and such he insinuates were all their highest present attainments, no better than the poor conceptions and lisping of babes: *but when I became a man, I put away childish things*; and in the heavenly state to low thoughts shall we entertain of all our present most esteemed acquisitions; we shall despise what in the days of childish folly we valued, and view every thing, with a distinctness of spiritual vision as much above our present state, as the thoughts of manhood are superior to the fancies of infancy: *for now we see through a glass darkly, the mirror reflecting the object indistinctly, and, like a riddle, the truth is enveloped with obscurity; but then face to face, clearly and fully, by intuition, without any darkening medium. Now know I in part, with all my singular gifts I know but in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known*, comprehending heavenly objects with the most distinct knowledge, and in the same way that God who is a Spirit, and his angels, know me.

3. Love is the most excellent of graces, as well as above all gifts. *And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three cardinal graces, inseparable from the Christian character, and which till death must be in constant exercise, if we be finally saved; but the greatest of these is love*, the others being as means to this as the end. And when faith is swallowed up in sight, and hope in the fruition of eternal blessedness, love, the bright image of the Deity, shall glow towards the eternal Three, and towards the celestial hosts, in every bosom of the faithful, and continue to burn, with unextinguished ardour throughout the countless ages of eternity.

CHAP. XIV.

FROM the things written in this chapter, it appears that the brethren at Corinth had erred in their opinion of the comparative excellence of the spiritual gifts, and had been guilty of great irregularities in the exercise of these gifts. In particular, they preferred the *gift of speaking foreign languages* to all the rest, because it made them respectable in the eyes of the unbelieving Greeks, who were great admirers of eloquence. Farther, possessing that gift in the manner of a habit, which they could exercise at pleasure, they were exceedingly fond of shewing it in the public assemblies, by speaking often and long in foreign languages, without regarding whether their hearers understood them or not. And fancying themselves the most honour-

speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by
except I shall speak to you either by revelation, doctrine?

honourable of all the spiritual men, because their gift was habitual, they claimed the privilege of speaking in the public assemblies preferably to others; whereby some who were better qualified to edify the church, were often obliged to be silent. Nay, to such a pitch did they carry their passion for speaking foreign languages, that on some occasions a number of them who possessed that gift, spake in the church all at once; whereby great confusion was occasioned in their meetings.

The Corinthians, by this improper use of their ability to speak foreign languages, having brought a bad report upon the Christian assemblies, St. Paul, in this chapter, endeavoured to lessen their admiration of the gift of tongues, by shewing that it was inferior to most of the other spiritual gifts, and that its value depended on its being used for the edification of others. Wherefore, as an introduction to his discourse on the subject, he began with exhorting them to make *law* the object of their constant pursuit, but *spiritual gifts* the object only of their earnest wish: and of the spiritual gifts, to desire the gift of prophesy, rather than the gift of speaking foreign languages, ver. 1.—Because he who, in the public assemblies, spake in an unknown language, spake to God only, and did no good to others, however sublime and excellent the things which he spake might be, ver. 2.—Whereas he who prophesied spake to men, in a known language, things for their edification, exhortation, and comfort, ver. 3.—In short, he who spake in an unknown language, edified none but himself; whereas he who prophesied edified the church, ver. 4.—This being the case, though the Apostle would have been glad that all the inspired men at Corinth had spoken foreign languages, he rather wished them to prophesy, ver. 5.—Next, he advanced various arguments to shew the unprofitableness of speaking foreign languages in the church, especially when all the congregation understood the language of the country, ver. 6—11.—Then exhorted such of them as earnestly wished to possess spiritual gifts, to seek those which would make them abound to edification, ver. 12.—and directed the persons who prayed in an unknown tongue, to pray in such a manner, that what they prayed might be interpreted, ver. 13, because, if any one prayed in an unknown tongue, without having his prayer interpreted, his spirit prayed, but his meaning did not profit his hearers, ver. 14.—The duty, therefore, of every inspired person, who prayed or sang psalms in the public assemblies, was to perform those offices in an intelligible manner, ver. 15.—otherwise, when he returned thanks to God, his hearers could not say *Amen*; that is, could not join in his thanksgiving, not understanding what he said, ver. 16. 17.—He then told them, that he could thank God in more foreign languages than all of them taken together, yet he would rather speak five sentences, in a known language, for the edification of others, than ten thousand sentences in an unknown language, which could profit nobody but himself, ver. 18. 19.

Next, to shew the Corinthians the foolishness of a number of them speaking in the church unknown languages

all at once, he told them it was acting like children. In bad dispositions, indeed, he wished them to be children, but in understanding to be men, ver. 20.—Then he put them in mind of Isaiah's prophecy, in which it was foretold, that God would speak to the unbelieving Israelites in foreign languages; but that even so they would not believe, ver. 21.—From which he inferred, that foreign languages were intended for a sign, not to believers but unbelievers, to convince them of the divine origin of the gospel. Whereas prophesy was especially intended for the edification of believers, ver. 22.—Farther, when the whole church is met in one place, if all of you, said he, who have the gift of tongues, speak at once, and there come in an unlearned person, or an unbeliever, will they not say, *ye are mad?* ver. 23.—Whereas if all inspired men *prophesy*, that is, speak in a known language, and in an orderly manner, to the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the assembly, and there shall come in an unlearned person, or an unbeliever, perhaps with a bad intention, such a one, understanding what is spoken by all, will probably be made sensible, through grace, of the evil of his idolatry and wickedness, ver. 24.—and the secrets of his heart will be discovered, so that falling prostrate, he will worship God, and carry away word that God is actually among the Christians, ver. 25.

In the remaining part of this chapter, the Apostle gave the Corinthians particular directions concerning the manner in which they were to exercise their spiritual gifts, ver. 26—33.—and prohibited women from speaking in the church on any pretence whatever, founding his prohibition on the will of God, and on the law of Moses, which commanded women to be subject to men, and even on the custom of nations, ver. 34, 35, 36.—Then he required the prophets, and other spiritual persons at Corinth, to acknowledge that all the things he had written were the commandments of the Lord. For St. Paul, though one of the greatest apostles, willingly submitted his doctrines and writings to be tried by those who had the gift of discerning spirits; being absolutely certain of his own inspiration, ver. 37.—He added, if, after the attestation borne to my precepts by the spiritual men, any teacher among you is ignorant that they are the precepts of the Lord, let him remain in his ignorance, ver. 38.—And, as the conclusion of the whole, he exhorted the Corinthians to desire earnestly to prophesy; but, at the same time, not to forbid any person to speak in an unknown language, if there was an interpreter present to interpret what he said, ver. 39.—And in general to do all things, in their public assemblies, decently and in order, ver. 40.

Before this illustration is finished, it may be proper to remark, first, that this and the two preceding chapters of St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, more than any other parts of the sacred volume, are useful for demonstrating the reality, and for making us acquainted with the nature, of that most singular and astonishing proof of the divine original of the gospel, which was set before the world in the supernatural gifts, wherewith multitudes of
the

7 And even things without life giving sound, ^b whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the * sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?

^a Jer. 9. 17, 18. & 48, 36. Job. 21. 11, 12. Matt. 9. 23. & 11. 17. * Or tunes.

the first Christians were endowed. For, from the account given of these gifts in the chapters mentioned, and of the persons who possessed them, and of the manner of their communication and operation, and of the uses for which they were intended, we understand, that they all proceeded from the Spirit of God, and were most astonishing in their operation: that, in every church, great numbers of persons possessed these gifts, having received them, either by an immediate illapse of the Holy Ghost, or by the imposition of the Apostles' hands: that the spiritual men exercised these gifts openly before all the world, for the confirmation of the gospel; and, in their public assemblies, for their own edification: that, in the absence of the apostles, the spiritual men, by these gifts, but especially by the gifts of miracles and tongues, through divine grace, converted numbers: and that the heathens who came into the Christian assemblies, (as many of them did, 1 Cor. xiv. 24.) had thereby an opportunity to know, and to report to others, that God was really among them. Thus, notwithstanding the gospel in the first age met with great opposition every where, from the statesmen, the priests, the craftsmen, the bigots, and even from the philosophers and rhetoricians, yet in all countries, by means of the influence of the spiritual gifts, and of the miraculous powers which abounded among the Christians, accompanied with divine grace, it overcame all opposition, and, through the blessing of God, spread itself so effectually, that at length it put an end to the heathen religions in the best peopled and most civilized provinces of the Roman empire.

My second remark is: That although the irregularities which the Corinthian brethren were guilty of in the exercise of their spiritual gifts, occasioned at first abundance of trouble to the Apostle Paul, these irregularities are not now to be regretted. By the direction of God, they have been the occasion of our receiving certain and full information concerning the existence of the spiritual gifts which made a part of the primitive glory of our religion, and concerning the way in which they were exercised by the Apostles, and other spiritual men, for the overturning of the heathen idolatry, the establishment of the gospel throughout the world, and the edification of the church itself.

Ver. 1. *Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, &c.*] Or, *purſue*, &c. St. Paul, in this chapter, concludes his answer to the Corinthians concerning spiritual men and their gifts; and having told them that those were most to be preferred which tended most to edification, and particularly shewn that *prophecy* was to be preferred to *tongues*, he gave them directions for the decent, orderly, and profitable exercise of their gifts in their assemblies. The word *ἀκολουθεῖτε*, rendered *follow after*, properly signifies, "To pursue, with an eagerness like that with which hunters follow their game;" and it may be intended to intimate how hard it is to obtain and preserve such a truly benevolent spirit, in the main series of life; considering, on the one hand, how many provocations we are likely to meet with; and, on the other, the force of self-love, which

will, in so many instances, be ready to break in upon it. But to true evangelical faith nothing is impossible. Instead of *follow*, we may read, *purſue*.

Ver. 2. *For he that speaketh, &c.*] "He that speaks in a tongue unknown in the auditory which he addresses, speaks in effect not to men, but to God; and as God alone knows the truth and importance of what he says, it is all lost on the audience, though he speaks in the Spirit the most sublime mysteries." Dr. Whitby thinks that the gifts of languages and prophecy were always to be found in the same person, but that the first was permanent, the other transient; yet surely it is very conceivable that either might be without the other. The miraculous *inspiration*, as it were, in a man's mind a new language, would, indeed, enable him to speak all he knew in it; but his fitness to discourse in public, as well as his capacity of predicting future events, were matters quite of another nature. He who attentively reads this chapter, says Mr. Locke, about spiritual men, and their gifts, may find reason to imagine that it was those who had the gift of tongues that caused the disorder in the church of Corinth, by their forwardness to speak, and striving to be heard first; and so taking up too much of their time in the assemblies. For remedying this disorder, and better regulating this matter, amongst other things, they had recourse to St. Paul. This opinion will be confirmed, if we consider, 1st, that the first gift which St. Paul compares with love, ch. xiii. and extremely undervalues in comparison of that divine virtue, is the *gift of tongues*; as if that were the gift which they most affected to shew, and most valued themselves upon; as indeed it was in itself most fitted for ostentation, in their assemblies, of any other, if any one were inclined that way; and that the Corinthians, in their present state, were not exempt from emulation and vanity, is very evident. 2dly, If we consider, that when in this chapter St. Paul compares their spiritual gifts one with another, the first, nay, the only one which he depreciates, in comparison of others, is the gift of tongues; of which he discourses for above twenty verses together, in a way proper to abate a too high esteem, and a too excessive use of it in their assemblies; which we cannot suppose he would have done had they not been guilty of some such miscarriage in the case as seems to be intimated in ver. 24. 3dly, When he comes to give directions about the exercise of their gifts in their meetings, that of *tongues* is the only one which he restrains and limits, ver. 27, 28.

Ver. 3. *But he that prophesieth, &c.*] That is, "Whereas he that prophesieth, in the sense in which I now use the word, i. e. discourses of divine things in a known language, *speakes to men*, and affords them edification, and exhortation and comfort, according to the particular tenor and contents of what he says."

Ver. 4. *In an unknown tongue.*] By *ἄγνωστον γλῶσσαν*, Dr. Lightfoot, in this chapter, understands the Hebrew tongue; which, he observes, was used in the synagogue in reading the scripture, in praying, and in preaching. "If that be the meaning of *tongue* here, says Mr. Locke, it suits well

8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

9 So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words * easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall ¹ speak into the air.

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them *is* without signification.

11 Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh *shall be* a barbarian unto me.

12 ^k Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous † of spiritual *gifts*, seek that ye may excel to *e* edifying of the church.

13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue pray that ¹ he may interpret.

14 For ^m if I pray in an *unknown* tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.

15 What is it then? ⁿ I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

* Gr. significant. ¹ Ch. 9. 26. ^k Ver. 7. 8. Ch. 12. 7, 31. † Gr. of spirit. Ch. 1. 10. ² Thes. 2. 2. ^a Eph. 5. 19. Col. 3. 16. Pf. 47. 7. Ver. 19. 26.

¹ Ch. 12. 10. ver. 26, 27.

^m Luke 24. 25. Rom. 14. 19.

“well with the Apostle’s design; which was to take “them off from their Jewish false apostle, who probably “might have encouraged and promoted this speaking of “the Hebrew in their assemblies.” But it appears to me more likely that the word *γλώσση*, here signifies any known tongue, in the general.

Ver. 5. *I would that ye all spake with tongues.*] How happily does the Apostle teach us to estimate the value of gifts and talents, not by their brilliancy, but usefulness. *Speaking with tongues* was, indeed, very serviceable for spreading the gospel abroad; but for those who staid at home, it was much more desirable to be able to discourse well on useful subjects in their own language; which might serve for the improvement of the society to which they belonged, and the conviction of such of their unbelieving neighbours as might visit their assemblies. See ver. 23—25.

Ver. 6. *By revelation, or by knowledge, &c.*] It is not to be doubted that the four distinct terms here used by the Apostle had each its distinct signification in his mind and intention. Whether what may be collected from these epistles will sufficiently warrant us to understand them in the following significations, must be left to the judgment of others. First, *Revelation*;—something revealed by God immediately to the person; see ver. 30. Secondly, *Knowledge*;—the understanding of the mystical and evangelical sense of passages in the Old Testament, relating to our Saviour and the gospel. Thirdly, *prophecy*; an *inspired hymn*, ver. 26, or the prediction of some future event. Fourthly, *doctrine*;—any truth of the gospel concerning faith, experience, or manners. But whether this, or any other precise meaning of these words, can be certainly made out now, it is perhaps of no great necessity to be over curious; it being enough, for the understanding the sense and argument of the Apostle here, to know that these terms stand for some intelligible discourse, tending to the edification of the church; though of what kind each of them was in particular we know not certainly.

Ver. 10—12. *There are, it may be, &c.*] *There are, for example, many different languages in the world, and all are significant, ver. 11. But if I do not understand the language,*

I shall be, with regard to him that uses it, as a foreigner, and he will be so to me, ver. 12. Since then there is among you such an emulation about spiritual gifts, seek to excel in these which most contribute to edify the congregation. Heylin.

Ver. 13. *Wherefore let him that speaketh, &c.*] If therefore any of you be fond of speaking languages, by a miraculous power, which he himself was before a stranger to, and which those who have not learnt it can make nothing of; let him beg of God, that, when he comes among such people, he may also be enabled to interpret what he says in their vulgar tongue, that it may not be a heap of unintelligible words to them; but that they may be profited by the discourse.

Ver. 14. *But my understanding is unfruitful.*] “My meaning is unprofitable to others, who understand not my words.” See ver. 4.

Ver. 15. *I will pray with the understanding also.*] That is, according to Mr. Locke, “When moved to it by the “Spirit, I will pray in an unknown tongue; but so that “my meaning may be understood by others;” that is to say, “I will not do it but when there is some one by to “interpret.”—I will not pretend, says Mr. Locke, to justify this interpretation of the term *τῷ νοῷ* by the exact rules of the Greek idiom; but the sense of the place will, I think, bear me out in it; and he must be little conversant with the writings of St. Paul who does not observe, that when he has used a term, he is apt to repeat it again in the same discourse, in a way peculiar to himself, and somewhat varied from its ordinary signification. So, having here in the foregoing verse used the word *νοῦς*, for *the sentiment of his own mind*, which was unprofitable for others when he prayed in a tongue unknown to them,—and opposed it to the word *πνεῦμα*, which he used there *for his own sense*, accompanying his own words, intelligible to himself, when by the impulse of the spirit he prayed in a foreign tongue; he continues in this verse to use *praying with the Spirit*, and *with the understanding* in the same opposition, the one for praying in a strange tongue, which alone his own mind understood and accompanied; the other, for praying so, as that the meaning of his mind in those words which he uttered was made known to others, so that they

16 Else, when thou shalt bleſs with the ſpirit, how ſhall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned ſay ^o Amen at thy giving of thanks, ſeeing he underſtandeth not what thou ſayeſt?

17 For thou verily givelt thanks well, but the other is not edified.

18 I thank my God, ^p I ſpeak with tongues more than you all :

19 Yet in the church I had rather ſpeak five words with my underſtanding, that *by my voice* I might teach others alſo, than ten thouſand words in an *unknown* tongue.

20 Brethren, be ^q not children in underſtanding : howbeit, in malice ^r be ye children, but in underſtanding be ^s men.

21 In the law it is written, ^t With *men of other tongues and other lips* will I ſpeak unto

this people ; and yet for all that they will not hear me, ſaith the Lord.

22 Wherefore tongues are for a ſign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not : but prophelying *ſerveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all ſpeak with tongues, and there come in *thoſe that are unlearned* or unbelievers, will they not ſay ^u that ye are mad ?

24 ^x But, if all prophely, and there come in one that believeth not, or *one unlearned*, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all :

25 And thus are the ſecrets of his heart made manifeſt ; and ſo, falling down on his face, he will worſhip God, and report that ^y God is in you of a truth.

^o Num. 6. 23. Deut. 27. 15. Neh. 5. 13. & 8. 6. 1 Chr. 15. 36. Pf. 103. 48. & 107. 1, 2. ^p Rom. 15. 19. ^q Pf. 119. 99. Rom. 16. 10. Eph. 4. 14. Ch. 2. 6. 13. & 3. 1. Feb. 5. 12. ^r Pf. 111. 1, 2. Mat. 11. 25. & 19. 11. & 18. 3. 1 Pet. 2. 2. ^s Gr. *perfect*, or of a *ripe age*. Ch. 2. 6. Phil. 3. 15. ^t If. 28. 11, 12. Deut. 28. 49. Jer. 5. 15. ^u Acts, 2. 13. & 26. 24. ^x Ch. 2. 15. Heb. 4. 12. John, 10. 9-11. & 6. 63. Acts, 2. 37. & 16. 14. ^y If. 45. 14. Zech. 8. 23.

they were alſo benefited. Dr. Doddridge, however, is of opinion, that the ſenſe and high ſpirit of the Apoſtle in this clauſe is loſt by the above interpretation. I apprehend, ſays he, it is deſigned further to intimate what a want of manly ſenſe and right underſtanding it muſt betray, to talk in a language which the hearers could not comprehend, how ſublime ſoever the diſcourſe may be. This the 20th verſe, and eſpecially the uſe of the word *τέλειος*, there ſtrongly ſuggeſts. Inſtead of, *I will pray with the underſtanding, and I will ſing with the underſtanding*, Dr. Heylin reads, *But my prayer ſhall be intelligible ;—but my hymn ſhall be intelligible.*

Ver. 16. *He that occupieth, &c.*] Or, *he that is one of the unlearned.* Dr. Heylin reads, *How ſhall a hearer, who knows only his own tongue, ſay, &c.*

Ver. 18. *I ſpeak with tongues more, &c.*] The occaſion ſhews, that the Apoſtle conſidered this acquirement as a ſpiritual gift ; and his uſing the preſent time ſhews that he ſpoke of it as then in his poſſeſſion. But why did he *ſpeak with more tongues than all of them?*—For a good reaſon : he was the peculiar Apoſtle of the Gentiles, and was to preach the goſpel among remote and barbarous nations. See ver. 4.

Ver. 20. *Be not children in underſtanding :*] This is an admirable ſtroke of true oratory, adapted to humble their ſpirits, by repreſenting thoſe things in which they were moſt ready to pride themſelves, as comparatively little. The word *μαίετες* refers to *infants*, and is not ſufficiently expreſſed by the word *children* ; for they are ſometimes vain, and ſometimes *malicious* too ; the old Adam more or leſs diſcovers itſelf in them : it ſhould rather be rendered, *be little infants in malice, —μαία, —* by which is

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to be underſtood all ſorts of evil tempers of mind which are contrary to the gentleneſs of childhood ; and in particular their emulation and ſtriſe about the exerciſe of their gifts in their aſſemblies. The word *τέλειος* ſignifies *full-grown men* ; intimating, that it was a kind of *puerility* to emulate, and to quarrel with one another.

Ver. 21. *In the law it is written,*] In the law, here, means the Old Teſtament, Ifai. xxviii. 11. where God has been complaining of the unteachable diſpoſition of the Jews. Inſtead of, *with men of other lips*, ſome read, *ſurely in foreign language, and with foreign lips, &c.* Moſt critics refer the words, as they ſtand in Ifai. 11, to the Babylonians, who ſhould come and ſpeak to them in a language unintelligible to them ; in which ſenſe the phraſe is uſed elſewhere, Deut. xxviii. 49. Jer. v. 15. Diodati thinks the meaning is, “ Because they would not attend to plain meſſages, God would ſpeak to them by ſuch as they could not underſtand :” and then the Apoſtle’s argument will be, “ Since God threatens this as a curſe, do not voluntarily bring it upon the church, merely to make a ſtatement of your own gifts.” See Luke, xxiv. 44. Acts, xxiv. 14.

Ver. 25. *And thus are the ſecrets, &c.*] “ In a manner to him very ſurpriſing and unaccountable ; inſomuch that ſometimes a perſon who comes into your aſſembly out of mere curioſity, or poſſibly with ſome ill deſign, is not able to command himſelf under the impreſſion which the word of God thus ſpoken makes upon him.” It is very poſſible that, as in the known caſes of Nathaniel and the woman of Samaria, (John, i. 47. iv. 18.) ſome ſecret facts relating to a ſtranger might, in ſome inſtances, be revealed to a prophet ; perhaps, in ſome caſes, the ill de-

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ſigns

26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, ² every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. ³ Let all things be done unto edifying.

27 If any man speak in an *unknown* tongue, *let it be* by two, or at the most *by* three, and *that* by course; and let one interpret.

28 But, if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God.

29 ^b Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

30 If *any thing* be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

31 ^c For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be comforted.

32 ^d And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 For God is not *the author* of ^{*} confusion, ^e but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

² Ver. 6. Ch. 12. 8—10. ³ 2 Cor. 12. 19. & 13. 10. Eph. 4. 12, 16, 29. 1 Thes. 5. 47. Rom. 14. 19. Ch. 10. 20. Ver. 5, 12. ^b Ch. 2. 15. & 12. 10. ^c Rom. 12. 7. Ver. 29, 30. ^d Ver. 12. 29. 1 John, 4. 1. Ch. 13. 10. 1 Thes. 5. 20, 21. ^e Gr. tumult or unquietness. ^{*} Ch. 12. 25. & 11. 16.

signs which had brought them into the assembly, when they came only as spies: and this was well suited to the purpose of producing, through grace, strong convictions of the presence of God with Christians. The passage, however, may be so understood, as to include any remarkable correspondence between what was spoken and the thoughts and state of mind whereof such a stranger might be conscious. Many memorable instances of which still happen, where ministers preach in an experimental manner, and lasting effects are often produced in consequence of such impressions.

Ver. 26. *Every one of you hath a psalm,*] *Is ready with a psalm, with a doctrine, &c.* Locke. It seems probable, that some of these Christians were so full of themselves, and so desirous of exercising their respective gifts, that, without waiting for the permission and direction of him who presided in the assembly (which in the synagogues the Apostles themselves seem to have done, see Acts, xiii. 15.), several began *speaking* or *singing* in the same minute, and some began while others were speaking. The manner in which discourses were carried on in the schools of the philosophers, (where several little knots of disputants seem to have been engaged at the same time,) and what happened frequently in the Jewish synagogues after worship was concluded, might possibly have given occasion to this irregularity.

Ver. 27. *If any man speak, &c.*] St. Paul has said in this chapter as much as conveniently could be said, to restrain their speaking in an unknown tongue in their assemblies; which seems to be that particular wherein the vanity and ostentation of the Corinthians was most forward to shew themselves. "It is not," says he, "a gift intended for the edification of believers; however, since you will be exercising it in your meetings, let it always be so ordered that it may be for edification." The original word *εἴτε* should be rendered *although*, since it is no where used simply for *if*, as in our translation: nor will the sense here bear *whether*, which is the common signification of the word *εἴτε*. Therefore, says Mr. Locke, I take the Apostle's meaning to be, "You must do nothing but to edification, ver. 26; and although you speak in an unknown tongue, even an unknown tongue must be made use of in your assemblies

"only to edification." The rule of the synagogue was, "In the law, let one read, and one interpret; in the prophets, let one read, and two interpret."—In Esther, "ten may read, and ten interpret."—Some learned critics would connect this and the 26th verse together; thus: *Hath every one a psalm? Hath he a doctrine? &c.*—*Let all be done to edifying; or if any one speak in an unknown tongue, let it be, &c.* See Luke, xi. 11.

Ver. 28. *But, if there be no interpreter,*] The miracle which conferred the gift of tongues, seems to have been the instantaneous impressing on the mind the familiar and perfect knowledge of a language, with which the person was before unacquainted; yet so that from that time the person receiving it should be able, without any new miracle, to use it as he thought fit; in the same manner as the members of the body are freely and perfectly used, after having been restored by miracle to the exercise of their natural functions. It was as much in the course of nature for an Apostle, whom the Holy Spirit had enabled to speak a strange language, ever afterwards to have the use of that language, as it was for the cripple whom Jesus restored to the use of his limbs, ever afterwards to walk, run, and perform all the functions of a man perfectly sound and whole. This is the only hypothesis upon which the abuse of this gift can be accounted for.

Ver. 30. *Let the first hold his peace.*] Some think that the word *συχάρτω* here should be rendered, *have done speaking*; for if the direction had been, "Let him that was speaking immediately hold his peace, as soon as another intimates that he has a revelation," it would have introduced a confusion which this advice was intended to prevent.—"If any thing be revealed to another, &c. let him not immediately arise and interrupt the first, but let him sit still till he have done speaking." See ver. 32, 33.

Ver. 31. *That all may learn,*] *Yet so as all may learn.*

Ver. 32. *The spirits of the prophets are subject, &c.*] Those who were actuated by the Holy Spirit, in the very moment of inspiration, still retained the free use of themselves, and continued masters of their rational and persuasive faculties. But it was just the contrary with the heathen oracles. The Delphic prophetess was a mere organ, her prophecies being delivered in a fit of extacy, when the presence of the god

34 ¹ Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

35 And, if they will learn any thing, ² let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

36 What! ³ came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

37 ¹ If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

38 ² But, if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

39 Wherefore, brethren, ¹ covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

40 ² Let all things be done decently and in order.

¹ 1 Tim. 2. 11, 12. Eph. 5. 22. Col. 3. 18. Tit. 2. 5. 1 Pet. 3. 1. Gen. 3. 16. ² 1 Pet. 5. 7. see on Ver. 34. with Ch. 11. 14. ³ 1 Cor. 2. 13. ¹ 2 Cor. 10. 7. 1 John, 4. 6. Ch. 7. 25. Luke, 10. 16. ² Rev. 22. 11. Pl. 81. 12. Hof. 4. 17. Gen. 6. 3. 1f. 6. 9, 10. ⁴ 44. 18. Ch. 12. 31. Ver. 1. ⁵ Ch. 11. 34. Col. 2. 5. Ver. 26, 27, 33.

or devil was supposed to obliterate all the impressions of human ideas.

Ver. 34, 35. *Let your women keep silence*] "As to your women, let them keep silence in your assemblies: for it is not permitted them to discourse there, or pretend to teach: that no way suits the state of subjection appointed them in the law. See Gen. iii. 16. But if they have a mind to have any thing explained to them which passes in the church, let them, for their information, ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the congregation."

Ver. 37. *Or spiritual,*] The *spiritual man*, in St. Paul's sense, in this place, is one who founds his knowledge in what is revealed by the Spirit of God, and not in the bare discoveries of his natural reason and parts. See ch. ii. 15.

Ver. 38. *If any man be ignorant,*] By the *any man*, mentioned in this and the foregoing verse, St. Paul seems particularly to intimate the false apostle, who pretended to give laws among them, and may well be supposed to be the author of these disorders; whom therefore St. Paul censures, and presses in these three verses. The word *ἄγνοιστα*, which we render, "Let him be ignorant," Dr. Whitby would render, "Let him not be acknowledged to be a true prophet." See his note.

Ver. 39. *Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, &c.*] Therefore, to conclude all that I have been saying on these points, my advice to you, brethren, is, that you be earnestly desirous of obtaining and exercising the gift of prophesy, as the most excellent in itself, and most profitable to the church, of all others; (ver. 1—5.) and yet that ye would not utterly discountenance and prevent the exercise of the gift of tongues, which may also be of good use in its place, if it be managed according to the foregoing rules concerning it."

Ver. 40. *Let all things be done decently*] "Especially remember this great comprehensive rule, to be applied to a thousand varieties which may arise, *Let all things be done decently, and according to order*; let all be conducted in a regular manner, to prevent such disturbances, disputes, and scandals for the future, as have already arisen in your society, and will proceed to greater evils, if you do not immediately set about reforming them."

Inferences.—How weak and poor a thing is pride and ostentation, and how wise and honourable humility and love! Who that has a right discernment would not rather be the obscurest Christian that now almost unseen joins our assemblies, and, in heart at least, humbly puts his *amen* to the petitions presented there, than the most fluent talker in Corinth, abusing the special gifts of the Spirit, and trifling away, in an unseasonable display of his then unprofitable endowments, the moments destined to the highest purposes of religious edification? Who must not lament to see pride and vain-glory so early insinuating themselves into Christian societies? Who must not, from so sad an instance, learn to be greatly watchful over their own hearts, on a side where they are subject to such dangerous attacks? ver. 2—12.

Had the most able and zealous protestant divine endeavoured to expose the absurdity of praying in an unknown tongue, as practised in the church of Rome, it is difficult to imagine what he could have written more full to the purpose than the Apostle has here done: and when it is considered how perversely the papists retain the usage of such *prayers*, it will seem no wonder that they should keep the *scriptures* also in an unknown tongue. But they proclaim, at the same time, their superstition and idolatry in so universal a language, that even a *barbarian* might perceive and learn it in their assemblies. May God give their prejudiced minds a juster and happier turn, and teach us to avoid a blind and unreasonable adherence to custom, merely as such; always directing ourselves by what the reason of the things, and the authority of scripture, concur to dictate, ver. 13—16.

We should learn of this wise and benevolent Apostle, to estimate the value of gifts by their usefulness, and to seek, above all things, the edification of our brethren, especially if we are providentially called to minister in public, ver. 18, 19. There is, perhaps, a manner of *speaking in an unknown tongue*, even when the language of our own country is used,—a height of composition, an abstruseness of thought, an obscurity of phrase, which common Christians cannot understand. Let not the ministers of the humble Jesus seek such *high things*, but, in this important sense of the exhortation, *condescend to men of low estate*. If the ignorant may be instructed, if the careless may be

M m 2

convinced,

CHAP. XV.

By Christ's resurrection he proveth the necessity of our resurrection, against all such as deny the resurrection of the body. The fruit and manner thereof, and of the change which the faithful shall pass through who shall be found alive at the last day.

[Anno Domini 57.]

MOREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto

* Acts, 18. 4. Ch. 1. 23, 24. & 2. 2, 5—7. 1 Thef. 1. 5. 1 Pet. 5. 12. Rom. 5. 2. 2 Cor. 1. 24. Ch. 1. 21, 24, 30. Rom. 1. 16. Or
16—18. Ch. 11. 23. Mat. 28. 20. Ezek. 3. 17. Gen. 3. 15. Lev. i—vi. xvi. xx d. xii. Num. xv. xxviii. xxix. Pf. xxii. lxxix. If. liii.
Dan. 9. 24—26. Zech. 13. 7. Luke, 24. 25—27, 44. Acts, 26. 22. Matt. xxvi—xxviii. Luke, xxii—xxiv. John, xviii—xxi. 1 Pet. 1. 11. & 2. 24.
& 1. 18. * Pf. 16. 10, 11. If. 53. 9. Hof. 6. 2. Jon. 1. 17. Mat. 12. 14. Luke, 24. 26. Acts, 2. 25. & 13. 33. 36. & 26. 22 Rom. 1. 4, & 4. 24
1 Pet. 1. 11.

convinced, if the vicious may be reformed; if the devotion of our Christian brethren may be excited, their love to each other cherished, and their holy resolutions confirmed,—the great ends of divine ordinances are answered; and that plainness of speech which may be most likely to promote them, is rather the glory than the reproach of the Christian orator.

How fondly do men flatter themselves with empty appearances, and often how justly do such deserve the imputation of childish folly, the height of whose temper will least allow them to bear it! Let us dare to examine ourselves impartially; solicitous that we may not be children in understanding; but, forming our minds on the maxims of scripture, and our lives on the example of Christ, may we grow up in him to the measure and stature of a perfect man:—but let us be children in malice, endeavouring to be as free from every gloomy, malignant, selfish passion, as newborn infants are, ver. 20. In short, it is this happy and amiable character, which we should diligently follow after; remembering that there is a sense in which we must become as little children, or we cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Those extraordinary gifts, which suited the first planting of Christianity in the world, are now ceased; but we have great reason to bless God that they were given, and that we have such an incontestable evidence of the truth of the gospel as this chapter affords. Such endowments must certainly argue a divine power setting its seal to the gospel; and the reality of such endowments can never be questioned, when we reflect on the manner in which the Apostle here reproves the abuse of them, and that in a society where so many were alienated from him and his ministry, and consequently where such appeals, if not founded on the strictest and most apparent truth, must have exposed him to a contempt never to have been removed. Though these miraculous gifts are now withdrawn, still the Divine Presence is with the church; of which we have this happy proof, that there are those who find the secrets of their hearts made manifest by the faithful and skilful administration of Christian ordinances; adoring the Lord God in their hearts, and acknowledging that he is of a truth with his church. May instances of this kind be more frequent, and may the spirituality and fervour

you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory * what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

3 For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures:

4 And that he was buried, and that he

with which divine ordinances shall be administered be such, as may afford more reason to expect them, ver. 24, 25.

We should always regard God as the author, not of confusion, but of peace; making it our concern to behave in his sanctuary in a manner agreeable to this view; with such solemn decorum, and with such a tender regard to the edification and comfort of each other, as he may approve. May the God of peace deliver Christians of every denomination and rank from that spiritual pride which has thrown so many religious societies into disorder: and, to advance in a state so happy as that of humility and love must necessarily be, may what the Apostles have written be acknowledged as the commandments of the Lord, and Christian worship and practice be more regulated by their truly authentic canons; which would render many that have since been devised, relating to indifferent matters, as unnecessary as some others are burdensome, superstitious, and absurd, ver. 33—40.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, Having recommended charity, or love, in the first place, he proceeds to shew what spiritual gifts were most desirable.

1. Follow after love, pursue it with the greatest eagerness, and desire spiritual gifts for the glory of God and the good of the church; but rather, or chiefly, that ye may prophesy, so as by divine illumination to be enabled most profitably to open and apply the Scriptures to the consciences of men for their comfort and edification.

2. He assigns this reason for his exhortation, He that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, who cannot understand him, but unto God; for no man understandeth him, howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries, and advances the most glorious and important truths: but he that propheseth, explaining and opening the Scriptures to the understanding and capacity of the hearers, speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort, and his ministry and gifts are made useful to their souls. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue, edifieth himself; but he that propheseth, edifieth the church, and communicates an extensive benefit to others as well as to his own heart. I would that ye all spake with tongues, and were furnished with this great gift; but rather that ye prophesed: for greater is he that propheseth, than

rose again the third day, according to the scriptures :

5^b And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve :

^b Luke, 24. 34. Mark, 16. 14. John, 20. 19—23.

than he that speaketh with tongues, he is a more useful and therefore a more excellent man, and to be more highly esteemed by the hearers; *except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.* Note; Our discourses should be adapted to the capacity of our hearers: high flights of eloquence, or affectation of learning, are absurd where the audience is illiterate. Our ambition must be to stoop; and we should ever be more solicitous to be understood than to be admired.

2dly, The Apostle goes on to shew the absurdity of making an ostentatious show of gifts, and speaks in his own person to insinuate the reproof which they deserved for their vanity in this respect. *Now brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you, interpreting what is made known unto me in an intelligible manner, either by revelation, if it be a new truth; or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?* Opening the Scriptures, and enforcing them on the conscience. He illustrates this,

1. By a pipe or harp. Unless these instruments give a distinction of sounds to excite the different passions which music raises, they will be useless and inharmonious: and just so must speaking in an unknown tongue be absurd to one who is a stranger to the language.

2. By a trumpet; which, if it give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? And as the soldier in such a case must be utterly at a loss, so must the congregation be where the discourse is in an unknown tongue, or above their capacities; and such preaching is to them no better than the whistling of the wind.

3. A person speaking in such an unknown tongue appears as a barbarian to the hearers. Various as the languages are in the world, each serves to convey the ideas of the mind to those who are acquainted with it, but to no others: therefore, if I know not the meaning of the language, it will appear mere gibberish; the speaker will appear a barbarian to me, and I to him.

Now this being evidently the case, the Apostle exhorts them, since they so eagerly coveted spiritual gifts, to desire those that were of the most useful tendency; and if they spoke with tongues, to pray that they might be able to interpret them for the edifying of the church. *For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, and my own soul may be engaged in devotion; but my understanding is unfruitful, and my prayers of no use to the hearer.*

3dly, The Apostle sums up what he had been saying. *What is it then that is proper to be done? I will pray with the Spirit, and on proper occasions with any of the tongues which he has given; and I will pray with the understanding also, in such manner as that others may be edified: I will sing with the Spirit, in whatever language he is pleased to enable me to utter his praises; and I will, in public, sing with the understanding also, that the church may join in my ascriptions of praise to God. Else, when thou shalt bless with the Spirit, though under his immediate inspiration, if it be in an unknown tongue, how shall he that occupieth the*

room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest, and therefore cannot join in the service? For thou verily givest thanks well; but the other, who knows not the meaning of the words, is not edified. *I thank my God (and happy is it when we can call him mine), I speak with tongues more than you all; he did not depreciate the gift, therefore, because he possessed it not, but because they made so evil a use of it: yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, than by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue, from which none of the hearers could receive the least benefit. Therefore, brethren, be not children in understanding, and foolishly boast yourselves on the showy gift of tongues: howbeit in malice be ye children, free from the malignant passions of envy, malice, and pride; but in understanding be men, and prove yourselves to be Christians grown to riper years, by knowing how to value things according to their intrinsic worth, and to prefer god-like love to the most astonishing gifts.* Note; (1.) That church must be erroneous, where ignorance is regarded as the mother of devotion, and the prayers are offered in an unknown tongue. (2.) The least good done to the meanest soul is an unpeakably greater acquisition than the highest applause gained to ourselves. (3.) A malicious envious spirit is directly contrary to true Christianity. Among the first lessons of that school, we must learn to become as little children.

4thly, The Apostle further enforces what he had advanced, by observing,

1. That it had been threatened to the Jews, as the punishment of their infidelity, that *with men of other tongues, and other lips, will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that they will not hear me, saith the Lord:* which was primarily fulfilled when they were sent into captivity to Babylon, where they heard the strange language of their conquerors; and secondarily, when, on the day of Pentecost, they heard the Apostles speak with tongues, yet rejected the evidence which the Holy Ghost bore thereby to the doctrine which they preached; deaf to the warnings of Providence and the calls of grace. The Corinthians should not therefore be so inordinately fond of what God had before used in a way of judgment upon Israel, or what the Jews in general, by their wilful obstinacy, had abused to their eternal condemnation.

2. *Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not, to carry the Gospel into the lands of infidelity, and bear a testimony to the truth of it, which those who believe do not so much need; but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not merely, but is also for them which believe, that they may be built up on the true foundation. So that to speak with tongues in a Christian assembly, where none could be profited thereby, was useless.*

3. The credit of their profession should restrain them from an ostentation of their gift of tongues. *If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak*
with:

6 After that he was seen¹ of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

¹ Mat. 26. 32. & 28. 10.

with tongues, it will appear a second Babel: and if there come in those that are unlearned, either private Christians or other common people, and unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad, and, instead of being converted, ridicule you as a parcel of frantic enthusiasts? But if all prophesy, in their turn preaching, praying, or praising, in an intelligible manner, and there come in one that believeth not, out of curiosity or by accident; or one unlearned, or ignorant; he is convinced of all, he is judged of all; his conscience is affected under the word, his sins are brought to his remembrance, and the just wrath of God due thereunto is set before him: and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, as if the preacher had known his very soul, and described his case particularly; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, convinced, by what he hears, that this is his work; and report that God is in you of a truth, since none could so discover the inmost soul, and speak with such power and energy, unless God's Spirit instructed them and accompanied their ministrations. *Note*; The word of truth, when rightly dispensed, is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart: and many who have heard it, have felt by experience, that God's ministers often describe their case as particularly as if they knew the secrets of their souls; and sometimes they wonder who has told them.

5thly, The Apostle reproves their ill behaviour, and gives them rules for their conduct.

1. He blames their irregularities in the church. *How is it then, brethren,* that you behave so unseemly in the house of God? For, *when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation;* and, whilst every one is forward to exercise his own gift, the whole is a scene of disorder and confusion. *Let all things be done unto edifying,* and no such unseasonable and unprofitable exercise of these divinely communicated gifts be permitted.

2. He orders how they should proceed in the congregation. (1.) *If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three;* no more than these should at one meeting speak in foreign languages, and that by course, in their proper turn; and let one interpret, that the audience may receive instruction: but, *if there be no interpreter, let him that speaks in an unknown tongue keep silence in the church,* and not interrupt what is to the use of edifying; and let him speak to himself and to God in private prayer. (2.) *Let the prophets speak two or three, at one assembly, and after each other, and let the other judge whether those who profess to be prophets really are so, and examine what they say by the word of truth.* (3.) *If any thing of peculiar importance be revealed to another prophet that sitteth by, let the first who was speaking hasten to conclude his discourse, and hold his peace: for ye may all prophesy one by one, at proper opportunities, that all may learn and all may be comforted;* this being the great end for which the gift of prophesy is bestowed. (See the Annotations.) *And the spirits of the*

prophets are subject to the prophets; these who are truly inspired, are not like those under diabolical possession; but have the due government of themselves, and need not be hurried into any indecency or impropriety, as to the matter, time, or manner of their speaking.

3. He enforces his discourse with this argument, *For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace;* such disorderly proceedings as these here remarked cannot arise from him; but *as in all the other churches of the saints,* so among you, it is his pleasure, and for his glory, that due order should be observed.

6thly, We have silence imposed on women in the church: *for it is not permitted unto them to speak as public teachers; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law,* and to shew it by such a modest silence. *And if they will learn any thing, and desire that what they have heard may be farther explained, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church,* and thereby renounce that due subordination which God has enjoined. *Note*; (1.) If it be the woman's duty to learn in subjection, it is the husband's duty equally to maintain his superiority by shewing himself able to inform her. (2.) Modesty is a woman's greatest ornament; and in that sex especially all boldness is peculiarly shocking.

7thly, The Apostle closes his discourse with holy warmth on the preceding points. *What mean you by your irregular behaviour? Came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? Are you the mother church? ought you to set up yourselves as oracles? and are you to pay no respect to the usages of other churches, as if your own was infallible? How intolerably assuming is such behaviour? If any man think himself a prophet, or spiritual, let him prove the truth of the inspiration which he challenges by subscribing to these truths, and acknowledge that the things that I write unto you, are the commandments of the Lord,* since no man, truly under the influence of the Spirit, can possibly contradict what that Spirit, speaking in his Apostles, dictates: but *if any man be ignorant, and obstinately refuse to submit to these commands, let him be ignorant, treated with deserved contempt, and left to follow the wilful blindness and perverseness of his own heart. Wherefore, brethren, on the whole, covet to prophesy, as the most excellent gift; and forbid not to speak with tongues, which are useful when managed according to the manner above prescribed. And for a general rule in all things pertaining to the public worship, let all things be done decently and in order;* and let every indecency and irregularity be banished from the house of God. *Note*; (1.) They who continue wilfully ignorant of, or obstinately reject the commandments of the Lord, evidently shew by whose spirit they are led. (2.) When a man hates the light, he is justly abandoned to the darkness that he has chosen. (3.) In the public worship of God, all the service should be rational, orderly, and edifying.

CHAP.

7 After that he was seen of James; * then of all the Apostles.

8 ¹ And last of all he was seen of me also, as of * one born out of due time.

¹ Mat. 28. 16. Luke, 24. 50. Acts, 1. 4, 12.
* Or an aborigine.

¹ Acts, 9. 3—5, 17. & 18. 9. & 22. 14. & 23. 11. & 26. 16. Ch. 9. 1. 2 Cor. 12. 1—6.

CHAP. XV.

FROM Acts, xvii. 32. it appears, that the resurrection of the dead was a subject of laughter to the learned Greeks, who, regarding the body as the prison of the soul, placed their happiness in being freed from it for ever by death. The false teacher therefore, to render the Gospel acceptable to the Greeks, denied the resurrection of the body; contending that the only resurrection promised by Christ to his disciples, was the resurrection of the soul from the death of sin, and affirming that that resurrection was already passed, 2 Tim. ii. 18. But the resurrection of the body, being one of the great objects of the faith and hope of Christians, the Apostle, in this xvth chapter, set before the Corinthians, and all mankind, the proof by which that joyful event is rendered indubitable: it is a necessary consequence of the resurrection of Christ. Wherefore, to lay the foundation of this proof deep and strong, the Apostle, before he shewed the connection which subsists between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the dead, recalled to the remembrance of the Corinthians, the arguments by which he had proved to them the truth of Christ's resurrection so effectually, that many of them had believed him to be really risen. And first, to make them sensible of the importance of the facts by which he had proved the resurrection of Christ, he told them, that they constituted some of the principal articles of the Gospel, ver. 1.—That they were the things which he first of all had delivered to them; and that he himself had received them first of all by revelation; namely, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, ver. 3.—and that he was buried as one known to be really dead; and that he arose from the dead on the third day, according to the scriptures, ver. 4.—That after his resurrection, he was seen of the Apostle Peter: then of the twelve, while they were assembled together in the evening of the day on which he arose, and on the eighth day thereafter, ver. 5.—That he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part were living at the time when St. Paul wrote this Epistle, ver. 6.—That after this he was seen of James, and then of all the Apostles, immediately before he ascended into Heaven, ver. 7.—and last of all, that he was seen of St. Paul himself, in different places and at different times, ver. 8.

Such were the proofs, by which the Apostle had persuaded the Corinthians to believe the resurrection of Christ. To view these proofs in a proper light, the three following remarks may be of use.

The first is, that the death and burial of Christ, having been publicly transacted at Jerusalem in the view of all the people assembled to celebrate the passover, were matters sufficiently known, and not denied by any one. And therefore, though they were necessary antecedents to his resurrection, the Apostle did not think it at all needful to prove them. It was of more consequence to observe, as

he has done, that these things happened according to the scriptures: for thereby he insinuated, that the death and burial of the Messiah, having been foretold by the Jewish prophets, Christ's pretensions to be the Messiah were not invalidated, but rather confirmed by his death and burial.—And with respect to his rising again from the dead on the third day, because that was not a matter of such notoriety as his death and burial, but was denied by the Jews, it was absolutely necessary that the Apostle should establish it, to the conviction at least of the unprejudiced, by the clearest proofs.

The second remark is, That Christ's resurrection from the dead being a matter of fact, it could not, during his absence in heaven, be so well proved by any other way as by the testimony of credible witnesses, who saw him alive after his resurrection, and had often conversed with him; and who had no interest to serve by deceiving the world in that matter; and who accompanied that testimony by the working of miracles, and by other supernatural gifts. Accordingly, from the account which St. Paul has given of the proofs by which he persuaded the Corinthians to believe the resurrection of Christ, they appear to have been precisely of the kind required. For he says he told them, that after his resurrection, Jesus shewed himself alive in different places, and on different occasions, to his Apostles; that is, to persons who, having accompanied him during his ministry, were perfectly acquainted with his form, his visage, his voice, his manner of speaking, and every other circumstance by which the identity of any person can be ascertained; and who, for that reason, were well qualified to judge, whether the person who appeared to them was really their Master risen from the dead. And as these witnesses had no interest to serve by testifying Christ's resurrection, but, on the contrary, exposed themselves thereby to innumerable evils, their testimony merits in every respect to be believed.

The third remark is, The Apostle's exposition of the proofs, whereby, at his first coming among the Corinthians, he persuaded many of them to believe Christ's resurrection, though intended more immediately for the confirmation of the faith of the Corinthians, has been of singular benefit to the world. For it not only shews, in what manner the belief of the resurrection of Christ was established in the world; but it makes mankind sensible, that the prevalence of that belief in the first age was well founded: and that we likewise, who at this distance of time entertain the same belief, have sufficient reason for so doing: and that our Master, by his resurrection from the dead, is powerfully demonstrated to be the Son of God, and our religion is shewn to be divine.

The Apostle having appealed to the testimony of the eye-witnesses, as the proper evidence of our Lord's resurrection, now that he is gone into Heaven, proceeds in the following part of the chapter to shew in what manner that evidence establishes beyond all contradiction, first, the truth

of

9 For I am ^m the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle, ⁿ because I persecuted the church of God.

10 But ^o by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace, which *was bestowed* upon me, was not in vain: but ^p I laboured more

^m Eph. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 11. c. Ver. 10. See Rom. 1. 1.
ⁿ Eph. 2. 7, 8. & 3. 7, 8. Rom. 1. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 16.

^o Acts. 8. 4. & 9. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 13. Gal. 1. 13, 23. Acts, 22. 4, 5. & 26. 5—11.
^p Acts, 20. 19, 20. Rom. 15. 19. 2 Cor. 11. 23; & 12. 11. 2 Tim. 4. 7.

of Christ's resurrection; and secondly, the certainty of the resurrection of all the dead.—His reasoning for that purpose is as follows: If it be constantly preached by all the eye-witnesses, and if it be firmly believed by all Christians, that Christ really arose from the dead, how can the false teacher, or any among you Corinthians, who call themselves Christ's disciples, affirm that there will be no resurrection of the dead? ver. 12.—For if there is to be no resurrection of the dead, Christ, who promised to return and raise the dead, is an impostor who has deluded the world with false hopes, ver. 13.—And if Christ had not been raised, the preaching of all who call themselves *eye-witnesses of his resurrection*, is false, and your faith in the Gospel is false, ver. 14.—Besides, we Apostles are found false witnesses concerning God, because we have witnessed, to the infinite dishonour of God, that he has raised an impostor from the dead, who assuredly is not risen, if the dead are not to be raised, ver. 15.—The argument, taken from the resurrection of Christ, to prove that the dead will be raised, is of such importance, that the Apostle affirmed a second time, if the dead are not to be raised, neither is Christ risen. He is an impostor whom God would never raise, ver. 16.—Besides, if Christ have not risen, your faith in him as your Saviour, though founded on miracles, is not only false but useless. It answers no purpose. The guilt of your sins remaineth, and you have no ground for escaping punishment, ver. 17.—Certainly also, both they who have died in the belief of Christ's resurrection, and they who have suffered death for that belief, are perished, if there is to be no resurrection of the dead, ver. 18.—Farther, to shew you the absurdity of imputing to us Apostles the crime of falsely testifying against God, that he has raised an impostor from the dead whom he has not raised, consider that if there is to be no resurrection, consequently no future state, our only motive to committing the great crime imputed to us, must be some advantage which we reap from it in this life. Yet, instead of advantage, we have, by preaching Christ's resurrection, drawn on ourselves from every quarter, the greatest present temporal evils; insomuch, that if in this life only we have hope of advantage from Christ, we are of all men the most miserable, ver. 19.—This argument joined with the consideration mentioned, ver. 18.—namely, that if there is to be no resurrection, those who have died in the belief of Christ's resurrection, and the witnesses who have suffered death for attesting Christ's resurrection, are all utterly perished, demonstrates that the witnesses of Christ's resurrection were themselves fully persuaded of the truth thereof. Wherefore, being perfectly qualified for judging, and having had the best opportunities to judge, of the truth of Christ's resurrection, they could not possibly be deceived in that matter, and had no motive whatever to deceive the world.

It seems, the philosophers affirmed that the resurrection of the dead, on account of the obedience of Christ unto death, is a thing unworthy of God: for the Apostle told the Corinthians, that God had confuted that assertion, by raising Christ from the dead, as the first fruit or pledge of his raising all the dead at the last day, ver. 20. Next he observed, that since God, consistently with his justice and goodness, subjected all mankind to death for one man's sin, as experience shews, he may, with equal justice and goodness, raise all men from the dead on account of the obedience of one man unto death, as revelation teaches. This I think is the meaning of ver. 21, 22.—Withal, to render the resurrection of the dead more certain, to such of the Corinthians as understood and believed the other doctrines of the Gospel, the Apostle assured them, that Christ will reign in his mediatorial kingdom, till he has destroyed all dominion opposite to God's; and in particular till he has, by the resurrection of the dead, destroyed the dominion of death, one of the greatest enemies of mankind. After which, Christ will deliver up the mediatorial kingdom to the Father, ver. 24—27; and then the Son himself, in respect to his humanity, shall be subject to the divinity, that the tri-une God may be over all his saints throughout the universe, ver. 28.

Next, turning his discourse to those who denied the resurrection of the dead, he asked them, what they must do to make up their loss, who are *baptized*, that is, plunged into the greatest afflictions, for believing the resurrection of the dead, if the dead rise not? and what possible reason can be assigned for their willingly suffering death, on account of that belief? ver. 29.—Here it is insinuated, that the testimony of the eye-witnesses concerning the resurrection of Christ, had through divine grace appeared so credible to many, and had wrought in them such a firm persuasion of their own resurrection, that at the time when the Apostle wrote this letter, they were suffering the greatest evils, rather than renounce that faith and hope. Farther, he asked what reason the Apostles could have for exposing themselves to the danger of death every hour, if they knew the resurrection of Christ and of the dead to be a falsehood? ver. 30.—and what advantage he, in particular, could propose to himself, in undergoing all the evils that he suffered, if there is to be no resurrection of the dead? In that case, he told them, it had been better for him, and the other Apostles, to have followed the maxims of the profane, *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die*, ver. 31, 32.—Having by these strong reasonings established, first, the truth of Christ's resurrection, and next, the certainty of the resurrection of all the dead, the Apostle advised the Corinthians to shun conversing with any one who denied these essential articles of the Christian faith, ver. 33.—and commanded the faction to awake from their errors, ver. 34.

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abundantly than they all : ⁹ yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

11 Therefore ¹ whether *it were* I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

⁹ Pl. 115. 1. Mat. 10. 20. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Phil. 2. 13. & 4. 13. 1 Tim. 1. 12.

¹ Ver. 3, 4. Ch. 2. 2.

In what follows, the Apostle answers two questions, with which the false teacher combated the doctrine of the resurrection. *But some one will say, how can the dead be raised? How is it possible? And if it be possible, with what kind of body do they come out of the grave?* The philosophers argued, that the resurrection of the body is a thing impossible; and that though it were possible, it is by no means desirable: because a body, such as men now have, is a clog to the soul in its operations. In answer to the first of these questions, the Apostle shewed the possibility of the resurrection of the body, by appealing to the operations of the divine power which we daily behold; namely, the production of plants from seeds which rot in the earth; the diversity of the bodies of beasts, fowls, and fishes; and the different degrees of light, with which the celestial bodies shine. For if the divine power appears so great, in the endless variety of its productions, can any rational person doubt of God's being able to raise the dead? ver. 35—42.—He therefore concluded that the resurrection of the dead is possible, ver. 42.

Next, to shew the philosophers their mistake, in supposing that the soul will be clogged in its operations by its re-union with the body, the Apostle compared the body of the righteous which dies, (for it is of them only that he now discourses,) with that which will be raised. Their buried body is corruptible; is dishonoured by death; is deformed and wasted by disease; and at best is weak in its operations; in short, it is an animal body, which like the body of beasts, depends for its growth and subsistence on meat and drink. But the body of the righteous, which shall be raised, will be incorruptible, and gloriously beautiful in its outward appearance, and powerful in its activity: in one word, it will be a *spiritual body*; a body which does not subsist by meat and drink, but by its own internal vigour. Now, there being these differences between the body of the righteous which dies, and the body which rises, the resurrection of the body, instead of being a disadvantage to the righteous, will contribute greatly to their perfection and happiness in the life to come, ver. 42—47.—For, *as the heavenly man* Christ now is, *such also*, at the resurrection, shall the *heavenly men*, the righteous be, in respect of their bodies, ver. 48.—And to prove that the righteous who are destined to live in Heaven, must bear the image of the heavenly man in their body, as well as in their soul, he affirms, that a corruptible body, composed of flesh and blood, cannot inherit the kingdom of God, ver. 49, 50.—Then he declares a great mystery or secret, namely, that the righteous, who are living on the earth at Christ's coming, instead of dying, shall all be changed in their body, from corruptible to incorruptible, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye: by which, and by the resurrection of the righteous from the dead, death shall be swallowed up for ever, ver. 51—54,—and being warmed by the grandeur of his subject, he breaks forth into that noble song of victory: *Where, O death, is thy sting?* ver. 55.—57.—The Apostle gave to this discovery, the appellation of a

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mystery, not only because it was hitherto kept secret from mankind; but because it is a discovery infinitely more important, interesting, and certain, than any of the discoveries concerning a future state, pretended to be made in the heathen mysteries, which were all fictions contrived to amuse the initiated, and raise the curiosity of the ignorant. This discovery St. Paul was inspired to make, because the knowledge of the manner and circumstances of the resurrection of the dead, and of the general judgment, and of the final issue of things, by rendering our conceptions of these matters more distinct, greatly strengthens our faith in them, and gives them a powerful influence on our conduct. Accordingly, the Apostle concluded this wonderful discourse, with an exhortation to the Corinthians to be stable, unmoved, and always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that their labour in the Lord is not in vain, ver. 58.

I shall finish this preface with observing, *first*, that no single fact in the history of any nation is supported by evidence equal to that which the Apostle Paul has produced in this xvth chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, in proof of our Lord's resurrection from the dead. He was seen after he arose, by a great number of his acquaintance, of whom eleven are particularly specified, who were appointed by Christ to publish and attest his resurrection to the world. These, having accompanied him during the three years of his ministry, were well qualified to judge, whether the person they conversed with during the forty days that he shewed himself to them and ate and drank with them, was their Master risen from the dead. And being fully assured of his resurrection by the evidence of their own senses, they published it in Jerusalem where he was put to death, and throughout all Judea, and every where else, as a thing of which they were absolutely certain; and shewed their persuasion of it, by suffering death for bearing testimony to it. This was the case likewise with St. Paul himself, who, though he had not accompanied Jesus during his ministry, was honoured at different times with a sight of him after his ascension, and was put to death for publishing his resurrection to the world. I therefore conclude, that if there be any force in the concurring testimony of many competent and disinterested witnesses, to induce mankind to believe things at which they were not themselves present, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead cannot be called in question, without rendering all history uncertain, and destroying the best source of men's belief.—*Secondly*, The resurrection of Jesus, his miracles, and the miracles of his Apostles, have been denied, because their existence destroys the Aristotelian atheism, which modern philosophers are so fond of reviving; namely, that the world, by powers natural to matter, has continued from all eternity the same as we see it; and that there exists nothing in the universe distinct from matter; so that the present course of things, consisting of the motions of the heavens, and of the successive generations and corruptions of animals and vegetables, can neither be interrupted

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nor

12 Now if Christ be preached that he you that there is no resurrection of the rose from the dead, how say some among dead?

* Acts, 23. 8. & 17. 18, 32. 2 Tim. 2. 17.

nor destroyed by any thing extraneous, but must continue for ever. Nevertheless, if miracles have happened, this system of atheism cannot hold; because miracles, being an interruption of the course of nature, are proofs from experience that there exists a power distinct from and superior to all the powers inherent in matter. And as this controuling power has exerted itself with intelligence and freedom, it must possess both these attributes, and is in part what we mean by the term God.—Miracles, therefore, being proofs from experience of the existence of God,—before the Aristotelian atheism can be established, that strong historical evidence by which the resurrection of Jesus, his miracles, and the miracles of his apostles are supported, must be destroyed. But, as was observed before, this cannot be done without destroying the faith of history, and overturning the grand foundation of human belief.

Ver. 1. Moreover, brethren, &c.] After St. Paul had left the Corinthians, some among them denied the resurrection of the dead, though he had strongly inculcated that doctrine. He therefore confutes their objections by Christ's resurrection, which the number of witnesses yet remaining who had seen him, put past all question; besides the constant inculcating of it by all the Apostles every where. From the resurrection of Christ thus established, he infers the resurrection of the dead; shews the order they shall rise in, and what sort of bodies they shall have. It is well known, that the primitive Christians were often insulted by the heathen philosophers for their hope of a resurrection, which one of them ridiculously enough calls "the hope of worms." See 2 Tim. ii. 18. Others taught that virtue was its own necessary reward, in such a manner as tended to overthrow the strongest of all natural arguments for a future state; namely, that which is taken from such an unequal distribution of rewards and punishments here below. If, biassed by these vain pretences of the heathen philosophers, or seduced by any Jewish teachers of Sadducean principles, the Christians were tempted so to refine on the doctrine of the resurrection, as in effect to explain it away, it shews the propriety of this Apostle's setting himself to prove the resurrection of the faithful principally, and a resurrection in general only, or chiefly, by implication.

Ver. 2. By which—ye are saved.] "By which you are brought into a state of salvation; into the way of being completely and eternally saved." The next clause should be rendered, *If you retain those joyful tidings which I delivered unto you.* The words rendered *unless*, *ἐὰν μὴ*, are remarkable, and may suggest the thought expressed ver. 17. So the first two verses may be a transition; as if he had said, "I preach the same gospel still, and I hope you will retain it: yet I have reason to fear that some of you entertain notions which tend quite to enervate it." Some would render *ἐὰν μὴ* with a comma, making it an exception to the former clause,—*but if not*,—if you do

not retain what I have preached,—*you have believed in vain.* See 1 Tim. v. 19.

Ver. 4. And that he rose again the third day.] It has been questioned, where the scriptures foretel that Christ should rise from the dead on the third day. Some think there is a parenthesis: so that the meaning will be, "He rose again according to the scriptures, and this on the third day." Others refer to Ps. xvi. 10. which says, *He should not see corruption in the grave*, as expressive of this, because bodies begin to putrify on the fourth day. Bishop Warburton refers this to the representative sacrifice of Isaac. Isaac, says he, was the representative of Christ dying for us; his carrying the wood represented Christ carrying his cross; his father's bringing him safe from mount *Moriah*, after three days, during which the son was under condemnation of death, represented the time that Christ continued dead; and the father plainly received him under the character of Christ's representative, as restored from the dead; for as his being brought to the mount, his being bound and laid on the altar, figured the sufferings and death of Christ, so his being taken from thence alive as properly figured Christ's resurrection; nay, even the very time of his resurrection from the dead.

Ver. 5. Then of the twelve.] It is certain, that neither *Judas* nor *Thomas* was there, and probably *James* might be absent, (see on ver. 7.) But as the *council of twenty-three* among the Jews might be said to be assembled if the greater part were present, though the number might not be complete; so the company might be called *the twelve*, though we should suppose a fourth part to have been absent. See Mark xvi. 14. Luke xxiv. 36. John. xx. 26.

Ver. 6. Above five hundred brethren at once.] This was probably in Galilee, where our Saviour had a very great number of disciples; and though there were no more than a hundred and twenty assembled at Jerusalem when *Matthias* was chosen, yet it does not follow that there was no such number in Galilee, where it appears, from the whole tenor of the gospel, that our Lord's disciples abounded very much. This, therefore, is so far from being an objection to the truth of our Saviour's resurrection (as Chubb and others would urge), that it is a glorious proof of the contrary. Had it been an imposture, so many false hearts and tongues could never have acted in concert; nor would they all have kept the secret, which remorse, interest, and perhaps often torture, might urge them to divulge: especially as there had been one traitor among the twelve; on whose account, had they been conscious of a fraud, a general suspicion of each other's secrecy must have arisen. See Ditton on the Resurrection, and Prideaux's Letter to a Deist, p. 241.

Ver. 7. Then of all the Apostles.] The change of phrase from that in the conclusion of the 5th verse, is very remarkable, and probably intimates, that they who were there called *the twelve*, (that is, the greatest part of the company who used to be so denominated)

13 But ' if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen :

14 And if Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is* also vain.

15 Yea, and we are found " false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that

he raised up Christ : whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

16 * For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised :

17 And ' if Christ be not raised, your faith *is* vain; ye are yet in your sins.

¹ John, 11. 25. & 14. 19. Rom. 4. 24, 25. & 8. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 14. 1 Thes. 4. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 7. ² Job, 13. 7. Acts, 1. 21. & 2. 24. 32. & 4. 10, 33. & 10. 39—42. & 13. 30—33. & 20. 21. ³ See v. r. 13, 14. ⁴ Ver. 14. Acts, 5. 31. & 13. 38, 39. Rom. 4, 24, 25. & 5. 10. & 8, 33, 34. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 21.

nated) were not, even *the whole eleven*. On which circumstance a probable conjecture is grounded, that James might, by some accident, have been detained from meeting his brethren, both on the day of the resurrection and that day se'nnight; and likewise at the time when Christ appeared to the five hundred: and that he might in this respect be upon a level with them, our Lord appeared to him alone, after all the appearances mentioned before.

Ver. 8. As of one born out of due time.] A birth which comes before its time, (the name which St. Paul here gives himself,) is usually *sudden* and unexpected, and is also weak and feeble. The former part applies to St. Paul's being made a Christian and an apostle, though it be in regard to the latter that he humbly styles himself *one born out of due time*.

Ver. 9. For I am the least of the Apostles, &c.] "For how much soever I be now enriched, and advanced to gifts and graces, and in the honours of the apostolate; and how eminent and successful soever my labours and sufferings have been in the execution of that office, I really am in myself, and in my own account, the very least and most contemptible of all the Apostles of Christ; yea, *less than the least of all saints*, (Eph. iii. 8.) utterly unworthy of any favour, much more of so high and honourable a station in the church: Nay, on the contrary, I justly deserved to have an eternal brand of infamy set upon me; because I was all along, in the days of my unregeneracy, and blind zeal for judaism, a most obstinate unbeliever, and a most bitter enemy to, and outrageous persecutor of, the church (Acts, viii. 3. ix. 1.) which God has erected as a peculiar people to himself, and which he owns and blesses, and will be glorified in and by."

Ver. 10. Was not in vain.] Instead of *was not in vain*, &c. some render the passage *has not been in vain; for I have laboured*.

Ver. 12. How say some among you? &c.] This may well be understood of the head of the contrary faction, and some of his disciples. *First*, because St. Paul introduces this confutation by asserting his mission, which these his opposers would bring in question. *Secondly*, because he is so careful to let the Corinthians see that he maintains not the doctrine of the resurrection in opposition to these their new leaders, it being the doctrine which he had preached to them at their first conversion, before any false Apostle appeared among them, and misled them about the resurrection. Their false Apostle was a Jew, and in all ap-

pearance judaized; may he not also be suspected of Sadduceism?—For it is plain that he did, with all his might, oppose St. Paul, which must proceed from some very great difference in opinion at the bottom, as there are no footsteps of any personal provocation.

Ver. 13. Then is Christ not risen.] The argument on which the Apostle dwells in so copious a manner, would appear to be of great moment, whatever the principles were by which the doctrine of the resurrection was assaulted. It could not be said, that that was in its own nature impossible which was accomplished in Christ; and it would prove that the hope of a resurrection was not, as the Gentiles represented it, a mean and sordid hope, since it was accomplished in the Son of God. See on ver. 1.

Ver. 17. Ye are yet in your sins.] The word *sin* is frequently used for the *punishment* due to *sin*; and in that sense it should be understood here: "Ye are yet liable to the punishment of your sins." It is the constant tenor of scripture, that atonement for the sins of the world was made by our great High-priest upon the cross; that his death was our ransom, and his blood the price paid for it; so that when we consider the ransom, which includes our justification, with respect to Christ, the author of it, it must be ascribed to his death and passion;—but as to ourselves, our title and interest in this common salvation being grounded in faith, our justification, though purchased by the blood of Christ, must be appropriated to ourselves through faith in that blood. For the same Apostle who has told us that we *are justified freely through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus*, has likewise told us, that God hath *set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood*. For this reason we are said to be *justified by faith*; not that our faith is the purchase of justification, which we owe to the blood of Christ alone; but because through faith we obtain the benefit of the redemption wrought by Jesus Christ. Now, though the death of Christ was the reconciling of the world to God, yet the resurrection of Christ is the crowning point of our hope and faith in him; even of our faith in his blood, by which he made a propitiation for our sins: and therefore, although Christ died for our offences, and made atonement for our sins, yet since our faith in his death, and our hope in his blood, (by which hope and faith we are justified,) are built upon the truth and credit of his resurrection, it is very properly said that he *rose again for our justification*. For the death of Christ would have been no justification to us, nor could we have had hope or faith in it, but for the

18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

19 ² If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

20 ⁴ But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.

21 ^b For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

22 ^c For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But ^d every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are

Christ's at his coming.

24 Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power.

25 ^f For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26 ^g The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed is death.

27 For he ^h hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under *him*, it is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him.

² 2 Thes. 4. 14. Rev. 14. 13. with 2 Tim. 4. 12. ^a Ver. 3—5. Acts, 26. 23. Rom. 8. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 3. Col. 1. 14. Rev. 1. 5. John, 14. 19, & 11. 25. Ver. 23, 25, 26, 45, 49. ^b Rom. 5. 12, 15—21. & 6. 23. ^c Gen. 2. 17. & 3. 6, 19. Rom. 5. 12—21. & 6. 23. John, 6. 39. 40. 54. & 11. 25. ^d Acts, 26. 23. Rev. 1. 5. If. 26. 10. John, 14. 19. & 11. 25. 1 Thes. 4. 15—17. Ver. 45, 49. ^e 2 Cor. 4. 14. Eph. 5. 27. John, 17. 2. Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18. John, 2. 35. & 13. 3. Heb. 2. 8. Pl. 45. 6. Dan. 7. 14. If. 9. 7. 1 Tim. 6. 15 ^f Pl. 110. 1. Eph. 1. 22. Acts, 2. 34. Heb. 10. 13. & 1. 13. ^g Hol. 13. 14. If. 25. 8. Luke, 20. 36. Rev. 20. 14. & 21. 4. Heb. 2. 14. ^h Pl. 8. 6, 7. & 110. 2. Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18. Eph. 1. 22. Phil. 2. 9—11. Heb. 1. 13. & 2. 8. & 10. 13. 1 Pet. 3. 22.

power and glory of the resurrection, which has wiped away the scandal and ignominy of the cross, and made it both a divine and rational act of faith to hope for life and immortality from *him*, who himself once died upon the tree. Thus we learn from St. Paul, that if *Christ be not risen, our faith is in vain; we are yet in our sins*. Whence we gather that faith in the death of Christ, not grounded on the assurance of his resurrection, is a *vain faith*, and such a one as cannot deliver us from our sins: nay, that the death of Christ could not have been a propitiation for sin without his resurrection, he expressly teaches in the next verse:—*Then they also, which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished*.

Ver. 18. *Fallen asleep in Christ.*] “All deceased Christians, not excepting the most excellent of them, who have died for their religion. They have lost their life and being together, on this supposition, in the cause of one, who, if still among the dead, must have been an impostor, and a false prophet.”

Ver. 19. *We are of all men most miserable.*] *Most pitiable*. Doddridge. It is quite foreign to the purpose to argue from this text, as some have done, that if there were no future state, holiness and virtue would make men more miserable than they would otherwise be. It is evident that St. Paul here speaks not of the case of good men in general, if we could possibly suppose that their hopes of future happiness should, after all, be disappointed; but of the case of the Apostles, and other first preachers and professors of Christianity, if, amidst all their hardships and persecutions, they were not supported by this hope. To be a *Christian*, in those days, was to be an example of well-tried holiness and virtue, of true wisdom, and of consummate fortitude; to be exposed to scorn, to infamy, and to death; to be pointed at as a fool, a madman, an enthusiast; to be reviled as an atheist, and an enemy to all religion; to be punished as a robber and murderer; to lose fame, and friends, and comfort; and to be exposed to every thing at which human nature shudders, and which a person of the greatest cou-

rage, unassisted by divine grace, would certainly endeavour to evade. Destitute therefore of the hope of the resurrection amid these sufferings, they must have been perpetually subjected to the upbraidings of their own minds, for sacrificing every view of happiness in this world, to advance what they knew to be a pernicious falsehood. Perhaps there never was a set of men on earth so wretched as they must have been on this supposition.

Ver. 20. *But now is Christ risen, &c.*] It is a great mistake to imagine that the Apostle is employed throughout this chapter in proving a resurrection: the proof lies in a very narrow compass, chiefly from ver. 12 to 19. and almost all the rest of the chapter is taken up in illustrating, vindicating, or applying it. The proof is, indeed, very short, but most solid and convincing;—that which arose from Christ's resurrection. Now *that* not only proved a resurrection to be in fact possible, but, which was much more, as it proved Christ to be a divine teacher, it proved the doctrine of a general resurrection, which he so expressly taught. It was natural too for so good a man as St. Paul to insist on the sad consequences which would follow, with respect to himself and his brethren, from giving up so glorious a hope; and the cordial manner in which he speaks of this, is a noble internal argument, which every reader of sensibility must feel. Instead of—*become the first fruits of them that slept*, some render the passage—*the first fruits of them that are fallen asleep*. The *first fruits* was a small part, first taken and offered to God, and which sanctified the whole mass that was to follow. See on ver. 18.

Ver. 24. *When he shall have put down all rule.*] *Shall have abolished, or deposed*. The word *καταργουμι* generally signifies divesting a thing of some power, whether lawful or usurped, which it formerly had, and of reducing it to an incapacity of exerting that power any more. Thus it is used of *Satan*, Heb. ii. 14. of *death*, here and ver. 26. of *temporal princes*, 2 Tim. i. 10. and 1 Cor. i. 28. ii. 6. and of the *ceremonial law*, Ephesians ii. 15.

Ver.

28 ¹ And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

29 Else what shall they do which are ^k baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?

30 ¹ And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?

31 I protest ^m by ^{*} your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, ⁿ I die daily.

32 If [†] after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advan-

¹ Phil. 3. 21. Mat. 23. 41, 43. Ch. 3. 23. & 17. 3. Eph. 1. 10. 1f. 49. 3. John. 14. 28. ^k Ver. 32. Mat. 20. 22. Luke, 11. 50. or Rom. 6. 3-5. ¹ Rom. 8. 36. 2 Cor. 11. 26. Gal. 5. 11. 13. ^m 1 Thes. 2. 19. 2 Cor. 1. 12. & 2. 14. ^{*} Some read, *ou*. ⁿ Rom. 8. 36. Acts, 10. 27. Ch. 4. 9-11. 2 Cor. 4. 8-12. & 1. 8, 9. & 11. 23-27. Gal. 6. 17. Col. 1. 24. 1 Thes. 2. 2. Acts, 19, 30, 31. 2 Tim. 3. 11. [†] Or to speak after the manner of men.

Ver. 28. Then shall the Son also himself be subject, &c.] "When the Father shall have subjected all things to him, so that it shall appear to every eye that he is indeed Lord of all, then shall the Son also himself be subject to him, who subjected all things to him, by a public act in the midst of this most august assembly; giving up as it were his commission to preside as universal Lord in the mediatorial kingdom, as having answered the end for which it was given him, in the complete salvation of all his faithful saints; whom he shall then introduce into a state of the greatest proximity to God, and most intimate converse with him, *that God, the Trinity, may be,* and that he may appear to be, *all in all:* that they all may enjoy complete and everlasting happiness, in the full communication of the divine favour to them for ever." It appears evidently, that the kingdom to be given up is the rule of this lower world, which is then to be consumed; and that it may not seem as if a province of Christ's empire was destroyed, his mediatorial government, undertaken in avowed subserviency to the scheme of redemption, Ephes. i. 10. and completed in the glorification of all his faithful people, shall close in the most honourable manner. God will declare the ends of it fully answered; and the whole body of his saints shall be introduced by him into a state of more intimate approach to, and communion with, the tri-une God, than had been known by the spirits of the blessed in their separate state. Upon the whole, we must remember here, that Christ is spoken of in his mediatorial capacity, and that it follows in the nature of things, that his mediatorial kingdom must cease, and be given up, when the great end of his mediatorial government is completely answered; so that no possible objection can be hence derived against the true Divinity of the second Person in the ever-blessed Trinity, who being God before the creation of this world, and consequently, before he assumed the office of the Redeemer of men, will and must remain *God over all, blessed for ever,* when the great designs of that office are entirely completed. Accordingly, it is very observable, that, though the apostle had expressly mentioned *God even the Father,* ver. 24. as the Person to whom Christ was to give up the kingdom, which he received from him; yet he here speaks of God *absolutely,* without the *personal* restriction, as *all in all.* See Jones's Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity, ch. i. art. 15, 39, &c. Bp. Brown's Procedure of the Understanding, and the Inferences drawn from 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

Ver. 29. Else what shall they do, &c.] "Such are our

"views and hopes, as Christians; *else,* if it were not so, *what should they do who are baptized* in token of their embracing the Christian faith *in the room of the dead,* who are just fallen in the cause of Christ, but whose places are filled up by a succession of new converts, who immediately offer themselves to succeed them, as ranks of soldiers that advance to the combat in the room of their companions, who have just been slain in their fight. *If the doctrine that I oppose be true, and the dead are not raised at all, why are they, nevertheless, thus baptized in the room of the dead,* as cheerfully ready, at the peril of their lives, to keep up the cause of Jesus in the world?" It would be almost endless to enumerate, and much more to canvass, all the interpretations which have been given of this obscure phrase, *ὕπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν.* There is no reason to believe that the superstitious custom, mentioned by Epiphanius, of baptizing a living person, as representing one who had died unbaptized, is here referred to; it is more likely to have arisen from a mistake of this passage than to have been so early prevalent. Mr. Cradock's supposing it to allude to washing dead bodies, neither suits the grammar, nor really makes any significant sense. The primitive Christians were accustomed, in general, to reserve the baptizing of adults for solemn occasions, particularly for Whit Sunday. But it is not at all improbable, that when any eminent Christians died, especially martyrs, some were chosen out of the catechumens who were preparing for baptism, and, in honour of these eminent saints, and to fill up their places, were *baptized for the dead.* Dr. Whitby, by the words, *for the dead,* understands, "for that Jesus, who, according to their doctrine, must still be dead;" and he observes, that the plural *ὡς νεκροί* is frequently used in scripture, when one person is spoken of; and that the *resurrection νεκρῶν*—of the dead in general, is thrice mentioned by this Apostle, when speaking of the resurrection of Christ alone. See the *Reflections.*

Ver. 31. I protest by your rejoicing.] "I protest by your joys, which I do so cordially take part in that I may call them my own."

Ver. 32. If after the manner of men, &c.] St. Paul was a Roman citizen, and pleaded his privilege as such, and therefore the chief captain was afraid because he had bound him; for, as Cicero says, *Facinus est vinciri civem Romanum, scelus verberari;*—that is, "it is wicked, or unlawful, to bind a Roman citizen;—it is villainous to scourge him," that is, "to examine him by scourging." This was at Jerusalem; but he had done the like before at Philippi. Now,

if

togeth' it me, if the dead rise not? ° let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.

33 ° Be not deceived: ° evil communications corrupt good manners.

* 11. 22. 13. & 56. 12. Eccl. 11. 9.

° Ch. 6. 9. Gal. 6. 7.

° Pf. 1. 1. Prov. 9. 6. & 13. 20. Gal. 5. 9. & 1. 6. Ch. 5. 6. 2 Tim. 2. 17.

if he pleaded his privilege on these lesser occasions, would he not much more have done it on such an occasion as this which is specified in the text? Besides, who could order it? The provincials had no such power; and the governor would not venture to inflict such a punishment on a Roman citizen, from which he was exempt by their laws: and especially he would not have attempted it at that time, which was the beginning of Nero's reign, while he governed well, and very moderately. Nor does any time appear in the course of the history which can well be assigned for it; for when St. Paul came first from Ephesus, he stayed but a little while, and left them in quiet, Acts, xviii. 19.; and upon his return thither, when the Jews endeavoured to prejudice the multitude against him, he taught in the school of Tyrannus; and though he continued there two years, we hear of no riot till the affair of Demetrius. After this he immediately left the city, and went into Macedonia. There is a like difficulty as to the place; — for to suppose it to have been in the theatre, as some have done, seems wholly without foundation. Theatres were designed for scenical entertainments, such as plays, musical concerts, the contests of poets and orators; and sometimes their public councils were held there. But they were no ways fitted, nor indeed safe, for contests with wild beasts. The *amphitheatres* were the usual places for those shows: nor do we find mention made in ancient writers of any amphitheatre at Ephesus; though had there been one, and St. Paul had been exposed in it, it is scarcely probable but we should have heard of it. Moreover, had the Apostle been thus engaged, it is difficult to apprehend how he could have escaped without a miracle. For those who conquered the beasts were obliged to fight with men till they were killed themselves. This was the barbarous custom at that very time, as we learn from Seneca, *epist.* 7. It seems most reasonable, therefore, to understand the expression as metaphorical, and that he alludes to the tumult raised by Demetrius. He uses the like metaphors, and with respect to the same thing, *ch. iv. 9.* and again, *ver. 13.* alluding to another custom. And in Acts (*ch. xx. 29.*) speaking of the Ephesians, making use of the same trope, he says, *I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.* As to the expression *κατα ἀνθρώπων*, the sense seems to be, *humanly speaking*; and so it is used by Chrysippus, and the phrase *κατ' ἀνθρώπου* by Æschylus, as Grotius remarks upon *Rom. iii. 5.* See also *Galat. iii. 15.* The relations which Nicephorus and Theodoret give us, of an encounter which St. Paul had with wild beasts on the theatre at Ephesus, have been so far regarded by Dr. Whitby, that he contends for the *literal* interpretation of this passage; in favour of which it is also urged, that had he spoken of *brutal men*, he would rather have mentioned the assault made upon him at *Lycstra*, where he was stoned, and supposed to be dead. But the danger of being pulled to pieces might be greater

at *Ephesus*: It had happened *very lately*, and as the scene was much nearer Corinth, it might be more natural for him to mention it here. The silence of St. Luke in his history as to so memorable an event as a combat *with beasts* must have been, and St. Paul's omitting it in the large catalogue of his sufferings, *2 Cor. xi. 23.* together with his known privilege as a Roman citizen, which would probably, as to be sure it should legally, have protected him from such an insult, do all favour the *figurative* interpretation; and the expression *κατα ἀνθρώπων*, *after the manner of men*, or *humanly speaking*, has a propriety on this hypothesis, which it cannot have on the other, and seems to be quite decisive.

Let us eat and drink, &c.] If the dead rise not at all, the Epicurean maxim might seem to be justified: "Let us make the best of this short life, which is the whole period of our being; and, giving up those sublime sentiments and pursuits which belong not to creatures of so short and low an existence, *let us eat and drink, since we are to die* as it were *to-morrow* or the next day; for, so little is the difference between one period of such a life and another, that it is scarcely worth while to make the distinction." It should be observed, that St. Paul writes all along upon a supposition, that if such proofs as he had produced of Christ's resurrection were not to be depended upon, we could have no certainty at all with respect to any future existence. And though it must be acknowledged, that the natural arguments for the immortality of the soul, and future retributions, carry with them great probability, yet the degree of evidence is by no means comparable to that which the Corinthians must have had of Christ's resurrection, with which our own has so necessary a connection: and, consequently, had these proofs been given up, what might have been pleaded in favour of the other, would probably have made very little impression. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that the Apostle is not here speaking his own sentiments, but arguing according to the Epicurean or Sadducean notions of those who, denying a future state, urged as a natural consequence, that man in that case had nothing more to do than to make the best he could of the present life. St. Paul could not, for a moment, admit of such a supposition. He was too firmly grounded in the belief of a resurrection, to allow for one moment any reasoning built upon the idea of its falsehood; and therefore we may observe, that he immediately adds to the sentiments which he puts into the mouth of his opposers, *Be not deceived, &c. ver. 33.* Consequently, all the absurd and blasphemous reasonings of Chubb, drawn from this passage, are grounded upon the most false and indefensible principles. St. Paul, in every page of his writings, shews too great a regard to holiness and virtue, for us ever to believe that he could think, upon any hypothesis, a life of impurity and vice preferable to them.

Ver. 33. Evil communications corrupt good manners.] The original words are a quotation from the works of Menander, and

34 'Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

35 But some man will say, 'How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

36 'Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

38 'But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

39 'All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.

40 There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

42 'So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

¹ Rom. 11. 17. Eph. 5. 14. Mat. 22. 20. Hof. 4. 6. ² Ch. 6. 5. Heb. 5. 11, 12. ³ John, 3, 4. Ezek. 37. 3. Mat. 22. 29. ⁴ Luke, 24. 15. John, 12. 24. ⁵ Ch. 3. 7. Pl. 10. 14. ⁶ Gen. 1. 16—6. ⁷ Dan. 12. 3. Mat. 13. 43. Col. 3. 3, 4. Ver. 50—54. Phil. 3. 20, 21. Luke, 20, 36.

and are an Iambic verse. Accordingly Dr. Doddridge very well translates them thus:

“ Good manners are debauch'd by talk profane.”

Ver. 34. *I speak this to your shame.*] May not this probably be said to make them ashamed of their leader, in whom they were so forward to glory? For it is not unlikely that their questioning and denying the resurrection came from their new Apostle, who raised such opposition against St. Paul. Instead of, *Awake to righteousness*, some read, *Awake, as becomes righteous men.*

Ver. 35. *Some man will say, How, &c. ?*] If we will allow St. Paul to know what he says, it is plain from his answers, that he understands these words to contain two questions: First, “How comes it to pass, that dead men are raised to life again;—would it not be better they should live on;—why do they die to live again?” Secondly, “With what body shall they return to life?” To both these he distinctly answers, 1. That those who are raised to a heavenly state, shall have new bodies; and next, that it is fit men should die, death being no improper way to the attaining of these new bodies. He shews that there is so plain and common an instance of this, in the sowing of all seeds, that he thinks it a foolish thing to make a difficulty of it; and then proceeds to declare, that as they shall have new bodies, so they shall have better bodies than they had before; namely, spiritual and incorruptible bodies. See Locke on the Human Understanding, b. ii. c. 27. and Ward's 48th Dissertation.

Ver. 36. *Except it die.*] It has been objected to this, that if the seed die, it never bears fruit; but it is certain that the seed in general does consume away in the ground, though a little germen or bud, which makes a part of it, springs up into new life, and is fed by the death and corruption of the rest. So that these wise philosophers of our own, talk just as foolishly as the Corinthian free-thinkers whom they vindicate. See John, xii. 23, 24.

Ver. 38. *To every seed his own body.*] The Apostle seems more directly to speak of that as its proper body, which is peculiar to that species of grain; yet undoubtedly each ear has a peculiar reference to one individual, as its proper seed, in such a manner, as another of the same species has not: and what follows plainly suits such a view. God is said to *give it this body as it pleases him*, because we know not how it is produced; and the Apostle's leading thought is, that it is absurd to argue against a resurrection, on a principle which is so palpably false as that must be, which supposes us to understand the whole progress of the divine works.

Ver. 39. *All flesh is not the same flesh.*] The scope of the passage makes it evident, that by *flesh* St. Paul here means *bodies*; as much as to say, that God has given to the several sorts of animals, bodies in shape, texture, and organization, very different one from another, as he has thought good; and so he can give to men at the resurrection, bodies of very different constitutions and qualities from those which they had before. Mr. Locke, instead of *beasts*, reads *cattle*, κτηνῶν.

Ver. 41, 42. *There is one glory of the sun, &c.*] Some would connect these two verses in the following manner: *There is one glory of the sun, &c.—For one star differeth from another star, ver. 42. So also in glory is the resurrection of the dead.* But the clause, *So also is the resurrection of the dead*, should rather conclude the 41st verse. As if the Apostle had said, “Another kind of glory shall appear than human nature has known in its purest state, in any beauty of form, or ornaments of dress. There shall, indeed, as I intimated, but now, be differences in the degree of that glory, correspondent to the different excellencies in the characters of good men, on whom it is to pass: but all shall experience a most illustrious and happy change.” It should be observed, that the resurrection of the dead here spoken of, is not the resurrection of all mankind in common, but only the resurrection of the

43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

the just. This will be evident to any one who observes that St. Paul having, ver. 22. declared that all men shall be made alive again, tells the Corinthians, ver. 23. that it shall not be all at once, but at several distances of time. First of all, Christ rose; afterwards next in order to him the just should all be raised, which resurrection of the just is that which he treats and gives an account of to the end of this discourse and chapter; and thus does not directly come to the resurrection of the wicked, which was to be the third and last in order: so that from the 23d verse to the end of this chapter, all that he says of the resurrection, is a description only of the resurrection of the just, though he calls it here by the general name of the resurrection of the dead. That this is the case is so evident, that there is scarcely a verse from the 41st to the end, which does not evince it. 1st, What in this resurrection is raised, St. Paul assures us, ver. 43., is raised in glory, but the wicked are not raised in glory. 2dly, He says *we* (speaking in the name of all that shall be then raised) shall bear the image of the heavenly Adam, ver. 49. which cannot belong to the wicked. *We* shall all be changed, that death may be swallowed up of victory, which God giveth us through our Lord Jesus Christ, ver. 51, 52, 53, 54, 57. which cannot likewise belong to the damned. And therefore *we* and *us* must be understood to be spoken in the name of the dead that will be Christ's, who are to be raised apart by themselves, before the rest of mankind. 3dly, He says, ver. 52., that when the dead are raised, they who are alive shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye. Now that these dead are only the dead in Christ, who shall rise first, and shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, is plain from 1 Theff. iv. 16, 17. 4thly, A farther proof whereof is, ver. 56, 57. in that their sins being taken away, the sting whereby death kills is taken away. And hence St. Paul says, God hath given *us* the victory, which is the same *us* or *we* who would bear the image of the heavenly Adam, ver. 49. and the same *we* who should all be changed, ver. 51, 52. All which places can therefore belong to none but those who will be Christ's, who shall be raised by themselves the second in order, before the rest of the dead. What St. Paul says in this 51st verse, is very remarkable, *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in the twinkling of an eye.* The reason he gives for it, ver. 53. is, because this corruptible thing must put on incorruption, and this mortal thing must put on immortality. How? Why by putting off flesh and blood, by an instantaneous change, because, as he tells us, ver. 50., flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; and therefore, to fit believers for that kingdom, those faints who are alive at Christ's coming, shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and those that are in their graves shall be changed likewise, and so all the whole collection of faints, all the faithful members of Christ's body, shall be put into a state of incorruptibility, immortality, and glory, ver. 52. Taking the resurrection here spoken of to be the resurrection of all the dead promiscuously, St. Paul's reasoning in this place can hardly be

understood. But upon a supposition that he here describes the resurrection of the just only—that resurrection which he says, ver. 23., is to be the next after Christ's, and separate from the rest, nothing can be more plain, natural, and easy than St. Paul's reasoning: and it stands thus; “Men alive are flesh and blood; and the dead in the graves are but the remains of corrupted flesh and blood; but flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither can corruption inherit incorruption, that is to say, immortality: therefore, to make all those who will be Christ's, capable to enter into his eternal kingdom of life—as well those of them who are then alive, as those of them who are raised from the dead, shall in the twinkling of an eye be all changed, and their corruptible shall put on incorruption, and their mortal shall put on immortality: and thus God gives them the victory over death, through their Lord Jesus Christ.” This is, in short, St. Paul's arguing here, and the account that he gives of the resurrection of the blessed. But how the wicked, who are afterwards to be restored to life, were to be raised, and what was to become of them, he here says nothing, as not being to his present purpose; which was to assure the Corinthians, by the resurrection of Christ, of a happy resurrection to all the faithful faints of God, and thereby to encourage them to continue steadfast in the faith which had such a reward. Nor is it in this place alone that St. Paul calls the resurrection of the just by the general name of the resurrection of the dead. He does the same, Phil. iii. 11., where he speaks of his sufferings, and of his endeavours, if by any means he might attain unto the resurrection of the dead; whereby he cannot mean the resurrection of the dead in general; which, since he has declared in this very chapter, ver. 22., that all men, both good and bad, shall as certainly partake of, as that they shall die, there needs no endeavours to attain to it. Our Saviour likewise speaks of the resurrection of the just in the same general terms of *the resurrection*, Mat. xxii. 30. And *the resurrection from the dead*, Luke, xx. 34—36., by which is meant only the resurrection of the just.

Ver. 42—44. *It is sown in corruption.*] “The body which has now in it such manifest principles of mortality and corruption, which consists now of such brittle and tender parts, that the least disease disturbs, and unfits them for their operations; which is now subject to so many casualties, and has its continuance depending upon the fit disposition of so many little and easily-disordered parts, that it is a greater wonder how we continue to live a day, than why we die after so few years' space;—this body shall, at the resurrection, be perfectly refined and purged from all the seeds of mortality and corruption. In a word, in respect to the faithful faints of God, this corruptible body shall spring up into an incorruptible and immortal substance, which shall be fitted to endure in perfect glory, as long as the soul to which it is united, even to all eternity. Further, that body which at death seems so base and abject, so vile and contemptible, shall at the resurrection be transformed into

45 And so it is written, 'The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 ^bThe first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

48 ^cAs is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the

heavenly.

50 Now ^ethis I say, brethren, that ^eflesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; ^fWe shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the ^glast trump: for the trumpet shall sound, ^hand the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

^a Gen. 1. 7. Rom. 5. 12-14. Acts, 3. 15. 2 Cor. 3. 17. John, 6. 53-57. & 10. 10. 28. & 14. 6. & 11. 25. Rom. 7. 10, 11. 2 Cor. 4. 10. Phil. 3. 10, 11. ^b Gen. 2. 7. & 3. 19. with John, 3. 13, 31. Eph. 4. 9. ^c 1 John, 3. 2. Mat. 13. 43. Rom. 8. 29. 2 Cor. 3. 18. & 4. 10, 11. ^d Ch. 1. 12. ^e John, 3. 6. Ver. 2. 22. Gen. 5. 3. Rom. 5. 1-21. Phil. 3. ^f Mat. 16. 17. John, 1. 13. Ch. 6. 13. 2 Cor. ^g 1 Theff. 4. 14-17. Rev. 14. 13. ^h Mat. 24. 31. 1 Theff. 4. 16. John, 5. 29. Pf. 50. 4. ⁱ See Ver. 41-44, 50. 2 Cor. 5. 2, 4. Phil. 3. 21.

“into a bright, a beautiful, and glorious body; which, “in comparison of the animal frame, may with sufficient “propriety be called a *spiritual body*, as being an infinitely “more pure and refined vehicle for the soul.” The phrase Σωμα ψυχικόν, ver. 44, which we render a *natural body*, should be rendered, more suitably to the Greek, and more conformably to the Apostle’s meaning, an *animal body*; for St. Paul is shewing here, that as we have animal bodies now, which we derive from Adam, endowed with an animal life, which, unless supported by a constant supply of food and air, will fail and perish; and at last, do what we can, will dissolve and come to an end: so at the resurrection, we shall have from Christ, the second Adam, spiritual bodies, which shall have an essential and naturally inseparable life in them, continuing and subsisting perpetually of itself, without the help of meat, or drink, or air, or any such foreign support; without decay, or any tendency to a dissolution. Of which our Saviour speaking, says, That they who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, cannot die any more, for they are equal to the angels: and surely in this view, there can be no impropriety or absurdity, as some have urged, in the Apostle’s calling this future nature and constitution, whatever it may be, a *spiritual body*, or a spiritualized frame.

Mr. Locke justly observes, that the time of man’s being in this world is his being *sown*, and not when, being dead, he is put into the grave; because dead things are not sown; seeds are sown being alive, and die not till after they are sown: and this, I apprehend, best agrees with the Apostle’s calling the body a *natural* or *animal body*, ver. 44. But yet, as laying and burying the body in the earth, bears some resemblance to the sowing of seed; and as the body is much more remarkable for its *corruption, weakness, and dishonour*, after, than before it dies, I would not exclude a consideration of its state and condition when it dies and is laid in the grave.

Ver. 45. The first man Adam was made a living soul;] An animal with life, ψυχῆ, —anima, whence animal in the Vol. II.

preceding verses. See 1 Theff. v. 23. and the note on Gen. ii. 7. The last clause is not a quotation from Scripture, as some have thought, but what the Apostle adds on occasion of the quotation from Genesis; as if he had said, “Christ is the last Adam, as an illustrious type of the first “(Rom. v. 14.); and he hath in himself a Spirit, with “which he quickeneth whom he pleases, and in what degree he pleases,—even all his faithful saints.” See John, i. 4. v. 26. and the 21st and 26th verses of this chapter.

Ver. 47. The first man is of the earth,] “The first man “was from the earth, and so earthly: he was created out “of the dust of the earth, and his body was only a mass “of animated clay; in reference to which it was said, “Dust thou art. The second man of whom we speak, is “the Lord from heaven: and whatever of earth there was “in the composition of the body which he condescended “to wear, it is now completely purified and refined into “the most glorious form.”

Ver. 51. Behold, I shew you a mystery:] I tell you, &c. That is, “a doctrine hitherto unknown, and which you “cannot now be able fully to comprehend; for we, the “faithful saints of God, shall not all sleep,—shall not “all be submitted to the stroke of death; but we shall “all, the living as well as the dead, at the appearance of Christ, be changed in a most happy and glorious manner into the image of our Lord.” See 1 Theff. iv. 15.

Ver. 53. For this corruptible, &c.] “For, in order hereunto, (τὸ φθαρτὸν τῷ) this very individual decaying and “corruptible body, which is now liable to putrefaction, “and will soon corrupt in the grave, must be new-built, “and formed into a state of strength and vigour, of “spiritual and incorruptible qualities: and this very body “(τὸ θνητὸν τῷ) which is of mortal frame, and, generally “speaking, shall die, must be, not created anew, but “happily altered by a proper resurrection of the same “substance, and must put on the form of a glorious immortality.”

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where *is* thy sting? O ^o grave, where *is* thy victory?

56 ^k The sting of death *is* sin; ^l and the

strength of sin *is* the law.

57 ^m But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 ⁿ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know ^o that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

^l If. 25. 8. Hof. 13. 14. Heb. 2. 14. Rev. 20. 14. & 5. 13, 20. & 7. 5, 6, 13. with 7. 4. & 6. 14. & 8. 2.

^k *Of 1st.*

^m Pr. v. 14. 32. John, 3. 21. Pf. 9. 17. If. 3. 11. ^l Rom. 4. 15.

ⁿ 2 Pet. 3. 11—14, 13. & 1. 4—9. 1 Pet. 1. 13. Tit. 2. 11—14. Luke, 1. 74, 75. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Col. 1. 23.

^m Rom. 7. 25.

Gal. 3. 13. & 4. 4.

Tit. 2. 14.

Rom. 5. 11.

1 John. c. 5, 11, 12.

^o 2 Chr. 15. 7. Pf. 19. 11. If. 3. 10. Gal. 6. 9. Heb. 6. 10. Rev. 22. 12, 14.

2 Cor. 15. 7.

Pf. 19. 11.

If. 3. 10.

Ver. 54, 55. So when this corruptible, &c.] Or, And when, &c. "When this glorious and long expected event shall be accomplished,—when this corruptible part of our frame shall have put on incorruption, &c. then shall be fulfilled what is written, *Isai. xxv. 8. Death is swallowed up in victory; perfectly subdued and destroyed; and so happy a state introduced, that it would hardly be known that death had ever had any place or power among Christ's subjects; in the assured view whereof, the Christian may even now, in faith and hope, with the greatest pleasure, take up his song of triumph, Where is thy sting, O death?*" The original has a kind of poetical turn, which seems in some measure to suit the sublimity of the sentiment; for the first of the clauses, *ver. 55.*, is an Ionic, and the second a Trochaic verse; and Mr. Pope has only transposed them, to make them, as they stand in our verses, the conclusion of one of his stanzas,—*O grave! where is thy victory?—O death! where is thy sting?* It is generally thought that these words are quoted from *Hosca*, xiii. 10. 14. where see the note.

Inferences.—The death and resurrection of Christ constitute the grand foundation of our holy faith. It may well be the daily joy of our hearts to think how firm that foundation stands, and what various and convincing evidence we have, that as Christ became incarnate, visited this wretched world, and died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; that as he condescended to go down into the caverns of the grave, and lie there in the cold and silent tomb, humbled in the dust of death; so also, according to the same Scriptures, he was raised again on the third day. How thankful ought we to be, that such convincing proofs were given of his resurrection, demonstrated by such infallible tokens and repeated appearances to all the Apostles, who had every opportunity which the most scrupulous temper could demand of examining at leisure into its certainty! More than five hundred persons were witnesses to it at one time; witnesses, who for many years survived to attest this important fact, and corroborate our faith and hope in God, who quickeneth the dead. As therefore we have thus received, so let us stand fast in this doctrine; remembering that our salvation dependeth on our steadfastly and practically retaining it; and that if ever, on any considerations, we make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, we have believed in vain, and worse than in vain.

It is matter of thankful joy, that St. Paul was added to this cloud of witnesses who attested the resurrection of Jesus;—that great Apostle, in whom the grace of God was so richly magnified; magnified peculiarly in that humility which he here expresses in so amiable a manner; calling himself the least of the Apostles, declaring that he was unworthy the name of an Apostle; and amidst all the labours and glories of this eminent station in the church, still keeping in his eye that *malice*, with which, in the days of his infidelity he had so grievously offended. And shall not we also learn of him to say, *By the grace of God I am what I am?*—Let us be solicitous that his grace bestowed on us be not in vain; and, ever bearing in mind then any sins of our unconverted state, and our great unworthiness since we have known God and been known of him let us labour in our Lord's service with proportionable zeal; and when we have laboured to the utmost, and exerted ourselves with the greatest fidelity and resolution, let us ascribe it to that divine agency which strengthened us for all; and say again, though some should esteem it a disagreeable tautology, *Not I, but the grace of God that was with me.*

Let us meditate with unutterable joy on the exaltation of our glorified Head,—of our gracious Sovereign, who has conquered death himself, and will make all his faithful saints partakers of his victory. He has received from his Father glory, honour, and dominion; and he shall reign till his conquest be universal and complete; shall reign till death be not only stripped of its trophies, but rendered subservient to his triumphs;—till all his purposes for his Father's glory and his own be fully accomplished.

But O! who can express the joy and glory of that day! when Christ shall give up the kingdom to the Father, and present unto him all his faithful subjects, transformed into his own image; a beautiful and splendid church indeed, for ever to be the object of the divine complacence; for ever to dwell in the divine presence, in a state of the greatest nearness to the tri-une God, who shall then be all in all!—Well may the expectation of this illustrious period cheer the Christian under his greatest extremities, and make him of all men the most happy; when otherwise, on account of his sufferings in the flesh, he might seem of all men the most miserable. Well may this his rejoicing in Christ Jesus, —that sacred oath which this persecuted and distressed Apostle with so sublime a spirit here uses, encourage him to go on, though he be daily dying; though he were to encounter the most savage of mankind, and death itself in its most

CHAP. XVI.

He exhorted them to relieve the wants of the brethren at Jerusalem; commendeth Timothy; and after friendly admonitions, cleth his epistle with divers salutations.

[Anno Domini 57.]

NOW concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.

4 And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.

1 Act, 11. 28, 29. & 24. 17. Rom. 12. 13. & 15. 25, 26. Ver. 3. 2 Cor. viii. ix. 1 John, 3. 17. Gal. 2. 10. Act, 16. 6. Luke, 24. 1. John, 10. 19, 26. Act, 10. 7. Rev. 1. 10. Prov. 3. 27, 28. 1 John, 3. 17. 2 Cor. 8. 11. & 9. 1-11. Col. 4. 19. & 1. 34. with 1 Cor. 8. 16, 19. Gal. 2. 10. Gr. gift. Act, 11. 29. & 24. 17. Rom. 15. 25, 26. Act, 4. 17. Rom. 15. 23. Act, 20. 4.

most dreadful forms. Well may this knowledge of God, and of his exalted Son, and of his infinite love towards his faithful people, awaken us to righteousness, and deliver us from the bondage of sin.

God Almighty enable us to retain these noble principles of doctrine and action, and to guard against these evil communications, those sceptical and licentious notions, which would corrupt our spirits, which would enervate every generous spark kindled and animated by the Gospel; and, by bounding our views within the narrow circle of mortal life, degrade us from the anticipations of angelic felicity, to the pursuits of brutal gratifications.

We may learn from this incomparable discourse of the Apostle to curb that vain curiosity, which is so ready in matters of divine revelations to break out into an unbecoming petulance; and where we are sure that God declares the thing, let us leave it to him to overcome every difficulty that may seem to attend the manner in which it shall be effected. Nothing may be more useful for the conquering of this weakness, than to observe the operations of God in the works of nature, where he giveth to every seed, whether animal or vegetable, such a body as shall please him. Each is proper for its sphere, and beautiful in its connection and order, though the degree of their glory be different; yea, and thus all the diversity of glory, which shall at last be apparent among the children of God,—even the children of the resurrection, shall serve to illustrate the divine wisdom, and goodness, and faithfulness.

The alterations and process made in every instance will indeed be wonderful, when this mortal puts on immortality, and this corruptible puts on incorruption! O, let us for ever adore the divine goodness, that, when by our relation to the first Adam, we were under a sentence of condemnation and death, he was pleased, in his infinite mercy, to appoint that we should stand related to Christ, as the second Adam, in so happy a bond, that by him we may, if faithful unto death, recover what we have lost in the former; yea, and far more; so that, as we have borne the image of the earthly, we may also bear the image of the heavenly. May we all earnestly aspire after his blessedness, and remember that our bearing the image of his holiness is inseparably connected with the hope of so glorious a privilege!

Let us therefore endeavour, by cultivating holiness in all its branches, to maintain this hope in all its spirit and energy; longing for that glorious day, when, in the utmost

strength of the prophetic expression, Death shall be swallowed up in victory; and millions of voices, after the long silence of the grave, shall burst out at once into that triumphant song, O death! where is thy sting?—O grave! where is thy victory? And when we see death disarmed, and the terrors of the law silenced, let us bless God for Jesus Christ, by whom the precepts of the law were perfectly fulfilled, and its penalty endured, that so we might not only be delivered from the curse, but called to inherit the blessing. Let it be considered as an engagement to universal obedience; and, in the assurance that whatever other labours may be frustrated, these in the Lord shall never be vain, let gratitude and interest concur to render us steadfast, immovable, and continually active in his service.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The resurrection of the dead being a chief article of the Christian faith, the Apostle, in this chapter, asserts and establishes the doctrine, in opposition to some false teachers who had attempted to undermine and overturn this glorious truth, 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18.

1. He reminds the Corinthians of that gospel which he had formerly preached unto them, which they had received from his lips, and in the faith of which they had hitherto in general persevered. By which also, he adds, ye are saved, if ye keep in memory, or hold fast, what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all, or among the most capital points of the Christian faith, and as the foundation on which all our hopes in time and eternity are built, that which I also received by immediate revelation, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, which had foretold his substitution and sufferings in the sinner's stead; and that he was buried; having truly tasted of death, he was laid in the grave; and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; being delivered for our offences, he was raised again for our justification; and in his resurrection we have an earnest of our own. And of the fact of his being risen we have the most authentic evidence, as I have told you that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, which name they bore, though their original number, by the apostasy of Judas and the absence of Thomas, was not complete. After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep in Jesus. After that he was seen of James, the brother or near kinsman of the Lord; then of all the Apostles; all of whom

5 Now I will come unto you, when ^s I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia.

6 And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may ^b bring me on my journey whithersoever I go.

^s Acts, 19. 21. 2 Cor. 1. 16.

^b Acts, 15. 3. & 20. 38. & 21. 5. Rom. 15. 24. 2 Cor. 1. 15, 23.

whom were ready to seal their testimony with their blood; men, who could not be deceived themselves, nor could be under the least temptation of deceiving others, when they expected nothing but suffering and death in every tremendous shape for their fidelity. *And last of all, he was seen of me also, that I might be an eye-witness of his resurrection, when called in so miraculous a way to the office and honour of an Apostle.* Hereupon,

2. He makes a beautiful digression, with the deepest humility acknowledging his own unworthiness, and Christ's rich grace in calling and qualifying him for the work of the apostleship. He was seen of me, *as of one torn out of due time*; despicable as an abortive foetus, and brought forth with violent pangs: *for I am the least of the Apostles*, utterly unworthy of the high honour, and last called to it; *that am not meet to be called an Apostle*, but deserved to have an eternal brand of infamy stamped upon me, *because I persecuted the church of God.* But by the grace of God, his amazingly rich and unmerited grace, a happy alteration is wrought in me, and *I am what I am*, have obtained mercy, and have been called not only to the faith of the Gospel, but to the dignity of an Apostle; *and his grace which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain, but wrought effectually*; so that under the influence of it *I laboured more abundantly than they all*, undergoing greater hardships, exposed to greater dangers, and with the most unwearied diligence spreading the Gospel through the world. *Yet not I*, though constrained to vindicate my character, I impute nothing to myself, but to the grace of God which was with me, enabling me for his work, and crowning it with success. *Therefore, whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed*: all of us bore the same testimony to a crucified and risen Redeemer, and you professed to make him your whole dependence for pardon, grace, life, and salvation. *Note*: (1.) A gracious man remembers with deep humility those sad days when he lived in rebellion against God. (2.) Whatever we are or do, to the grace of God alone we are indebted for it, and he must have the glory. (3.) All true ministers of Jesus bring one message, determined to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified.

2dly, Having proved the certainty of Christ's resurrection, he proceeds to shew the certainty of ours; refuting the opinion of those heretical teachers, who suggested that it was impossible, or that Christ did not rise in a *public capacity*, as the head and first-fruits of his faithful saints. *Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?* From which, if it were true, the following absurdities would necessarily follow:

1. *If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen*, notwithstanding all the prophecies, and the undoubted testimony of so many unexceptionable witnesses.

2. *If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, useless, and unprofitable*, the resurrection of Jesus being the grand

truth on which the whole Gospel depends; *and your faith is also vain*; the doctrine on which it is built would have no solid foundation, and the hopes which you thence derive must disappoint and deceive you. *Yea, and, on this supposition, we are found false witnesses of God*, and must have made use of his sacred name to support a most impious falsehood; *because we have testified of God*, professing to act by his authority, and under his commission, *that he raised up Christ* to a glorious and immortal life, in token of the acceptance of his undertaking as the reward of his sufferings, and as he is the head of his faithful saints, who should follow him into his kingdom: *whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not*: for it is evident, *if the dead rise not, then is not Christ*, who was once numbered among the dead, raised: *and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain*, and all the hopes arising from him are delusive: *ye are yet in your sins*, under the guilt and condemnation of them: for as there is no atonement for sin, but that which he offered, and on his resurrection the acceptance of his sacrifice depended, if he had continued in the grave, and seen corruption, we must have sunk into despair, and concluded his oblation unsatisfactory; nor could we have expected, that he who remained himself the prisoner of death, should ever be able to deliver us from the power of it.

3. *Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished*, this being the necessary consequence of the above horrid supposition; for if Christ be not risen, their hope in him is vain; and then, though they died martyrs for his cause, they have departed with a lie in their right hand, and are lost for ever; than which thought nothing can be more shocking or discouraging to surviving Christians.

4. *If this were the case, that in this life only we have hope in Christ*, and after death have nothing to look for, *we, who are Christians by profession, and especially the ministers of Christ, who stand most exposed to persecution and all kinds of suffering for his sake, are of all men most miserable*; foregoing all the comforts and advantages of this life, and wading through a sea of difficulties and trials: and how absurd would this be, if after death we had no respect to the recompence of reward, and expected not a joyful resurrection! and who would ever seek to be crucified unto the world, and the world unto him, if he looked no farther than the grave, and hoped for nothing in eternity.

3dly, The certainty of Christ's resurrection being proved, and the glaring absurdities demonstrated which must follow from a contrary supposition, the Apostle passes on to the effects of Christ's resurrection, as ensuring the resurrection of all the descendants of Adam, and especially the resurrection to glory of all the faithful saints of God.

1. *Because Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept and shall sleep in him. He is the first-begotten from the dead, and the first-born of many brethren,*

7 For I will not see you now by the way ;
 but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the
 Lord permit.

8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until * Pen-
 tecost.

9 For ¹ a great door and effectual is opened

¹ Ch. 4. 19 & 11. 34. Jer. 10. 23. Acts, 18. 21. Rom. 1. 10. Jam. 4. 15.

* Acts, 2. 1. Lev. 23. 15—21. Num. 28. 26. Exod. 23. 16.

² 2 Cor. 2. 12. Col. 4. 3. Rev. 3. 7, 8. Acts, 14. 27. & 19. 8—23. Ch. 15. 32. 2 Cor. 1. 8.

thren,—all the persevering saints, whom he will bring unto glory; and his resurrection is the pledge and earnest that all his faithful people shall live with him for ever. God, in raising him up, has given his saints, who persevere in the love of him, the assurance, that they shall be blessed and gathered in with him in their season: *for since*, or because, *by man came death*, which followed on the first sin, *by man came also the resurrection of the dead*, by the second man, the Lord from heaven. *For as in Adam*, our common parent, *all die*, involved in his guilt, and exposed to death, temporal, spiritual, and eternal; *so in Christ shall all mankind be made alive*; and especially all his faithful saints, who, by virtue of their union with him, shall be raised to a life of eternal glory. *But every man in his own order*, (*εκαστης*) Christ first, and then his saints, shall each in their time, rank, and order, rise into glory—*Christ, the first-fruits*, who consecrates the harvest, and is the pledge of our resurrection; *afterward they that are Christ's*, at his coming, even all his faithful people.

2. The Apostle proves that we must rise, because death is among those enemies which the exalted Mediator shall destroy. *Then cometh the end of the world*, and of all the sorrows of the faithful, *when*, having gathered in all his persevering saints, *he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father*, that mediatorial kingdom, the peculiar administration of which has been entrusted to him as the Son of man: *when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power*; abolishing every form of civil and ecclesiastical government, and subduing every enemy, human or diabolical, that tyrannized over his people; *for he must reign, as Mediator, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed, is death*, when the dead bodies of his faithful people shall be raised to immortal life, no more to see corruption. *For he, even God the Father, hath put all things under his feet*, and appointed him to be Head over all things to his church. *But when he hath put all things under him, it is manifest that this refers only to all created beings, and that he is excepted which did put all things under him*; for God himself can be subject to none. *And when all things shall be subdued unto him, and the ends of his Mediatorial kingdom answered in the complete salvation of all his faithful saints, both in body and soul, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him*; he will then resign the peculiar government committed to him, surrendering himself as the Head of his church, and the members of his body mystical, into his Father's hands, to receive those eternal rewards which are due to him in virtue of his great atonement; *that God may be all in all*; and henceforth the delegated power and authority of Jesus, as Mediator, shall cease, and the one glorious God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, shall be the immediate fountain of dominion and blessedness to the church triumphant for ever.

3. He argues the certainty of the resurrection from the very baptism of Christians. *Else what shall they do which are baptized?* If there be no resurrection, how absurd and strange would it be to take up the Christian profession, when, if they had nothing in prospect after death, and here stood exposed to every misery, and the danger of daily martyrdom, they would seem merely baptized *for the dead*, and be of all men most miserable *if the dead rise not at all. Why are they then baptized for the dead?* Who with such a prospect would ever be prevailed on to embrace Christianity? *And why stand we in jeopardy every hour*, and ready to seal our testimony with our blood, if we had not the glorious hope of a better resurrection? *I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus*, by all the comforts of Christianity, and as surely as that Spirit lives who is the author of them, *I die daily*, living continually in the nearest views and expectations of martyrdom. *If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus*, encountering men brutish and savage in their tempers, and have exposed myself to conflicts as dangerous as those which the condemned criminals sustain when obliged to encounter wild beasts in the public amphitheatres, *what advantage it me*, what benefit could I reap from such perilous adventures, or what could ever induce me thus to hazard my life, *if the dead rise not?* Surely if this were the case, that nothing was to be hoped for after the grave, it would be our wisdom rather to adopt the principles of Epicurus, than of Christianity, and to say, *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die*, and rather enjoy present pleasure, than suffer needless pain, if there were no hereafter, and death put an end to us for ever. *Note*; (1.) Nothing but the prospects of eternity can possibly engage any to the practice of Christianity. Till we have realizing views by faith of the things not seen, it is impossible that we should take up the cross of Christ. (2.) One great support in suffering is a respect to the recompence of the reward.

4. The Apostle closes this part of his discourse with a solemn caution. *Be not deceived* by those false teachers who endeavour to sap the foundation of your hopes: *Evil communications corrupt good manners*; the bad principles of these seducers could not but produce immoral practice; and to be connected and intimate with such men was dangerously infectious. *Note*; Bad company should be shunned as the plague. *Awake then to righteousness*; be on your guard, and see that ye walk as become your holy profession: *for I perceive by these dangerous doctrines which have been introduced among you, that some of you have not the knowledge of God*, and of his mind and will, as revealed in his Gospel. *I speak this to your shame*, that men of such bad principles and corrupt conversation should be among you, permitted as teachers, or suffered to communicate with the church as members. *Note*; We are blamable not only for the evils that we commit ourselves, but those which we connive at in others.

unto me, and *there are many adversaries.*

10 Now ^m if Timotheus come, see that he

may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also *do.*

^m Ch. 4. 17. Rom. 16. 21. Phil. 2. 19—23. 1 Thes. 3. 2.

4thly, Two plausible objections against the resurrection are here suggested. (1.) *How are the dead raised up?* what power is sufficient for such a work, to recover the scattered atoms? and (2.) *With what body do they come?* with the same identical particles, or in some other shape and form? In answer to the objector, the Apostle replies, *Thou shalt.* Probably the persons who opposed the doctrine of the resurrection pretended to high attainments in science, and to reason as philosophers; but they proved their ignorance, rather than their wisdom, and erred, not knowing the scriptures, or the power of God.

1. *That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.* The same Power, therefore, that every year raises, from under the clod where the seed was sown and corrupted, a plentiful harvest, can raise from the grave the body which has returned to its dust again; and it would be as absurd to object against the possibility of the one as the other.

2. As to the *manner of the resurrection, and with what body we shall come from the grave, to continue the similitude, I answer, That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, without any of that rich clothing which afterwards it produces, the blade, the ear, and then the full corn in the ear; it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain, which dies and revives again: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body; so ordering it, in infinite wisdom, that every seed produces its own species. In quality, indeed, the resurrection body will differ from the present, though in identity of person the same. Nor is this strange, when we see out of the same materials, that bodies of very different qualities are formed. *All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds;* the substance is originally the same, though, by divine power, wonderfully diversified in quality. *There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but, though all formed of the first created matter, they greatly differ in excellence; the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another:* such difference will there be between the present and the resurrection body, as between a clod and a star. *There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory, is of greater magnitude, and shines with greater splendor; so also is the resurrection of the dead.* Such will be the difference between the saints in glory, according to their excellencies. We are raised by the same divine power which makes the corn vegetate; and that almighty hand which modifies the same matter in the different bodies around us, can make the like glorious difference between our present and our resurrection body, though the manner *how*, may be to us inconceivable. *It is sown in corruption, from the day of its generation till it is putrified in the dust; it is raised in incorruption, incapable of putrefaction or dissolution. It is sown in dishonour; in life full of defilement, covered with shame; in death loathsome and most contemptible; it is raised in glory, like unto Christ's**

glorious body, shining as the stars for ever and ever. *It is sown in weakness, is at present liable to a thousand infirmities, pain, weariness, sickness, accidents, and death; and in the grave must be a prey for worms; it is raised in power, vigorous and active, fit to join the immortal soul, and, without weariness, and without ceasing, to serve God in his temple for ever. It is sown a natural body, which needs the constant support of meat and drink, and sleep, like the beasts that perish: it is raised a spiritual body, requiring none of these animal refreshments. There is a natural body, such as we now possess; and there is a spiritual body, suited to the celestial world which is the inheritance of the saints. And so it is written, The first man Adam, from whom we derive our present body, was made a living soul, was endued with animal life, and required all those supports which we do: the last Adam, the Lord Jesus, was made a quickening Spirit, possessing life in himself, and the fountain of it to believers, having, since his resurrection, a spiritual body: and by virtue of his power, and the union of his faithful saints to him, he shall fashion their bodies like his own. Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual: Adam's animal body was first, Christ's spiritual body afterwards; and such is the order also established for the faithful, first to bear the natural, then to receive the spiritual body. The first man was of the earth, formed from the clay; and by his sin he became earthy, returning to the dust whence he came. The second man is the Lord from heaven, coming thence to take our nature upon him; and is now returned thither with his human nature glorified; and his faithful people may expect him to come from thence to make them like himself. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; as Adam's body was, so must our's be, who sprung from him, mortal and corruptible; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly; as many as are born from above, and made partakers of a divine nature, and are faithful unto death, shall be conformed in their bodies to their Lord, and shall shortly be glorified together. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, by nature the children of corruption, sprung from a fallen parent, and like him must return to dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly; as many as are by faith perseveringly united to Jesus, and renewed in the spirit of their minds, shall bear shortly his bright image in their bodies, as well as souls, for ever.*

5thly, The Apostle,

1. Gives the reason of the change which he had described. *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood, such as our bodies are at present, cannot inherit the kingdom of God; they are unable to bear the eternal weight of glory, and incapable of tasting the delights, or being employed in the services, of that blest world to which the faithful are going. Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. The body must be refined from its corruptible dross before it can enter upon or enjoy the incorruptible inheritance.*

2. He informs them of a secret unknown to them. *Be-*

bold,

11 ^a Let no man therefore despise him : but come unto me : for I look for him with the conduct him forth in peace, that he may brethren.

^a Tit. 2. 15. 1 Tim. 4. 12.

held, I show you a mystery ; we shall not all sleep in the dust, but we shall all be changed ; on as many of the saints as shall be found alive at Christ's appearing, a change will pass equivalent to death and resurrection, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, when the voice of Jesus shall awaken the dead. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed, the bodies of the faithful undergoing a happy alteration in their qualities, though preserving their identity ; for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, that they may be capable of enjoying that celestial happiness which Jesus has purchased and provided for all those who shall have followed him faithfully through the regeneration.

3. When this awful season comes, then shall death be for ever abolished. *So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, If. xxv. 8. Death is swallowed up in victory.* And that king of terrors shall be so utterly destroyed, that he shall never more be able to lift his arm against one of the glorified saints ; and, in the prospect of this happy day, the faithful soul can even now, in faith and hope, antedate her eternal triumphs, and, exulting, cry, *O death, where is thy sting ? I defy it. O grave, where is thy victory ? I rise immortal, and tread thee beneath my feet for ever.*

4. The ground of the believer's triumph is here declared. *The sting of death is sin ; this arms the monster with all his terrors ; and the strength of sin is the law, binding over the transgressor to a future judgment ; and not merely denouncing bodily death as the wages of sin, but passing sentence of eternal death, and consigning body and soul to hell. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* In his adored name we lift up our banners ; in his righteousness we make our boast, since he has died in our stead, he has led captivity captive ; though the faithful see corruption in the grave, death cannot hold dominion over them ; they shall rise glorious and immortal ; and, through their great Redeemer's power and grace, come and reign with him in glory everlasting. *Note ; (1.)* Death is no longer dreadful, when the sting of sin, through the atoning blood, is taken out of the conscience. The faithful shall find, by the way of the grave, the golden gates of life and immortality, which open into the paradise of God. *(2.)* That which will be the subject of the everlasting praises of the righteous, should now be the matter of their songs.

5. He closes the whole with a warm exhortation, arising from the foregoing discourse. *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, firm, and unwavering in the faith and hope of the gospel, especially in the great doctrines of the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus, with the blessed effects thence flowing, of the immortal life and glory of all the faithful ; unmoveable by any of the artifices of Satan, or the craft of seducers ; founded on the rock which storms shall in vain ; always abounding in the work of the Lord,*

zealously and abidingly engaged in his service, cheerful, and willing to undergo any sufferings, in spite of every opposition, increasing with the increase of God ; *knowing, as the most assured truth, that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, but that, perseveringly cleaving to him in faith, he will strengthen, uphold, and own you in life and in death, and, after death, raise up your bodies to immortal life, and bestow the never-fading crown of righteousness and glory upon you, the reward, not, indeed, of debt, but of grace.* *Note ; (1.)* Our practice will keep pace always with the strength of our faith ; and the more realizing our views of eternal things are, the more vigorously shall we press towards the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. *(2.)* It is the strongest encouragement to labour for the Lord, that the faithful soul is sure to succeed in his service. *(3.)* Whatever we do or suffer for Christ, we shall never regret in the day of the resurrection, and shall only then be ashamed that we have loved him no more, and served him no better.

CHAP. XVI.

BEFORE the Apostle concluded his letter to the Corinthians, he gave them directions for making the collection for the saints in Judea. During his eighteen months abode at Corinth, he had exhorted the brethren to undertake that good work, (as indeed he did the brethren in all the Gentile churches) with a view to establish a cordial union between the converted Jews and Gentiles every where. And so desirous were the Corinthians of the proposed union, that, on the first mention of the collection, they agreed to make it. But the divisions in the church at Corinth, it seems, had hitherto hindered them from beginning it. The Apostle, therefore, in this letter, requested them to set about it immediately ; and he directed them how to do it, ver. 1-4.

At the time that St. Paul wrote this epistle to the Corinthians, he had altered his resolution respecting his voyage to Corinth, of which he had formerly given them notice by Timothy and Erastus, as mentioned 2 Cor. i. 15, 16. For he now informed them, that, instead of sailing directly from Ephesus to Corinth, as he had at first proposed, his intention was, not to come to them immediately, but to take Macedonia in his way, ver. 5.—after staying at Ephesus till Pentecost, on account of the extraordinary success with which he was preaching the gospel to the inhabitants of the provinces of Asia, who resorted to him in that metropolis, ver. 8, 9.—In the mean time, to compensate the loss which the Corinthians sustained by his delaying to visit them, he wrote to them this letter, in which he gave them the instructions which he would have delivered to them if he had come to them, and promised when he came to abide a considerable time, and, perhaps, to winter with them, ver. 5, 6.—And because he had, some time before, appointed that Timothy should visit Corinth, he begged the Corinthians to give him a good reception, if he came to them, ver. 10, 11.—With respect to Apol-

los,

12 As touching ^o our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: ^p but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he

shall have convenient time.

13 ^q Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

14 ^r Let all your things be done with charity.

^o Acts, 18. 24. & 19. 1. Ch. 1. 12. & 3. 5. Tit. 3. 17. ^p Ecc. 1. 11. Ch. 6. 12. & 10. 23. & 14. 26, 40. ^q Matt. 24. 42. & 25. 13. & 26. 42. 1 Pet. 8. 5. Rev. 17. 15. & 3. 2. 1 Thel. 5. 6. & 3. 8. 2 Thel. 2. 15. Acts, 20. 31. Ch. 1. 5. & 11. 2. & 15. 1, 58. 2 Cor. 1. 24. Gal. 5. 9. Eph. 6. 10, 14. Phil. 1. 27. & 4. 1, 13. Col. 1. 10. 11. & 4. 2, 12. 2 Tim. 2. 1. ^r Ch. 8. 1. & 12. 31. & 14. 1. & 13. 4—7, 13. Gal. 5. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 5. Rom. 13. 8.—c. Mat. 22. 37—39.

los, whom it seems the Corinthians wished to see, he told them, he had intreated him to go to them with the brethren; but that, having no inclination to go to Corinth at that time, he had deferred his visit till he should find a convenient season. Perhaps the insolent behaviour of the faction while Apollos was among them, had so disgusted him, that he did not choose to expose himself a second time to their attempts.—To this apology for Apollos the Apostle subjoined a few practical advices. Then he shewed a particular regard to the members of the family of Stephanas, because they were the first fruit of Achaia, and had employed themselves zealously in the ministry for the saints, ver. 13—18.

The Apostle, before he finished his letter, sent to the Corinthians the salutations of the churches of the proconsular Asia, and of the brethren at Ephesus, who assisted him in preaching the gospel, ver. 19, 20.—Then wrote his particular salutation to them with his own hand, ver. 21.—And to shew his sincerity in the curse that he was going to pronounce on hypocritical professors of religion, he, in the same hand-writing, added, *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maran-atha*, ver. 22.—Lastly, to comfort the sincere part of the church, he gave them, in particular, his apostolical benediction, together with his own love, ver. 23, 24.

Ver. 2. Upon the first day of the week] Beza observes here, that Basil joined these words, *upon the first day of the week*, to the preceding clause, which he reads thus: *Now, concerning the collection for the saints, &c. even so do ye upon the first day of the week.* According to this reading, the following words will express, not what he advises to be done on that day, but previously the week before, in order to prepare for the collections which were to be made, at their usual meetings for public worship, on the first day of every week. The argument thence drawn for the religious observation of the first day of the week, in these primitive churches of Corinth and Galatia, is too obvious to need any illustration, and yet too important to be passed by in an entire silence. The word *ἑναυριάζων* signifies, properly, “putting into the common treasury;” *treasuring it up* in the common stock; for it is certain, the Apostle directs that they should, every Lord’s day, bring to the congregation what their charity had laid aside the foregoing week, as their gain came in; that there it might be put into some public box, appointed for that purpose, or into the officers’ hands. For if they only laid it aside at home, there would, nevertheless, be need of a collection when he came. See Luke, xxiv. 1. John, xx. 1. Matth. xxviii. 1.

Ver. 3. And when I come, &c.] When I come, whomso-

ever you shall approve, them will I send with letters, to carry your liberality, &c. Locke. The Apostle’s sense justifies the present manner of reading; he telling them here that, finding their collection ready when he came, he would write by those whom they should think fit to employ in sending it, or go himself with them, if it should be thought convenient.

Ver. 4. And if] But if.

Ver. 5. For I do pass through Macedonia.] For I am just upon my journey through Macedonia. Macedonia was not the direct way from Ephesus to Corinth.

Ver. 8. But I will tarry at Ephesus, &c.] This is a plain intimation that St. Paul was now at Ephesus, and, consequently, that the inscription added at the end of the epistle, which tells us it was written *from Philippi*, is very far from being authentic. It should be remembered, that no credit is to be given to any of these additions, which have been very presumptuously made, and very imprudently retained.

Ver. 9. For a great door and effectual, &c.] Some think that here is an allusion to the door of the *circus*, whence chariots were let out when the races were to begin: and that the word *ἀντιμαχητοῦς*, signifies the same as *antagonists*, with whom the Apostle was to contend, as in a course, Acts, xix. 20, &c. This opposition rendered his presence more necessary to preserve those who were already converted, and to increase the number, if God should bless his ministry.

Ver. 11. But conduct him forth, &c.] But bring him on his journey, &c. The original words of the last clause are something ambiguous; but the most natural sense appears to be, “For I expect him here with the other brethren, who are now the companions of his journey.” Accordingly it seems probable that Timothy came to Ephesus before St. Paul was driven out of it by the tumult; and that the Apostle, being obliged to leave that city in so abrupt a manner, desired Timothy to stay a while after him, to settle the affairs of that important church more completely than he had an opportunity of doing. See 1 Tim. i. 3.

Ver. 12. Our brother] There are few, perhaps, who need be told, yet it may be convenient, once for all, to remark, that, in the Apostle’s time, *brother* was the ordinary appellation which Christians used one to another. The *brethren* here mentioned seem to be Stephanas and those others who came with a message, or letter, to St. Paul from the church of Corinth, by whom he returned this epistle in answer. See Acts, xi. 26.

Ver. 13. Stand fast, &c.] There is no need of seeking a different sense of each word in this verse. If there be any difference,

15 I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)

16 That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.

17 I am glad of the coming of Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.

18 For they have refreshed my spirit and yours: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.

19 The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in

the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

20 All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss.

21 The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand.

22 If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maran-atha.

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¶ The First Epistle to the Corinthians was written from Philippi by Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus and Timotheus.

¹ Ch. 1. 16. Rom. 16. 5. Rev. 14. 4. ² Acts, 6. 3, 5. Rom. 15. 31. ³ 2 Cor. 8. 4. & 9. 1. Heb. 6. 10. ⁴ Phil. 2. 29. ⁵ 1 Thes. 5. 12; ⁶ 1 Tim. 5. 17. Heb. 13. 17. Ch. 4. 8, 12. & 9. 7. ⁷ 2 Cor. 11. 9. Phil. 2. 30. Col. 4. 18. Philem. 13. ⁸ Rom. 15. 32. ⁹ 2 Tim. 1. 16. ¹⁰ Prov. 25. 13. ¹¹ 2 Cor. 7. 6, 13. ¹² 1 Thes. 5. 12. ¹³ Rev. 1. 4. 11. with Acts, 16. 6. & 19. 10. ¹⁴ Acts, 18. 2, 18, 26. Rom. 16. 3. ¹⁵ 1 Tim. 4. 19. ¹⁶ Rom. 16. 5, 23. Col. 4. 15. Philem. 2. ¹⁷ Heb. 13. 1. ¹⁸ 1 Pet. 2. 17. ¹⁹ Rom. 16. 16. ²⁰ 2 Cor. 13. 12. ²¹ 1 Thes. 5. 26. ²² 1 Pet. 5. 14. ²³ Rom. 16. 22. Col. 4. 18. ²⁴ 2 Thes. 3. 17. 18. Gal. 6. 11. ²⁵ Gal. 1. 8, 9. & 6. 14. ²⁶ 1 John. 4. 8—10, 19. ²⁷ Heb. 10. 26—29, 4—3. ²⁸ Rom. 16. 20, 24. ²⁹ 2 Cor. 13. 14. Gal. 6. 18. Eph. 6. 23, 24. Phil. 4. 23. Col. 4. 18. ³⁰ 1 Thes. 5. 28. ³¹ 2 Thes. 3. 18. ³² Heb. 13. 25. ³³ 1 Pet. 5. 14; ³⁴ Rev. 1. 4, 5. & 22. 21. ³⁵ Ch. 4. 15. ³⁶ 2 Cor. 12. 15. ³⁷ Phil. 1. 8. ³⁸ 2 Thes. 2. 8.

difference, the word ἀνδρίζεσθε may refer to a strength of resolution; and the word χαλαρίζεσθε to that cheerful and courageous expectation of a happy event, which the consciousness of so good a cause would naturally administer. The meaning of the next verse is, "Let all your affairs be transacted in love, and under the influence of that noble principle of unfeigned benevolence which I have so largely described," ch. xiii.; the Apostle's main design being to put an end to the faction and division which the false apostle had made among them, it is no wonder that we find unity and love so much and so often pressed in this and the second epistle.

Ver. 15, 16. *I beseech you, brethren, &c.*] Dr. Heylin renders these verses thus: *Ye know that the family of Stephanas, &c.—I beseech you then, my brethren, ver. 16. that you pay all deference to them, and all others who like them assist us in our labours.* Dr. Doddridge reads, *I beseech you, brethren, as ye know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and as they have set themselves to ministering to the saints, ver. 16. that you subject yourselves to such, and to every associate in that work and labour.* The 15th verse seems to imply, that it was the generous care of the whole family to assist their fellow-christians; so that there was not a member of it which did not do its part.

Ver. 17. *Fortunatus,*] This worthy man survived St. Paul a considerable time: for it appears from the epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, sect. 59. that he was the messenger of the church at Corinth to that of Rome, by whom Clement sent back that invaluable epistle. See Archbp. Wake's epistles of the apostolical fathers.

Ver. 18. *For they have refreshed my spirit, &c.*] By removing those suspicions and fears which were on both sides.

Ver. 19. *Aquila and Priscilla salute you much, &c.*] They had formerly made some abode at Corinth, and there St. Paul's acquaintance with them commenced, Acts, xviii. 1, 2. It is no wonder, therefore, that they were particular in their salutations.

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Ver. 22. *Anathema, Maran-atha.*] When the Jews lost the power of life and death, they used, nevertheless, to pronounce an *anathema* on persons who should have been executed according to the Mosaic law; and such a person became an *anathema*, or *cheren*, or *accursed*,—for the expressions are equivalent. They had a full persuasion that the curse would not be in vain; and, indeed, it appears they expected that some judgment, corresponding to that which the law pronounced, would befall the offender. Now, to express their faith that God would, one way or another, and probably in some remarkable way, interpose, to add that efficacy to their sentence which they could not give it, it is most likely they used the Syriac words *Maran-atha*; that is, "The Lord cometh;" or, "He will surely and quickly come, to put this sentence in execution, and to shew that the person on whom it falls is indeed *anathema*,—*accursed*:" in allusion to this, when the Apostle was speaking of a secret alienation from Christ, maintained under the forms of Christianity, (which, perhaps, might be the case among many of the Corinthians, and much more probably may be so among us,) as this was not a crime capable of being convicted and censured in the Christian church, he reminds them that the Lord Jesus Christ will come at length, and find it out, and punish it in a proper manner. The Apostle chose to write with his own hand this weighty sentence, and insert it between his general salutation and benediction, that it might be the more attentively regarded. See John, ix. 22. and Bishop Patrick on Deut. xxvii. 15.

Ver. 24. *My love be with you all, &c.*] When we consider what an alienation of affection some of these Corinthians had expressed with respect to our Apostle, this declaration of tender regard to them all, without any exception, is so much the more affectionate, and fully displays the benevolent disposition of his mind.—With respect to the *subscriptio* of this epistle, see on ver. 8.

Inferences.—The example of St. Paul before us should teach ministers to be ready to promote charitable collections for the relief of poor Christians. They should frequently exhort their hearers to *do good and to communicate*, reminding them that their contributions ought to bear a proportion to the degree in which God has been pleased to prosper them. We see an evident reference to the stated assemblies of the church, on *the first day of the week* in this early age; and it is a proper duty of that day, to devise and execute liberal things according to our respective abilities.

The prudent caution of St. Paul, as to the management of pecuniary affairs, is worthy the attention of the ministers of the Gospel; and may teach them to take care, not only that they satisfy their own consciences in the fidelity of their transactions, but also that they *provide things honest in the sight of all men*. The Apostle's courage, in making the opposition that he met with at Corinth a reason for his promising a longer visit there, may instruct us not to study our own ease in the choice of our abode; but rather to prefer those circumstances, however disagreeable in themselves, wherein we may be providentially led to do most for the advancement of religion in the world.

His care that his young friend *Timothy* might be as easy as possible, constitutes likewise a very amiable part of his character, and suggests in a manner well worthy of notice, how careful private Christians should be, that they do not terrify and distress the minds of those who are entering on the ministerial office. A faithful disposition to labour in the work of the Lord, ought to command respect: yet sometimes, as in the instance of *Apollos*, even that diligence may be so liable to misrepresentation, that it may be the wisdom of ministers to absent themselves from places, where they have many to care for and admire them. On the whole, the great business of life is, to glorify God in doing our best for promoting the happiness of mankind; and no self-denial ought to seem hard to us, while we keep that glorious end in view. However the particular trials of Christians may vary in different ages, the same works in general demand their diligence; the same enemies their watchfulness; the same difficulties their courage and fortitude; nor will they ever perform, resist, and endure well, but when *love* reigns in their hearts, and presides over the whole of their behaviour.

We owe our sincere thanks to the Author of all good, when he raises up the spirits of his servants to any distinguished activity and zeal in his cause. Christians, of standing superior to their brethren, ought to emulate such a character; and when they do so with genuine marks of becoming modesty, and upright views, all proper respect should be paid to them: especially to those who are honoured with, and labour faithfully in, the ministerial office. To such, let others submit themselves in love; not, indeed, as to the *lords of their faith*, which even the Apostles pretended not to be; but as friends whom they esteem and reverence, ever tenderly solicitous to secure their comfort, and increase their usefulness.

We see how much the Apostle was concerned to promote mutual friendship among the disciples of our blessed Lord; how kindly he delivers the salutations of one and another. It becomes us to remember each other with cordial regard; and in imitation of this wise example, to do all that we can to cultivate a good understanding among our Christian brethren; and to abhor that disposition to sow

discord, which has been so fatally successful in producing envyings, and strife, and every ill work.

To conclude all; let us lay up in our memory, and often review this awful sentence, this *anathema, maran-atha*, which, to give it the greater weight, the Apostle records *with his own hand*: be it ever remembered, that professing Christians, who do not sincerely *love their Master*, lie under the heaviest curse which an Apostle can pronounce. May such unhappy persons take the alarm, and labour to obtain a more ingenuous and devout temper and spirit, ere the Lord, whom they neglect, and against whom they entertain a secret enmity, descend from heaven with insupportable terror, and pronounce the *anathema* with his own lips, in circumstances which shall for ever cut off all hope, and all possibility of its being reversed. If his solemn voice pronounce, his almighty hand will immediately execute it: how will they be cast down to destruction, as in a moment! How will they be utterly consumed with terrors! To prevent so dreadful an end of our high profession, of our exalted hopes, *may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us!* Amen.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The church at Jerusalem having undergone peculiar oppressions and sufferings, and many of the saints being reduced to great poverty, the Gentile brethren, at the Apostle's intigation, generously contributed for their relief.

Now concerning the collection for the saints in Judea, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Since in wealth the Corinthians exceeded the Galatians, and in spiritual gifts were so eminent, it would be a shame if they came behind in benevolence and charity. *Upon the first day of the week*, the day held sacred among Christians, and hallowed by their solemn assemblies, *let every one of you lay by him in store*, contributing to the collection for the poor, *as God hath prospered him*, each according to their ability; the rich more abundantly; and they who have little, cheerfully giving a portion out of that little, *that there be no gatherings when I come.* And, being thus in readiness, *when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters*, and recommend as faithful men, *them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem*, concurring in your recommendation. *And if it be meet*, and judged necessary for this benevolent design, *that I go also, they shall go with me.* Note; (1.) Every Christian is bound, according to his abilities, to minister to the necessities of his brethren. (2.) All our success comes from God's gracious providence, and is gratefully to be acknowledged. (3.) The more we receive from God, the more are we called, as good stewards, to improve it for his glory, and the advantage of our brethren.

2dly, The Apostle, in his own mind, had planned a visit to Corinth, of which he informs them, though Providence prevented at this time the execution of his design.

Now I will come unto you, such is my present intention, if the Lord please, *when I shall pass through Macedonia, for I do purpose soon to pass through Macedonia.* And it may be that I will abide a considerable time among you, *yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go*, returning to your former affection, and testifying your accustomed respect for me, notwithstanding these prejudices which the false teachers have laboured to instil. *For I will not see you now by the way, (ἐν πειρασμῷ) to make*

make a transient visit, which would not answer the end that I purpose, of settling your affairs, establishing you in the truth, and enjoying your company; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit, at whose disposal I am, and by whose providence I desire ever to be directed. But I will tarry at Ephesus (whence he seems to have written this Epistle) until Pentecost, either till that feast was past, or till its approach, when he intended to be at Jerusalem, a great concourse of Jews from all parts assembling there at that season. And the reason for his long stay at Ephesus he gives; for a great door and effectual is opened unto me, a signal blessing has attended my labours, and great multitudes are by the Spirit converted to the faith of Christ, and, as might be expected, there are many adversaries, both Jews and Gentiles, who, instigated by Satan, oppose with all their might and craft the progress of the Gospel, against whom he chose personally to stand up, and boldly to vindicate the glorious cause. Note; (1.) Wherever Christ is preached successfully, there the malice and cunning of earth and hell will be exerted, to stop the rising interest of truth and godliness. (2.) Success in our labours is a great argument and encouragement boldly to persevere. (3.) Faithful ministers, instead of being affrighted or impeded by outward opposition, have their zeal but the more kindled. What weakens their hands and discourages their hearts, is the unfaithfulness of professors, and the insensibility of their hearers.

3dly, The Apostle,

1. Recommends Timothy to them, who was now on his journey to Corinth. If Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear of any insult from any of the factious leaders; regard him with affection, treat him with respect, and hear him with attention: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do, zealous for the cause of the same divine Master, and tried and found faithful. Let no man therefore despise him because of his youth, slight his reproofs, or think lightly of his ministry, but conduct him forth in peace; give him a proof of your affection and esteem, by providing him with necessaries for his journey, and bringing him on his way, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren; either I and the brethren here expect him, or I desire his return with the brethren who may accompany him hither. Note; Young ministers should be encouraged, not despised; and their ministrations, though without the sanction of grey hairs, yet, seconded with the weight of zeal and piety, deserve the most serious attention.

2. He informs them that Apollos declined a visit to them at present, though he had earnestly pressed him thereto. As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren, but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time. Though a party at Corinth had affected to set up Apollos in preference to Paul, the Apostle entertained no jealousy of his brother-labourer, assured that he never would encourage, but discountenance, such a spirit of division. The faithful ministers of Christ will not harbour mean distrusts of each other; no, not though those who love to sow discord among brethren, endeavour to instil base suspicions. On the other hand, Apollos, probably out of respect to his honoured brother Paul, declined at that time the visit, lest, in the present ill disposition of too many of the Corinthians, it might be abused by those who wanted to make

him the head of a party; though when the present feuds were subsided, he meant to go thither, and labour among them. Such a spirit of love should ministers cultivate, jealous for each other's reputation as their own, and frowning on every flatterer that would attempt to raise their credit at the expence of their brother.

4thly, The Apostle proceeds,

1. To some general exhortations. Watch ye against every enemy of your souls, especially those who would seduce you from the doctrines of truth; stand fast in the faith, grounded and settled in the hope of the Gospel, so as never to be moved from your holy profession; quit you like men, with wisdom, zeal, and fidelity, in the midst of the opposition of enemies, and the snares of deceivers; be strong in the grace which is in Jesus Christ, exercising yourselves unto godliness, and fighting manfully under the Lord's banners against every enemy within and without. And while you thus shew yourselves courageous for the truth, let all your things be done in charity, and let a spirit of meekness temper all your zeal. Note; (1.) A Christian is compassed with enemies; he need be ever on his guard. (2.) While we are firmly established in the principles of the Gospel, no danger or sufferings will deter us from the path of duty. (3.) Love or charity is the great ornament of our profession; to bear with the perverseness of mistaken friends, and meekly to sustain the attacks of avowed enemies, is to be like our Master.

2. He commends to their particular regard the house of Stephanas. I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, converted by my ministry, and whom I baptized myself, and that they have addicted themselves unto the ministry of the saints, laying themselves out in the Lord's immediate service, and zealously employed in assisting his people to their utmost, both in their temporal and spiritual concerns,) I beseech you, brethren, that ye submit yourselves unto such, directed by them, imitating their examples, and not led away by upstart teachers; and that ye in like manner reverence, regard, and attend to, every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth to promote the interests of the same divine Master, and the edification of your souls.

3. He testifies his satisfaction in the good account that he had lately heard concerning them. I am glad of the coming of Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus; for that which was lacking on your part, they have supplied; giving the Apostle a more clear state of the matter than was conveyed in the letter which they brought, and explaining, much to his satisfaction, things which reports had greatly exaggerated. Note; It is a great joy to every minister and Christian's heart to hear unfavourable reports of the brethren contradicted by those who are best acquainted with their circumstances.

4. He enjoins them to respect those faithful men at their return. For they have refreshed my spirit by their conversation, and the accounts they have given; and this cannot but afford a like satisfaction to yours: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such, and shew them that respect and regard which their kind, candid, and charitable construction of your conduct merits at your hands. Note; Good offices done to us demand a grateful return.

5thly, St. Paul closes his Epistle,

1. With affectionate salutations. All the churches of Asia salute you, cordially wishing you every blessing of the everlasting

lasting Gospel. *Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house, even all the members of that amiable family which compose a little church among themselves; and such a family is happy indeed. All the brethren greet you with warm affection. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss. The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand. And thus he signs what his amanuensis had written from his lips, as genuine and authentic.*

2. He subjoins a solemn warning. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, be his eminence of station never so great, his gifts never so extraordinary, his profession never so glaring, if his heart be unsound, his principles erroneous, and his practice dishonourable to the Gospel, fomenting divisions and puffed up with pride, let him be anathema, maran-atha, excommunicated from the body of the faithful, and consigned over to that fearful judgment, which the*

righteous Lord, in the day of his appearing and glory, will inflict on such offenders, unless they truly repent. *Note;*

(1.) It is not enough to be Christians in word; do we love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity? That is the question. (2.) None sink under heavier vengeance than those who have been false and faithless to their holy profession.

3. He concludes with his usual benediction and prayer. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you; and therein is comprehended every blessing in time and eternity. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Sharply as I have been constrained to rebuke you, I love you affectionately in him; and every thing that I have said flows from the most unfeigned desire to promote your present and eternal happiness. Amen! May this be the happy issue. Believe my kind intentions and regard; join with me in my prayers, and then the issue shall be peace.*

THE SECOND EPISTLE
OF
PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE
CORINTHIANS.

P R E F A C E.

ST. PAUL's general design in this Epistle was, to lay open to the Corinthians the artifices of false teachers, by whom they had suffered themselves to be led astray; *ch. xi. 13.* These were certain Jews, taken from the bosom of the synagogue, and proselyted to Christianity; who, still retaining an inclination toward the Mosaic ordinances, wanted to introduce a part of those observances into the Christian religion, and join the righteousness of Christ with justification by works, to form a full and entire justification. *Gal. ii. 4. v. 1, &c.* This is what St. Paul calls, in the present Epistle, a corruption of the word of God, *ch. ii. 17.* and he combats it with great force throughout the *iii. d. chapter*, wherein he admirably shews the superiority of the gospel over the law, and the ministry of the new dispensation over that of the old. He nearly pursues the same subject in the *iv. th chapter*; and in the *v. th* teaches that Christ has reconciled the world to God by his death, and that he was the sacred victim which atoned for all our sins, *ver. 18—21.* In the *vi. th chapter* he speaks of the labours of his ministry, testifies his regard for the Corinthians, and exhorts them to avoid any close connections with unbelievers, *ver. 14—18.* since it was a snare that had betrayed them into many faults, of which he had already spoken in his former Epistle, *1 Cor. viii. 10. x. 14, 20.* In the *vii. th chapter* he touches again on the case of the incestuous person who had been excommunicated, (*1 Cor. v. 1—5.*) of whose repentance he had heard with great joy. The *viii. th* and *ix. th* regard the general collection making in the churches of Greece for the faithful at Jerusalem; which not being completed when St. Paul wrote this second Epistle to the Corinthians, it is clear that it was written not long after the first, where he had spoken of the same thing, *1 Cor. xvi. 1.* and consequently, before he wrote the Epistle to the Romans, at which time the collections were finished, and he was himself carrying the produce to Jerusalem, *Rom. xv. 25, 26.* All the rest of the Epistle is employed in exposing the pomp and vanity of false teachers, and in vindicating his own ministry by a view of the extraordinary sufferings that he had endured, of his zeal for the churches, and of the visions and ecstasies with which the Lord had honoured him. The necessity of a legitimate defence obliged him thus to speak of himself in terms painful to his modesty and humility, *ch. xii. 6.* but he owed it to his own honour, to the edification of the church, and still more to his religion, which these false teachers thought they never could successfully attack, if they left St. Paul in the full enjoyment of his high reputation.

CHAP. I.

The Apostle encourageth them against troubles, by the comforts and deliverances which God had given him, as in all his afflictions, so particularly in his late danger in Asia: and calling both his own conscience and theirs to witness of his sincere manner of preaching the immutable truth of the gospel, he excuseth his not coming to them, as proceeding not of lightness, but of his lenity towards them.

[Anno Domini 58.]

PAUL an Apostle ^a of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and ^b Timothy *our* brother,

^a See 1 Cor. 1. 1. Rom. 1. 1. 5. Gal. 1. 1. 15. Phil. 1. 1. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 1 Cor. 16. 10, 11. & 2 Tim. 1. 2. ^c Acts, xviii. 1 Cor. i—xvi. ^e Rom. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 3. Gal. 1. 2. Eph. 1. 2. Phil. 1. 2. Col. 1. 2. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 3. Ch. 11. 31. Rom. 15. 6. Col. 1. 15. 2. 2. Eph. 1. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 3. Ch. 11. 31. Rom. 15. 6. Col. 1. 15. M.c. 7. 18. ^h Rom. 15. 5. 2 Thes. 2. 16. If. 51. 3. 12.

unto ^c the church of God which is at Corinth, with ^d all the saints which are in all Achaia :

2 ^e Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 ^f Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ^g the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort ;

4 ^h Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them who are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

2 Thes. 1. 2. ^b Acts, 16. 1—3. & 17. 24 & 18. 5. & 20. 4. Heb. 13. 23. ^d 2 Cor. 1. 2. & 6. 11. Eph. 1. 1. Phil. 1. 1. Col. 1. 2. Heb. 3. 1. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 2. Jude, 2. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Tim. Heb. 1. 3. John, 20. 17. Pf. 40. 8. ^e Exod. 34. 6. Pf. 86. 5, 15.

CHAP. I.

AFTER giving the Corinthians his apostolical benediction, St. Paul began this chapter with returning thanks to God, who had comforted him in every affliction, that he might be able to comfort others, with the consolation wherewith he himself had been comforted, ver. 3—7. By this thanksgiving the Apostle insinuated, that one of the purposes of his writing the present letter, was to comfort the sincere part of the Corinthian church, and to relieve them from the sorrow occasioned to them by the rebukes in his former letter.—Next, to shew the care which God took of him as a faithful Apostle of his Son, he gave the Corinthians an account of a great affliction which had befallen him in Asia, that is, in Ephesus and its neighbourhood, and of a great deliverance from an imminent danger of death, which God had wrought for him ; namely, when he fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, as mentioned in his former epistle, ch. xv. 32, and had the sentence of death in himself to teach him that he should not trust in himself, but in God, ver. 8, 9.

When the Apostle sent Timothy and Erastus from Ephesus into Macedonia, as mentioned, Acts, xix. 22. it is probable that he ordered them to go forward to Corinth, (1 Cor. xvi. 10.) provided the accounts which they received in Macedonia gave them reason to think their presence in Corinth would be useful ; and that he ordered them likewise to inform the Corinthians, that he was coming straightway from Ephesus to Corinth, to remedy the disorders which some of the family of Chloe told him had taken place among them. But, after Timothy and Erastus departed, having more than ordinary success in converting the idolatrous Gentiles in the province of Asia, he put off his voyage to Corinth for some time, being determined to remain in Ephesus and its neighbourhood till the following Pentecost ; after which he purposed to go through Macedonia, in his way to Corinth. This alteration of his intention the Apostle notified to the Corinthians in his first epistle, ch. xvi. 5—8. But the faction having taken occasion therefrom to speak of him as a false, fickle, worldly-minded man, who, in all his actions, was guided

by interested views, he judged it necessary, in this second letter, to vindicate himself from that calumny, by assuring the Corinthians that he had behaved *with the greatest simplicity and sincerity*, ver. 12.—and by declaring that what he was about to write on that subject was the truth ; namely, that when he sent them word by Timothy and Erastus, of his intention to set out for Corinth immediately by sea, he really meant to do so, ver. 13—16.—and that the alteration of his resolution did not proceed either from levity or falsehood, ver. 17.—as they might have known from the uniformity of the doctrine which he preached to them, ver. 18, 19, 20.—whereby, as well as by the earnest of the Spirit put into his heart, God had fully established his authority with the Corinthians. It was therefore absurd to impute either levity or falsehood to one who was thus publicly and plainly attested of God to be an Apostle of Christ, by the spiritual gifts and graces which he had conferred upon him, ver. 22, 23.—Lastly, he called God to witness that hitherto he had delayed his journey to Corinth expressly for the purpose of giving the faulty among them time to repent, ver. 23.—and that, in so doing, he had acted suitably to his character ; because miraculous powers were bestowed on the Apostles, not to enable them to lord it over the persons and goods of the disciples, by means of their faith, but to make them helpers of their joy, persuading them both by arguments and chastisements to live agreeably to their Christian profession, ver. 24.

St. Paul's first epistle produced different effects among the Corinthians : many of them entered into themselves ; they excommunicated the incestuous man, requested St. Paul's return with tears, and vindicated him and his office against the false teacher and his adherents. Others of them still adhered to that adversary of St. Paul, expressly denied his apostolical office, and even furnished themselves with pretended arguments from that epistle. He had formerly promised to take a journey from Ephesus to Corinth ; thence to visit the Macedonians ; and to return from thence to Corinth : but the unhappy state of the Corinthian church made him alter his intention, since he found that he must have treated them with severity, ch. i. 15—23.

Hence

5 For, ¹ as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

6 * And whether we be afflicted *it is* for

your consolation and salvation, which * is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation.

¹ Acts. 9. 4. Col. 1. 24. Ch. 4. 9, 10. & 11. 3. Pl. 34. 19, 20. & 94. 18, 19.

* Ver. 4. Ch. 4. 15, 17, 18. Rom. 8. 18, 28. 2 Tim. 2.

10—12. & 1. 8. * Or is wrought.

Hence his adversaries partly argued, 1st, That St. Paul was irresolute and unsteady, and therefore could not be a prophet; 2dly, The improbability of his ever coming to Corinth again, since he was afraid of them. Such was the state of the Corinthian church, when St. Paul, after his departure from Ephesus, having visited Macedonia, received an account of the above particulars from Titus, ch. vii. 5, 6. and therefore wrote to them his second epistle about the end of the same year, or the beginning of 58. The contents of this epistle are these: *First*, He gives the Corinthians an account of his sufferings to that time, and of the comfort that he derived from meditating on the resurrection, ch. i. 1—11. *Secondly*, He vindicates himself against those who would not consider him as a true Apostle, because he had altered his resolutions, ch. i. 12.—ii. 4. *Thirdly*, He forgives the incestuous man, and tells the Corinthians how much he longed for their amendment, ch. ii. 5. 13. *Fourthly*, He treats of the office committed to him, of preaching the redemption by Jesus Christ in all its branches. His adversaries had ridiculed his sufferings: he shews that they are no disgrace to the gospel, or its ministers; and here he gives a short abstract of the doctrine that he preaches, ch. ii. 14. to the end of ch. v. *Fifthly*, He shews it to be his office, not only to preach the redemption by Christ, but to inculcate certain duties, and particularly that of *flying from idolatry*;—an oblique censure of those who attended the idol feasts; ch. vi. *Sixthly*, He endeavours, once more, to win their confidence, by telling them how affectionately he was disposed towards them, and rejoiced at their amendment, ch. vii. *Seventhly*, He exhorts them to a liberal collection for the Christians in Judea, ch. viii. to ix. 15. *Eighthly*, He vindicates himself against those who thought him deficient in the evidences of his apostleship, and imputed his caution when at Corinth to his consciousness of not being a true Apostle, ch. x. to the end of the epistle.

Ver. 1. Timothy our brother,] That is, either in the common faith, (see Rom. i. 13. and 1 Cor. xvi. 13.) or, brother in the work of the ministry. See Rom. xvi. 21. St. Paul may be supposed to have given Timothy the title of brother here, in this peculiar connection, for dignity's sake, to procure him a reputation above his age among the Corinthians, to whom he had before sent him with some kind of authority to rectify their disorders. Timothy was but a young man when St. Paul wrote his first epistle to him, as appears 1 Tim. iv. 12. which epistle, by universal consent, was written to Timothy after he had been at Corinth, and, in the opinion of some very learned men, not less than eight years after; and therefore his calling him brother here, and joining him with himself in writing his epistle, may be to let the Corinthians see, that, though he who had been sent to them was so young, yet he was one whom

St. Paul thought fit to treat as an equal. *Achaia* was the country in which Corinth stood.

Ver. 3. Blessed be God] St. Paul begins with justifying his former letter to them which had afflicted them, (see ch. vii. 7. 8.) by telling them that he thanks God for his deliverance out of his afflictions, because it enables him to comfort them, by the example both of his affliction and deliverance, acknowledging the obligation that he had to them and others, for their prayers, and for their thanks for his deliverance; which he presumes they could not but put up for him, since his conscience bears him witness (which was his comfort) that, in his behaviour to all men, and to them more especially, he had been direct and sincere, without any selfish or carnal interest; and that what he wrote to them had no other design than what lay open, and they read in his words,—and did also acknowledge, and he doubted not but they would always acknowledge, (part of them doing so already,) that he was their minister and apostle, in whom they rejoiced; as they would, he trusted, be his rejoicing in the day of the Lord, ver. 3—14. From what St. Paul says in this passage,—which, if read attentively, will appear to be written with great address,—it may be gathered, that the opposite faction endeavoured to evade the force of the former epistle, by suggesting, that whatever he might pretend, St. Paul was a cunning, artificial, self-interested man, and had some hidden design in it; which accusation appears in other parts also of this epistle. It is observable, that eleven of St. Paul's thirteen epistles begin with exclamations of joy, praise, and thanksgiving. As soon as he thought of a christian church planted in one place or another, there seems to have been a flow of most lively affection accompanying the idea, in which all sensibility of his or their temporal afflictions was swallowed up, and the fulness of his heart must vent itself in such cheerful, exalted, and devout language.

Ver. 4. Who comforteth us] It is certain that the mention of these experiences must have had a powerful tendency to conciliate the regard of the Corinthians to St. Paul; and such an introduction to his epistle as the whole of this before us, could not but incline them strongly in his favour. Some think that the last clause of this verse refers plainly to the comfort which the repentance of the incestuous person gave St. Paul, after the affliction that he had endured on his account. See ch. vii. 7. But it seems more natural to understand it of that general consolation arising from the pardon of sin and interest in God; that his afflictions should co-operate for his advantage; and that a crown of glory, heightened by these trials, would close the scene. He frequently insists on these topics in his epistles; and none surely can be more important and delightful.

Ver. 6. Which is effectual] or effected. Instead of salvation,

7 And our hope of you is steadfast, ¹ knowing that, as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant ^m of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, inasmuch that we despaired even of life:

9 But we had the * sentence of death in ourselves, that ⁿ we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:

10 ^o Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us:

11 ^p Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be

given by many on our behalf.

12 ^q For 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, and more abundantly to you-ward.

13 For we write none other things unto you than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end.

14 As also ye have acknowledged us in part, ^r that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are our's in the day of the Lord Jesus.

15 ^s And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second ^t benefit;

¹ Rom. 5. 3, 4. & 8. 17, 18. ² Thes. 2. 13. & 3. 7. ² Tim. 2. 12. Heb. 6. 9, 10. ^m Acts, 19. 23, &c. ¹ Cor. 4. 9—11. & 15. 32 & 16. 9. Ch. 4. 7—12. 16. & 11. 23—27. ² Tim. 3. 11. Acts, 14. 19. ⁿ Or answer. ⁿ Ch. 4. 7. Jer. 17. 5, 7. Rom. 4. 17—20. ^o Job. 5. 17—21. Pf. 34. 19, 20. If. 41. 10—16. & 46. 3, 4. ¹ Cor. 15. 31, 32. Ch. 11. 23. ¹ Sam. 17. 37. ² Tim. 4. 17. ^p Rom. 15. 30. Ch. 4. 15. Phil. 1. 19. Philem. 22. If. 45. 12. Jam. 5. 16. Phil. 4. 6. ¹ Pet. 5. 7. Acts, 12. 5. ^q Ver. 10. ² Kin. 20. 3. Act., 23. 1. & 24. 16. Gal. 6. 4. ² Tim. 1. 3. Heb. 13. 18. Pf. 32. 2. John 1. 47. ¹ Cor. 2. 4, 13. & 4. 4. & 9. 15. Ch. 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 7. 14. & 11. 6. ^r Ch. 5. 12. Phil. 2. 16. & 4. 1. ¹ Thes. 2. 19, 20. ^s ² Cor. 16. 5. & 4. 19. & 11. 34. Rom. 1. 11. & 15. 29. ^t Gr. grace.

tion, Mr. Locke reads *relief*; as it signifies here only (says he) deliverance from their present sorrow.

Ver. 8. *Our trouble—in Asia.*] Some have thought that this may refer to the persecution at Lystra, where St. Paul's danger had been extreme, and he had been recovered by miracle, Acts, xiv. 19, 20. But as that happened so long before the visit to Corinth, in which he planted the church there, Acts, xviii. 1. it seems more probable that he either refers to some opposition which he met with in his journey through Galatia and Phrygia, Acts, xviii. 23. of which no particular account has reached us, or, rather, to the tumult raised against him at Ephesus, by Demetrius, Acts, xix. 29, 30.

Ver. 11. *Ye also helping together by prayer.*] “I have this confidence in God's continual care; and it is the more cheerful, as I persuade myself you are and will be assisting us by your prayers, that so the favour obtained for us by the importunate prayers of many, may be acknowledged by the thanksgiving of many on our account;—as nothing can be more reasonable than that mercies obtained by prayer, should be owned in praise.”

Ver. 12. *In simplicity.*] *Plain-heartedness*; not only meaning well on the whole, but declining an over-artful way of prosecuting a good end. What is meant by *fleshly wisdom*, may be seen, ch. ii. 5. St. Paul's working with his own hands for his maintenance among the Corinthians, (Acts, xviii. 3. Cor. ix. 15.) which he did not every where, must be a convincing proof of what he observes in the last clause of this verse.

Ver. 13. *What ye read or acknowledge;*] *What ye know and acknowledge.* Doddridge. *Than what, when you read, you acknowledge.* Wale's Critic, notes. “I take the sense ‘to be,’ says Dr. Heylin, ‘that he meant not by his

“ letters to insinuate any thing more than was plainly expressed, and appeared at the first view of them agreeable to the declaration that he had made in the verse before.”

Ver. 14. *That we are your rejoicing,*] The Apostle here signifies that part of them who adhered to and owned him as their teacher; in which sense *rejoicing*, or *glorifying*, is much used in these epistles to the Corinthians, on occasion of the several partisans boasting, some that they were of Paul, and others that they were of Apollus, &c.

Ver. 15. *And in this confidence I was minded.*] Or, *I proposed*: So ver. 17. The next thing which St. Paul justifies, is his not coming to them. He had promised to call on the Corinthians in his way to Macedonia, but failed: this his opposers would have to proceed from levity in him, or a mind regulating itself wholly by carnal interest (ver. 17.). To which he answers, that God himself having confirmed him among them by the unction and earnest of his Spirit, in the ministry of the gospel of his Son,—whom St. Paul had preached to them steadily the same, without any the least variation, or unsaying of any thing that he had at any time delivered,—they could have no ground to suspect him to be an unstable, uncertain man, who could not be depended on in what he said to them, ver. 15—22. In the next place, with a very solemn asseveration, he professes that it was to spare them that he came not to them, ver. 23.—ch. ii. 3. He gives another reason, ver. 12, 13—why he went on to Macedonia, without coming to Corinth, as he had proposed; namely, the uncertainty he was in, by the not coming of Titus, concerning their disposition at Corinth. Having mentioned his journey to Macedonia, he takes notice of the success which God gave to him there and every where, declaring of what consequence his preaching was, both to the salvation and condemnation of those

16 And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judea.

17 When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay?

18 But ^a as God is true, our ^{*} word toward you was not yea and nay.

19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, *even* by me ² and Sylvanus and Timotheus, ³ was not yea

and nay, but in him was yea.

20 For ² all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us.

21 Now he ³ which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, *is* God;

22 ^b Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

23 Moreover, ^c I call God for a record upon my soul, ^d that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.

24 ^e Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

¹ 1 Cor. 4. 19. & 10. 33. & 11. 34. Ch. 10. 2. with Acts, 16. 6, 7. Gal. 2. 2. ^a Ver. 23. Rom. 1. 5. & 9. 1. Ch. 11. 31. Mat. 5. 37. Jan. 5. 12. ^b Or preaching. ^c Acts, 15. 40. & 16. 17. & 18. 5. ^d Exod. 3. 14. John, 8. 58. Heb. 11. 3. ^e John, 14. 6. & 1. 14, 17. Gal. 3. 17. Luke, 24. 27. 44. Heb. 9. 15—17. ^f 1 John, 2. 26, 27. Ch. 5. 5. ^g Rom. 8. 16. Ch. 5. 5. Eph. 1. 13, 14. & 4. 30. 2 Tim. 2. 19. Rev. 2. 17. ^h 1 Tim. 5. 21. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Rom. 1. 9. & 9. 1. Ch. 11. 31. Gal. 2. 20. ⁱ 1 Cor. 4. 21. Ch. 2. 3. & 12. 20. & 13. 2, 10. 1 Thes. 2. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 10. ^j Mat. 23. 8—10. 1 Cor. 3. 5. Ch. 4. 5. & 2. 2—3. 1 Pet. 5. 3. Rom. 11. 20. 1 Cor. 15. 1. 1 Pet. 5. 12.

who received or rejected it; professing again his sincerity and disinterestedness, not without a severe reflection on their false apostle, ver. 14—17.

By the word *χαρις*, in the verse before us, which our Bibles translate *benefit*, it is plain the Apostle means his being present among them a second time, without giving them any grief or displeasure. He had been with them before almost two years together, with satisfaction and kindness; he intended them another visit, but it was, he says, that *they might have the like gratification*; that is, the like satisfaction in his company a second time: which is to the same purport with what he says, ch. ii. 1.

Ver. 16. *And to pass by you into Macedonia.*] See 1 Cor. xvi. 5—8.

Ver. 17—20. *Yea, yea, and nay, nay?*] The sense of these verses is, “I did not change my design through levity, nor did I purpose first one thing and then the contrary, as selfish views might determine me, ver. 18. “As God is true, we have never prevaricated with you, ver. 19. For what I, Sylvanus, and Timothy have preached concerning Jesus Christ the Son of God, is not inconsistent, but invariably the same, ver. 20. For all the promises of God are ratified in and verified by him to the glory of God by our preaching.” And besides, in Christ there is such a real evidence of God’s conversing with men; and such wonders actually wrought, in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of his Son, (facts in themselves much more wonderful than any of the glorious consequences to follow,) as tend greatly to confirm our faith, and make it easier for us to believe such illustrious promises as those which are given us, the very greatness of which might otherwise have been an impediment to our faith, and have created a suspicion, not whether God would have performed what he had promised, but whether such promises were really given us: and we may add, that God could not have given such promises, except in and through Christ, unless he were unjust, which is impossible.

Vol. II.

Ver. 21. *Now he which stablisheth us*] *Who maketh us steady*; in opposition to the charge of inconstancy, which he complains of, ver. 17. The Greek of *anointed* is *χρῖστος*, that is, hath given us of the same Spirit which renders Jesus *the Christ*. See Heylin, and the next note.

Ver. 22. *Who hath also sealed us, &c.*] Who, answerable to various uses of a seal among men, has likewise printed his holy image upon us, and assured us of our interest in the Blood of the Covenant: and he has freely given us his Spirit, who dwells in our hearts, and sheds abroad his influences, and a sense of his love there, as a pledge and earnest of the eternal inheritance. See Eph. i. 13, 14. All these are arguments to satisfy the Corinthians, that St. Paul was not, nor could be, a man who minded not what he said, but as it served his turn. His reasoning, ver. 18—22., whereby he would convince the Corinthians that he was neither fickle nor unsteady, being a little difficult to be understood by reason of the brevity of his style, the following summary will set it in a clear light: “God hath set me apart to the ministry of the Gospel by an extraordinary call, has attested my mission by the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, has sealed me with the Holy Spirit of promise, has given me the earnest of eternal life in my heart by his Spirit, and has confirmed me among you in preaching the Gospel, which is all uniform and of a piece;—as I have preached it to you, without varying in the least; and there, to the glory of God, have shewn that all the promises concur, and are in Christ, and are certain to every faithful soul. Having therefore never faltered in any thing which I have said to you, and having all these attestations of being under the special direction and guidance of God himself, the great Fountain of truth, I cannot be suspected of dealing doubly with you in any thing relating to my ministry.”

Ver. 23, 24. *Moreover, I call God for a record*] Or, *to witness*. Nothing but the great importance of St. Paul’s vindicating his character to such a church, would have justified

CHAP. II.

Having showed the reason why he came not to them, he requireth them to forgive and to comfort that excommunicated person, even as himself also, upon his true repentance, had forgiven him: declaring withal why he departed from Treas to Macedonia, and the happy success which God gave to his preaching in all places.

[Anno Domini, 58.]

BUT I determined this with myself, ^a that I would not come again to you in heaviness.

2 For ^b if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?

3 And ^c I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is *the joy of you all*.

4 ^d For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye

^a Ch. 1. 23. & 7. 2. 20. & 13. 2, 10. 1 Cor. 4. 21. Gal. 5. 10.

^b 1 Cor. 4. 15. & 9. 1, 2. Ch. 3. 14. Phil. 3. 18. Lev. 19. 17. Prov. 27. 5. Pf. 143. 5.

^c 1 Cor. 5. Ch. 12. 21. & 1. 14. & 8. 22.

the solemnity of an oath of this kind. The meaning of these verses is as follows: "With respect to that change in my purpose of coming to you, which some would represent as an instance of a contrary conduct, I call God to witness, and declare to you, even as I have hope that he will have mercy on my soul, that it was not because I slighted my friends, or feared my enemies, but of real tenderness, and with a desire to spare you the uneasiness, which I thought I must in that case have been obliged to give you,—that I came not as yet to Corinth, ver. 24. Not that I pretend to have dominion over your faith; for it is by faith you stand; but I forbore to come, as one concerned to preserve and help forward your joy, which I am tender of; and therefore declined coming to you, whilst I thought you in an estate which would require a severity from me that would trouble you." It is plain that St. Paul's doctrine had been opposed by some of them at Corinth; (1 Cor. xv. 12.) his apostleship questioned; (1 Cor. ix. 1, 2.) he himself triumphed over, as if he durst not come; (1 Cor. iv. 18.) they saying that his letters were weighty and powerful, but his *bodily presence weak*, and his *speech contemptible*; 2 Cor. x. 10. This being the state in which his reputation was then at Corinth, and he having promised to come to them, 1 Cor. xvi. 5. he could not but think it necessary to excuse his failing them at that time, by reasons which should be both convincing and kind; such as are contained in the verses before us.

Inferences.—It is very observable, how often the great Apostle describes and addresses *Christians* under the appellation of *saints*. Let the venerable title be ever fixed and retained in our minds; that so we may continually remember the obligations that we are under to answer it, as we would avoid the guilt and infamy of lying to God and men, by falsely and hypocritically professing the best religion, very possibly to the worst, and undoubtedly to the vainest purposes: and that we may be excited to a sanctity becoming this title, let us often think of God, as the *Father of mercies*, and as the *God of all consolation*; and especially let us contemplate him, as assuming these titles under the character of the *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. So shall we find our hearts more powerfully engaged to love

and trust in him, and enter into a more intimate acquaintance and frequent converse with him.

From him may we seek *consolation in every distress*; considering the supports which we so experience, not as given for ourselves alone, but for others also; that we, on the like principles, may *console them*. *Ministers*, in particular, should regard them in this view, and rejoice in those tribulations which may render them more capable of *comforting such as are in trouble*, by those *consolations with which they themselves have been comforted by God*; that so the church may be edified, and God glorified in all, by the thanksgiving of many, for mercies obtained in answer to united prayers.

Let us particularly remember the support which St. Paul experienced, when he was *pressed above measure*, and as it seemed, quite *beyond his strength*, so as to *despair of life*,—and *received the sentence of death in himself*, as what was wisely appointed to teach him a firmer confidence in God, who raiseth the dead. Strong as his faith was, it admitted of farther degrees; and the improvement of it was a happy equivalent for all the extremities that he suffered. He therefore glories, as assured of being *rescued from future dangers*, ver. 10. Nor was his faith vain, though he afterwards fell by the hand of his enemies, and seemed as helpless a prey to their malice and rage, as any of the multitudes whose blood *Nero*, or the instruments of his cruelty, poured out like water. Death is itself the grand rescue of a good man, which bears him to a state of everlasting security; and in this sense, every believer may in some sort adopt the Apostle's words; and while he acknowledges past and present, may assuredly, in the confidence of faith, expect *future deliverances*.

Happy therefore shall we be, if by divine grace we be enabled at all times to maintain the temper and conduct of Christians; and can confidently rejoice in the *testimony of our consciences*, that our *conversation in the world is in simplicity and godly sincerity*; that our ends in religion are great and noble; that our conduct is simple and uniform; in a word, that we act as in the *sight of a heart-searching God*. Then may we look upon the applauses or the censures of men as comparatively a very light matter; and may rest assured, if, as with regard to the Apostle in the instance before us, we suffer a malignant breath for a while to obscure

might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.

5 ° But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not

° 1 Cor. 5. 5, 2. Gal. 4. 12.

scure the lustre of our *character*, but, notwithstanding, continue to cleave to Christ,—the day is near, which will reveal it in unclouded glory.

All the promises of God, are *yea and amen* in Christ. Let us depend upon it that they will be performed to all the faithful saints of God; and let us make it our great care, that we may be able to say we are interested through Christ in the blessings to which they relate. Let there be a proportionable steadiness and consistency in our obedience; nor let our engagements to God be *yea and nay*, since his are so faithful to his simple-hearted persevering saints.—Are we established in Christ? Are we sealed with the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts? Let us acknowledge, that it is God who hath imparted it to us; and let Christians of the greatest integrity and experience be proportionably humble, rather than by any means elated on account of their superiority to others.

We see the light in which ministers should always consider themselves, and in which they are to be considered by others;—Not as having dominion over the faith of their people, or a right to dictate, by their own authority, what they should believe, or, on the same principles, what they should do; but as helpers of their joy, in consequence of their being helpers of their piety and obedience. In this view, how amiable and engaging does the ministerial office appear! What a friendly aspect does it wear upon the happiness of mankind! and how little true benevolence do they manifest, who would expose it to ridicule and contempt!

May those who bear that office, be careful that they do not give it the most dangerous wound, and abet the evil works of those who despise and deride it; which yet they will most effectually do, if they once appear to form their purposes according to the flesh. Let them with a single eye direct all their administrations to the glory of God, and the edification of the church; that they may be able to appeal to their hearers, as those who must acknowledge, and bear their testimony to their uprightness. In that case, they may confidently look on them as those, in whom they hope to rejoice in the day of the Lord. And if, while they pursue these ends, they are censured as persons actuated by any mean and less worthy principle, let them not be much surprized or discouraged. They share in exercises, from which the blessed Apostle St. Paul was not exempted; as indeed there is no integrity or caution, which can guard any man from the effects of that malice against Christ and his Gospel, with which some hearts overflow, when they feel themselves condemned by it.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, The Apostle opens the Epistle,

1. With his usual address and salutation. Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God eminently called to this high office, and Timothy our brother, who joins me in heartiest affection towards you; unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia, who in profession and practice appear to be separated from

the world as the Lord's people—Grace be to you, and peace, with all their happy fruits, from God our Father, the Author of all our blessings, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the meritorious cause of them.

2. He blesseth God for the signal mercies that he had experienced. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in and through him, as the divine Mediator, is now become to us the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, multiplying his pardons, showering down his benefits, and giving us temporal and spiritual consolation through this Son of his love, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, by his word and Spirit bringing home the great and precious promises with power to our souls, and shedding abroad his love in our hearts; that, from experience of the riches of his goodness, we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, whether of soul or body, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God, tenderly sympathizing with them, and suggesting those encouraging words of scripture, which, in distress, we have found reviving to our own souls. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, to whom we are thus conformed, and who is still afflicted in all the afflictions of his members, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ, who fails not to minister supports and comforts proportionable to our sufferings. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, it is designed for your advantage; that by our examples of patience, fortitude, and perseverance, you may be encouraged to bear up under every trial, and boldly stand fast, till your salvation is completed; which is effectual by persevering in the exercises of faith and patience, in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted by divine supports under our afflictions, or by seasonable deliverances from them, it is also ordered for your consolation and salvation, as the means thereof; if you will but improve them. Note; (1.) All our mercies from God call for perpetual grateful acknowledgments. (2.) They who have been exercised with trials in their own souls and bodies, will be the most able comforters to others under the like troubles. We speak best, when we speak from experience. (3.) Though our afflictions may be at present grievous, the time will come, if we be faithful in the improvement of them, when we shall see peculiar reason to bless God for them, and know that they have been through grace especially conducive to our eternal salvation. (4.) All our comforts flow from God in Christ, as reconciled to us through the Blood of his Son.

2dly, St. Paul,

1. Expresses his confidence in them; and our hope of you is steadfast, that you will never be discouraged by any tribulations which you see us endure, or are called to bear yourselves; knowing that as ye are partakers of the sufferings with us, so shall ye be also of the consolation, rejoicing with us here in the experience of God's love, and, if faithful unto death, shortly to arrive where sorrow shall be for ever banished, and our joys will be perfected.

2. He informs them what a weight of afflictions he had under-

overcharge you all.

6 Sufficient to such a man is this 'punish-

ment, which was inflicted of many.

7^b So that contrariwise ye ought rather

Or. *conjure.* 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. Ch. 13. 10.

* Ch. 12, 13. Gal. 6. 1, 2. Eph. 4. 16, 32. Col. 2. 13. & 3. 13. 1 Thes. 5. 14. Heb. 12. 12, 13.

undergone. *For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, (see Acts, xiv. xvi. xix.) that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, loaded with burdens more than our natural strength could sustain; so that we despaired even of life, not knowing which way to escape, and our case to all appearance desperate. But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, and concluded that we must be destroyed; the Lord in his providence suffering us to be brought to these extremities, that we should not trust in ourselves, feeling by experience our own utter insufficiency to help ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead, whose wisdom, power, and grace alone could extricate us from our troubles, and save us from the jaws of death. Note; The Lord sometimes suffers his believing people to be reduced as it were to the last gasp in their trials, that he may convince them more deeply of their own helplessness, and magnify his grace and power more signally in their deliverance.*

3. He gratefully acknowledges the divine interposition: *who delivered us from so great a death, when to human view it appeared inevitable; and doth deliver, in jeopardy as we stand every hour: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us, content to cast our care upon him, in the fullest confidence of his protection and support: Ye also helping together by prayer for us, and joining in affectionate supplications on our behalf, that we may be still preserved in the midst of danger; that for the gift of so signal a deliverance as we have experienced, bestowed upon us by the means of many persons, in answer to the prayers of those faithful souls, who, ceaseless at a throne of grace, besought the Lord for us, thanks may be given by many on our behalf, and God glorified and praised for the mercy that he has extended towards us. Note; (1.) Past experience of God's interposition should engage us still to hope in his mercy. (2.) None ever trusted God and were confounded. (3.) We owe much to the prayers of those who interest themselves for us in their approaches to God. (4.) The blessings received in answer to prayer, call loud for a due return of praise.*

3dly, The Apostle,

1. Vindicates himself in general from the insinuations of his traducers. *For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, maintaining a single eye to God's glory; not with fleshly wisdom, purposing any mean ends or selfish designs of our own; but by the grace of God, having this for our governing principle, taught by his word, and guided by his Spirit, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you ward who cannot but be conscious how holily and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you; and if I have now disappointed you of my intended visit, it was no double-mindedness, but the providence of God, which prevented me. Note; A good conscience affords always matter of real joy.*

2. He appeals to themselves for the truth of what he said. *For we write none other things unto you than what you*

read or acknowledge, and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end; our future conversation will, we trust, be as exemplary as the past. As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus, when we hope to appear with you before him as the seals of our ministry, our joy and crown.

4thly, In answer to the insinuations of his enemies, who accused him of levity and inconstancy:

1. He avers the sincerity of his intentions at the time when he gave them his promise. *In the confidence of their affection and esteem he was fully purposed to visit them, in hopes of affording them further spiritual assistance; and not merely to call on them in his way to Macedonia, but to return thence, and make some considerable stay among them, and then to have been helped forward on his journey by them to Jerusalem. When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness, promising rashly, and altering my mind without sufficient reason? Or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh? Was I influenced by any secular views? Or did I want to flatter you, and tell you what I never intended to perform? That with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay, talking backwards and forwards to serve a turn? No; St. Paul; as every faithful man does, spoke the truth from his heart.*

2. He vindicates his doctrine, which the seducers wanted to represent as equally erroneous as his promise was deceitful; and this he does with a solemn appeal to God. *But, as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay, our doctrine was not various and changeable, but uniformly the same; for the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea; the same crucified Jesus was the subject of our ministry, and we taught with perfect harmony all the glorious truths of Gospel grace: for all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, to all his faithful saints; flowing from the favour and love of God, purchased by the obedience to death, and ratified by the blood-shedding of the Redeemer, unto the glory of God by us, who by our ministrations is thus exalted in the highest.*

3. He mentions some of the inestimable blessings which God in Christ Jesus had bestowed. (1.) *Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ is God, we are built up in him, and are united together to him as our living Head.* (2.) *He hath anointed us with the gifts and graces of his Spirit.* (3.) *He hath also sealed us, stamping his blessed image on our souls.* (4.) *He hath given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, shedding abroad his love, as a pledge of that eternal felicity which he will confer upon all his faithful saints.*

4. He gives a weighty reason for not coming at present to Corinth, and solemnly calls God to witness thereto, that it was out of mere tenderness towards them, to spare them, that he might not be obliged to inflict on the offenders condign punishment. *But, to prevent mistakes,*

he

to forgive *him*, and comfort *him*, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with over-

much sorrow.

8 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would

he adds, *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, we assume no tyrannical power, nor pretend to be Lords over your conscience; but are helpers of your joy, desiring to promote your spiritual and eternal consolation; for by faith ye stand—faith grounded not on fallible human testimony, but on the word of God.*

CHAP. II.

THE Apostle's apology for delaying his visit to the Corinthians, which was begun in the preceding chapter, is continued in this. Earnestly desirous of their repentance, he had delayed to come, having determined with himself not to come among them with sorrow, by punishing the guilty, if he could by any means avoid it, ver. 1, 2.—And therefore, instead of coming to punish them, he had written to them, that he might have joy from their repentance, ver. 3.—And, to meliorate the severity of his first letter, he told them that he wrote it in the deepest affliction; not to make them sorry, but to shew the greatness of his love to them, ver. 4.

On receiving the Apostle's former letter, the sincere part of the Corinthian church, which was much more numerous than the faction, immediately excommunicated the incestuous person, in the manner they had been directed. And he appears to have been so affected with his punishment, that in a little time he dismissed his father's wife, and became a sincere penitent. Of these things the Apostle had been informed by Titus, who, I suppose, was present at his excommunication. The Apostle, therefore, in this letter, told the Corinthians, that the punishment which they had inflicted on their faulty brother, having induced him, through grace, to repent of his crime, they were now to forgive him, by taking him again into the church; and even to confirm their love to him, by behaving towards him in a kind and friendly manner, lest Satan should drive him to despair, ver. 5—12. Farther, to make the Corinthians sensible how much he loved them, the Apostle described the distress he was in at Troas, when he did not find Titus there, from whom he expected an account of their affairs. For, although he had the prospect of much success at Troas, he was so concerned in his mind that he could not remain there, but went forward to Macedonia, in expectation of meeting Titus. In Macedonia his concern was somewhat alleviated, by the success with which his preaching was attended. For in Macedonia God caused him to ride in triumph with Christ, having enabled him to overcome all opposition, ver. 13, 14.—The idea of riding in triumph with Christ, naturally led the Apostle to describe the effects of his preaching, both upon believers and unbelievers, by images taken from the triumphal processions of the Greeks and Romans, ver. 15, 16.—This beautiful passage he concluded with a solemn affirmation that he did not, like some others, corrupt the word of God with foreign mixtures; but always preached it sincerely and disinterestedly, as in the sight of God, ver. 17.—By thus speaking he plainly insinuated, first, that the false teacher, on whom too many of the Corinthians doated,

had corrupted the word of God from worldly motives: and, secondly, that God, in his infinite mercy, had owned and blessed the fidelity with which he preached the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, however contrary they might be to the prejudices and passions of mankind: besides, the disinterestedness of his conduct, which was evident to all with whom he conversed, manifested, to every ingenuous mind, that, in preaching the gospel, he did not propose to acquire either riches, or fame, or worldly power among his disciples.

Ver. 1. For—I would not come again, &c.] “I proposed in myself, it is true, to come to you again; but I resolved too that it should be without bringing sorrow with me.” That this is the meaning of this verse, and not that he would not come to them in sorrow a second time, is past doubt, since he had never been with them in sorrow a first time. See ch. i. 15.

Ver. 2. For if I make you sorry, &c.] “For if I were to do any thing that would be a trouble to you, whom I so dearly love, nothing but a sense of duty, and hope of rectifying what was amiss among you, could ever reconcile me to it, much less give me any satisfaction in it: and which of you, in that case, could exhilarate my spirits, and make me rejoice again; unless it were the very person, or persons, whom I should have made uneasy by sharp rebukes, both of the principal offenders, and of others among you that were puffed up, and countenanced them, instead of mourning over them, and taking care to purge the church of them? See 1 Cor. v. 2, 7. It is only the repentance of such, and their recovery from the guilt which they respectively had contracted, that could turn my own sorrow into joy.”

Ver. 3. I wrote this same unto you,] That I wrote relates to the first epistle to the Corinthians is evident, because it is so used in the next and the ninth verse; and what he wrote in that epistle, which he calls *αυτο τριστο*, *this very thing*, was, most probably, concerning the punishment of the fornicator; as appears by what follows to ver. 11. especially if it be compared with 1 Cor. iv. and v. 8. For there he writes to them to punish that person; and if St. Paul had come himself before it was done, he must have come *with a rod*, as he calls it, and have himself chastised them: but now, knowing that the Corinthians had punished him, in compliance with his letter, and having had this trial of their obedience, and the offender being become a genuine penitent, he is so far from continuing the severity, that he writes to them to forgive him, and to take him again into their affection.

Ver. 4. And anguish of heart] Over-bearing anguish seems the import of the word *συνωχῆ*, which nearly resembles the verb *συνίχαι*, ch. v. 14. See the place.

Ver. 5. But if any have caused grief, &c.] St. Paul being satisfied with the Corinthians for their ready compliance with his orders in his former letter to punish the fornicator, intercedes to have him restored; and to that end speaks of him as a penitent in milder terms. St. Chrysostom, the Syriac, and Arabic, render this verse thus: *He has not grieved*

confirm *your* love toward him.

9 For to this end also did I write, ^b that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.

10 ⁱ To whom ye forgive any thing, I *for-*
give also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave *it*, for your sakes *forgave I it* * in the person of Christ;

11 ^k Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

12 Furthermore, when I came to ^l Troas to ^m preach Christ's gospel, and ⁿ a door was opened unto me of the Lord,

13 ^o I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Mace-

donia.

14 ^p Now thanks *be* unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and ^q maketh manifest the favour of his knowledge by us in every place.

15 For we are unto God ^r a sweet favour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

16 ^s To the one *we are* the favour of death unto death; and to the other the favour of life unto life. And ^t who *is* sufficient for these things?

17 For we are not as many, which [†] ^u corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

^b Ch. 7. 12, 15. & 8. 24. & 10. 6. Phil. 2. 22. 2 Tim. 4. 5. ⁱ Mat. 18. 18. John, 20. 23. 1 Cor. 5. 4. Ch. 5. 20. ^k Or in the sight.
^k Luke, 22. 31. 1 Cor. 7. 5. Ch. 11. 3. Eph. 6. 11, 12. 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26. 1 Pet. 5. 8. ^l Acts, 16. 8. & 20. 6. ^m Mark, 16. 15. Luke,
2. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 1. 23. & 2. 2. & 15. 3, 4. ⁿ Acts, 14. 27. 1 Cor. 16. 9. Col. 4. 3. Rev. 3. 7, 8. ^o Ch. 7. 5. 6. ^p Rom. 8. 37. Ch. 4.
7—12. Phil. 4. 4. & 3. 3. Pf. 149. 2. 1 Thes. 5. 16. 1f. 61. 10. ^q Rom. 10. 17, 18. & 15. 19. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Song, 1. 3. Col. 1. 6, 21.
^r 1 Cor. 1. 18. Ch. 4. 3. ^s Luke, 2. 34. Acts, 13. 46. Mat. 13. 14. & 11. 20—24. John, 3. 19, 36. & 9. 39. 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8. Rom. 1. 16.
1f. 49. 5, 6. ^t Ch. 3. 5, 6. 1 Cor. 15. 9. Ch. 12. 11. [†] Or deal deceitfully with. ^u 1f. 1. 27. Ch. 1. 12. & 4. 2. & 11. 13. 2 Pet. 2. 3.
^v 1 Tim. 6. 5. Tit. 1. 11.

grieved me, but (not to aggravate too much) in some sort all of you. Pere Simon has it, *He has not only grieved me, but some of you.* The following version of Dr. Heylin is paraphractical, though expressive of the sense: "Whatever affliction I have had, I am not the only person concerned; so that I must not charge you all with what comes but from a part of you."

Ver. 6. *Sufficient to such a man, &c.*] "Sufficient to such a one, who has here been the aggressor, but is now a penitent, is this rebuke and censure, which he has already suffered by many, and, indeed, by the whole body of your society, which has shewn so wise and pious a readiness to pursue the directions that I gave for animadverting upon him; and bringing him, through grace, to repentance." It is observable, how tenderly St. Paul deals with the Corinthians in this epistle; for though he treats of the fornicator from the 5th to the 10th verse, inclusively, yet he never mentions him under that, or any other painful title, but in the soft terms of *any one*, or *such a one*. Instead of *this punishment*, &c. some read, *this rebuke from the majority*.

Ver. 12, 13. *When I come to Troas*] *When I came to Troas, and a door to the gospel of Christ was opened.* Knatchbull. How uneasy St. Paul was, and upon what account, see ch. vii. 5—16. It was not barely for the absence of Titus, but for want of the news he was to bring with him, ch. vii. 7. Instead of, *I went thence into Macedonia*, some read, *I came from thence*, &c.

Ver. 14. *Which causeth us to triumph in Christ,*] That is, "In the success of my preaching in my journey to Macedonia, and also in my victory at the same time at Corinth, over the false Apostles, my opposers, who had raised a faction against me among you." Thus St. Paul

represents himself as triumphing through the divine power; and, as, in triumphal processions, especially in the east, fragrant odours and incense were burnt near the conquerors, he seems beautifully to allude to this circumstance in what he says of the *odour*, *the odour of the gospel*, in the following verses: and he seems further to allude to the different effects of strong perfumes, to cheer some, and to throw others into violent disorders, according to the different dispositions they are in to receive them. *Ælian* observes, that some kinds of animals are killed by them. *Hist. Animal.* l. iii. c. 7. Dr. Heylin observes, that the *knowledge of God*, or knowledge that there is a God, may be a mere speculation; not so the *favour*, *relish*, or mental sensation of God, called here the *favour of his knowledge*. Now an apostle speaking by the spirit of God, really excites this favour or sensation in the minds of his believing hearers: being himself actuated by God, he gives, through grace, some real perception of him.—Those who piously cultivate this, improve accordingly; those who understand it, and will not be wrought upon by it, grow more indisposed and hardened: as is shewn in the following verses.

Ver. 15, 16. *For we are unto God, &c.*] *For, upon God's account, [or, in order that God may be known] we communicate a savoury odour of Christ, to them who are saved, and to them who are not,* ver. 16. *To the one we are the favour of death, so as to prove mortal to them; and to the others the favour of life, so as to revive them.* The phrase, *For upon God's account*, is, literally, *For God*. That God cannot be effectually known, but through Christ, is the constant doctrine of scripture. See Heylin, Mill, and Wall.

Ver. 17. *Which corrupt the word of God:*] *Καπηλιωνες, adulterating*, is an expressive phrase, alluding to the practice of those who deal in liquors, which they debase for their

CHAP. III.

[Anno Domini 58.]

Let their false teachers should charge him with vain glory, he sheweth the faith and graces of the Corinthians to be a sufficient commendation of his ministry. Whereupon, entering on a comparison between the ministers of the law and of the gospel, he proveth that his ministry is so far the more excellent, as the gospel of life and liberty is more glorious than the law of condemnation.

DO we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others,

epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?

² Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men.

³ Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

⁴ And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

^a Ch. 1. 12. & 5. 12. & 10. 8, 12. & 2. 14, 17. & 4. 2. & 11. 5, 13. & 12. 11. with 1 Cor. 2. 6, 12. & 3. 10. & 4. 15. & 9. 1, 12, 19. & 10. 37. ^b 1 Cor. 4. 15. & 9. 1, 2. & 3. 10. Ch. 7. 3. & 11. 11. & 12. 15. Phil. 1. 7. Rom. 1. 8. ^c Exod. 24. 12. & 34. 1. & 31. 18. & 32. 16. Pf. 40. 3. Jer. 31. 31. Heb. 8. 10. Ezek. 11. 19. & 36. 25, 27. ^d Ch. 2. 14. Phil. 1. 7. Heb. 3. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 2.

own greater gain; and it insinuates, in strong terms, the mean temper and conduct of their false teachers.

Inferences.—What a tender love and concern have faithful pastors for their flocks! They are exceeding solicitous about their affairs: they make their sorrows and joys their own, and are willing to keep up as good an opinion of them as possible: they are grieved at heart when any of them fall into sin, and persist with such obstinacy in it, as to oblige the church to cast them out of its communion: they are earnestly desirous that such offenders may be brought to repentance, and, upon good evidence that they are so, would have them restored to the fellowship and affection of the whole community, lest they should be swallowed up with over-much sorrow. And why should not churches take off their censures, when the proper ends for which they were inflicted are answered? To be unfor- giving to those whom we have ground to hope God has pardoned, is a disobedience to Christ's authority, and gives Satan an advantage against the humble penitent, to drive him to despair; and against the church, to bring an odium upon it, as though it were uncharitably severe. And, alas! how many are the wiles of the devil for sup- planting the cause of Christ, which it is our wisdom and duty to observe, and guard against! But blessed be God, who will make his precious gospel triumphant, to the joy of his servants, whose consciences bear witness to their in- tegrity, in defiance of all opposition; and will take pleasure in its ministrations, whether they issue in the righteous destruction of those whose carnal hearts are averse to it, or in the spiritual life and eternal salvation of those that be- lieve through grace. O how awful on the one hand; how delightful on the other; and how difficult and important, on the whole, is the work of the ministry! We may well cry out, Who is sufficient for these things? And if any are wise and faithful stewards in dispensing them, and that with good effect, all the glory belongs to God. Woe be to those, the number of whom is too great, that corrupt the simplicity of the gospel: but they who, through divine light and influence, preach and maintain the purity of its doctrines, according to the word of God, as in the in- tegrity of their hearts, with disinterested views, and as un- der his all-seeing eye, may be humbly confident, for their encouragement, that whether their success be more or less,

they and their labour shall be graciously accepted of him in the Beloved.

REFLECTIONS.—1st. The Apostle suggests another rea- son why he would not come now to Corinth, (which, in- deed, he had intimated in the former chapter,) lest he should be compelled to exercise such severity on offenders as would be bitter to them, and painful to himself; and in such circumstances it must be a melancholy meeting, when he must make those sorrowful who should have made him glad; and, while this was the case, his tender sympathy with them must occasion heaviness to his own spirit. He wished, therefore, rather that all offences might be first re- moved, for which end he had written the former letter, and that he might not be obliged to sorrow over those as impenitent, in whom he hoped to rejoice as faithful or penitent; and he would fain hope, from his confidence in their affection and regard, that his joy was theirs, and that they would be ready to remove every cause of unca- siness, and delight to make him happy. With much an- guish of heart, and many tears, he had dictated this epistle, not to grieve them, but to profit them, and that his own love towards them, and jealousy over them, might be more abundantly manifested. *Note* (1.) Faithful rebuke is the surest mark of love. (2.) Correction is an unplea- sing though necessary task. (3.) The design of every re- proof should not be to grieve, but to recover.

2dly, The Apostle directs them how to behave towards the incestuous person, who had been, according to his or- ders, excommunicated.

1. He had been grieved, *in part*, that he was com- pelled to punish; but, since this man had testified his re- pentance, the cause of his sorrow was removed: and though he had found fault with many who were puffed up, and had not mourned on this occasion, he would not overcharge them with farther reproof, since they had, as a body, cleared themselves by their obedience to his letter.

2. The punishment which had been inflicted on the of- fender was sufficient, seeing that he was penitent; and, since he was humbled and restored, the sentence of ex- communication should be removed. He exhorts them therefore, (1.) to forgive him; (2.) to comfort him under the deep wounds of shame and remorse, which he must have felt, lest Satan should take advantage of his distress-

5 ° Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves ; but our sufficiency is of God ;
6 Who also hath made us able ministers

* John, 15. 5. 1 Cor. 3. 5—7. & 15. 10. Ch. 2. 16. & 4. 7. Phil. 2. 13. & 4. 13. † 1 Cor. 12. 28. Eph. 4. 11. Ch. 5. 18—20. Rom. 1. 5.

to overwhelm him with despair ; (3.) to confirm their love towards him, and receive him into their church with all the cordiality of warm affection. *Note*, We ought to be peculiarly tender of broken spirits, not aggravating their offences, but sympathizing with their anguish.

3. This was the end which the Apostle proposed in respect to the present subject, both in his former and present epistle, that he might have a proof of their obedience. And, to engage them to a ready compliance with his present exhortation, he mentions his own willingness to concur with them in forgiving this penitent ; and this he did also thus publicly for their sakes, as a fresh mark of his love to them, and to promote their welfare, lest Satan should take advantage, from any severity shewn to this offender, to discourage the hearts of backsliders from returning, through despair of pardon, or raise prejudices against the members of the church as of an unforgiving and inexorable spirit. *For we are not*, says he, *ignorant of his devices*, how by every method he strives to obstruct the success of the gospel, and disturb the peace of the church.

3dly, The Apostle,

1. Acquaints them with another thing which retarded his journey to Corinth. *Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel*, that constant delightful theme on which I dwell, *and a door was opened unto me of the Lord*, he, who hath the hearts of all men in his hand, having given me a pleasing prospect of success, so anxious was I to hear of you, that *I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother*, whom I expected to arrive there from you : *but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia*, where I met him, and heard with delight the account which he brought from you.

2. Having hinted his successful labours at Troas, he breaks forth into thanksgiving to God. *Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph*, in the midst of all our tribulations, raising us superior to our foes, and filling us with exultation and joy in Christ, the rock of our confidence ; *and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place*, diffusing his gospel as fragrance, and causing our labours to be acceptable to himself, and profitable to those among whom he sends us to minister. *For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ* ; his precious name in our lips, and his grace in our hearts, render us pleasing to God, *in them that are saved*, who yield to be saved by grace, and in whom God's rich mercy is magnified, being called by him to the faith and privileges of the gospel, and accepting that call to the glory of God ; *and also in them that perish*, in whom his justice is displayed in punishing their obstinate infidelity ; and, though they are not gathered, yet are we alike glorious in the eyes of the Lord, who regards not our success so much as our fidelity. *To the one we are the savour of death unto death*, a despised and abused gospel aggravating their guilt, and increasing their condemnation ; *and to the other the savour of life unto*

life : like a sweet perfume that recovers the fainting spirit, so does the gospel, through the power of the Holy Ghost, quicken the souls of believers from the death of sin unto a life of righteousness, and continues to refresh and revive them amidst all their trials and sufferings. *And*, in the view of these eternally important truths, and the awful and difficult charge lying upon us, who needs not to tremble for himself, and to cry out, *Who is sufficient for these things ?* The greatest, the best of men, will be most conscious of their own weakness, and be looking up for more than human power to enable them for the discharge of this arduous employment. *Note*, (1.) The gospel word never returns void. Where it is not a favour of life, it will be a favour of death. (2.) The more we are sensible of our own insufficiency, the more shall we look up to him who giveth strength to the weak.

3. He vindicates himself, and glances at their false teachers. *For we are not as many, which corrupt and adulterate the word of God*, to make advantage thereby ; *but as of sincerity*, without guile or deceit ; *but as of God*, speaking under his influence, guidance, and authority, *in the sight of God speak we in Christ*, approving ourselves to the great Searcher of hearts, with a single eye to the Redeemer's glory, and making him the grand subject of all our ministrations.

CHAP. III.

THE things mentioned in the beginning of this chapter shew, that the false teacher had established himself at Corinth, neither by working miracles, nor by communicating to the Corinthians spiritual gifts ; but by producing letters of recommendation from some brethren in Judea, and by talking in a vaunting manner of his own talents. For, in allusion to these things, the Apostle asked the Corinthians ironically, whether, in order to obtain credit with them as an apostle, it was necessary that he should, a second time, prove his apostleship ? or, if he needed, as some, (the false teacher) letters of recommendation, either to them or from them ? ver. 1.—And, to heighten the irony, he told them, that they themselves were a copy of the letter of recommendation which he carried about with him, not from the brethren of any church, but from Christ himself : which original letter was written on his own heart, and was known and read of all his converts, ver. 2.—A copy of this letter the Apostle told the Corinthians he had ministered or furnished to them, written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God ; not on tables of stone but on the fleshy tables of their own heart, ver. 3.—A recommendation of this sort, he told them, was a just matter of boasting, and was afforded to him by Christ in the presence of God, ver. 4.—Consequently, it was afforded to him by God's authority.

It seems the false teacher extolled the law of Moses above the gospel of Christ, and assumed to himself great authority

of the new testament; ^a not of the letter, but spirit * giveth life.
of the spirit: for ⁱ the letter killeth, but ^k the ⁷ But, if ^l the ministrations of death, written

^a Jer. 31. 32. Heb. 8. 6—13. & 9. 15—17. & 10. 16. Mat. 26. 28. ^b Rom. 2. 27—29. & 7. 6. Heb. 9. 10. Eph. 2. 15. ^c Deut. 27. 26.
Gal. 3. 10, 21. Rom. 3. 20. & 4. 15. & 7. 6, 9—13. Ch. 2. 16. ^d John, 6. 63. Rom. 1. 16, 17. 1 Cor. 1. 24. Ch. 2. 15. & 5. 18. 2 Tim. 1.
10. Heb. 8. 6, 8. Act. 16. 14. & 26. 17, 18. 1 John, 1. 1. ^e Or quickeneth. ^f Rom. 7. 10. Deut. 10. 1. Exod. 24. 12. & 31. 18. & 32.
16. & 34. 1, 29, 30.

authority on account of his knowledge of that law. Wherefore, in the remaining part of this chapter, the Apostle, by the strongest arguments, demonstrated to the Corinthians that the law of Moses was much inferior to the gospel of Christ. The law was a dispensation of *the letter*: but the gospel was a dispensation of *the spirit*: the law killed every sinner, whether he was penitent or not, by its dreadful curse; but the gospel gives life to all penitent believers, without exception, by its gracious promises, ver. 5. 6. The gospel therefore is a *covenant of life*, but the law a *covenant of death*.—Farther, he observed, that if the ministrations of the covenant of death, engraven on stones, covered the face of Moses, its minister, with such an outward glory that the children of Israel could not look steadfastly on him, after he came down from the mount—the ministrations of the covenant of the Spirit which giveth life must occasion a much greater glory to them who were employed in ministering it. For the gifts of the Spirit, wherewith the Apostles, the ministers of the covenant of the Spirit, were honoured, were a much greater glory than the external splendour which covered Moses's face, when he appeared with the tables of the law in his hand, ver. 7—11.—The reason is, the ministers of the Spirit had the glory of inspiration abiding with them always, so that they could use much greater clearness of speech in explaining the covenant of the gospel than Moses was able to do in explaining the covenant of the law; as was emblematically represented by Moses putting a veil upon his face while he spake to the Israelites. For he delivered to them the obscure figurative institutions of the law, together with such words as God had spoken to him; but added nothing, from himself, for explaining the meaning of these institutions. Hence, the generality of the Israelites have remained ignorant of the true nature and end of the law till this day, but partly through the wilful blindness of their own hearts, ver. 12—15.—But when the whole nation shall turn to the Lord, the darkness of the law shall be done away, ver. 16.

The expressions in this part of the chapter being obscure, the Apostle told the Corinthians that *the Lord*, by which he meant *the gospel*, of which the Lord Christ is the author, is the dispensation of *the Spirit*, of which he spake; and that, in delivering the gospel, there was great liberty of speech granted to its ministers, especially to the Apostles, who, by beholding the glory of the Lord Jesus while he abode on earth, and by the repeated revelations which they received from him since his ascension, were changed into the very same image, by successions of *glory*, that is, of *illumination*, coming from the Spirit of the Lord. So that in respect of the light of the gospel which they diffused through the world, they were become the images of Christ, ver. 17, 18.

Ver. 1. *Do we begin again to commend ourselves?* This is a plain indication that St. Paul had been blamed among them for commending himself; as the next clause seems to

intimate that their false apostle had got himself recommended to them by letters, and so had introduced himself into that church.

Ver. 2. *Ye are our epistle, &c.*] “I may well say, that you are yourselves our epistle, the best recommendation from God himself; his testimonial, as it were, written upon your hearts, in the glorious change by our means produced there: and the effects of it are so apparent in your lives, that I may say ye are known and read by all men, who know what you once were, and now are.” Many copies, however, read, *our hearts*; but the Apostle seems to mean, that the change produced, not only in their external conduct, but in their inward temper, was so great, that all who could judge of it by intimate knowledge (and it is certain that some judgment may be formed,) must own it a great attestation to his ministry;—and in this view we may read *your hearts*. The enormities into which they were once plunged, (see 1 Cor. vi. 11, &c.) would much illustrate this argument. See the next verse: and see the introduction, or preface, to this chapter, for another view of the subject.

Ver. 3. *Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared*] The sense of St. Paul here is plainly this: that he needed no letters of commendation to them; but that their conversion, and the gospel written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of God in the tables of their hearts, by his ministry, and not in tables of stone; was as clear an evidence and testimony to them of his mission from Christ, as the law written in tables of stone was an evidence of Moses's mission: so that he [St. Paul] needed no other commendation. This is what we are to understand by the verse; unless we will make the *tables of stone* to have no signification here. But to say, as he does, that the Corinthians, being written upon in their hearts, not with ink, but with the Spirit of God, by his instrumentality, was *Christ's commendatory letter of him*.—This being a pretty bold expression, liable to the exception of the captious part of the Corinthians, to obviate all imputation of vanity or vain-glory herein, he immediately subjoins what follows in the next verse.

Ver. 4, 5. *And such trust have we, &c.*] As if he had said, “But mistake me not, as if I boasted of myself. This so great boasting which I use is only my confidence in God, through Christ; for it was God who made me a minister of the gospel, who bestowed on me the ability for it; and whatever I perform in it is wholly from him.” Πισθία, *trust*, is a milder term for *boasting*. So St. Paul uses it, ch. x. 7. compared with v. 8. See also Rom. ii. 19. The word λογίζεσθαι, ch. x. 7. is used as here, [ver. 5.] for *counting upon one-self*. The clause should be rendered *to reckon upon any thing as of ourselves*: or, if the word λογισσάμενοι should rather be thought to signify here *to discover by reasoning*, then the Apostle's sense will run thus: “Not as if I was sufficient of myself,—by the strength of
R r “my

and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:

8 How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?

9 For if ^m the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

10 For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

11 For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.

12 Seeing then that we have such hope, ⁿ we use great ^{*} plainness of speech:

13 And not as Moses, ^o which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not

^m Gal. 3. 5. Rom. 1. 16, 17. & 3. 21. 1f. 46, 12, 13. & 49. 3. Luke, 2. 14, Eph. 3. 10, 21. Pl. 21. 5. & 72. 17—19. Heb. 8. 6—13. & 10. 16—22. Ch. 5. 18—21. Rom. 5. 15—21. ⁿ Ch. 4. 2, 13. & 7. 4. Eph. 6. 19. ^{*} Or boldness. ^o Exod. 34. 33, 35.

“my own natural parts, to attain the knowledge of thee “gospel truths which I preach; but my ability herein is “all from God.” But, in whatever sense the word λογισμοί is here taken, it is certain that τὸ, which is translated *any thing*, must be limited to the subject in hand; namely, the gospel which he had preached to them. Dr. Heylin renders these verses, *And we are assured of this, through Christ, before God, ver. 5. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to effect any thing by the strength of our own reason; but our sufficiency is from God, ver. 6. who hath enabled us to be ministers, &c.* See ch. i. 6.

Ver. 6. *Not of the letter, &c.*] By expressing himself as he does here, St. Paul may be understood to intimate, that the *New Testament*, or *Covenant*, was also, though obscurely, held forth in the law; for he says he was constituted a *minister of the Spirit*, or spiritual meaning of the law, which was Christ, (as he tells us himself, ver. 17.) and *giveth life*, while the letter killeth. But both letter and Spirit must be understood of the same thing,—viz. the *letter of the law*, and the *spirit of the law*: and, in fact, we find St. Paul truly a minister of the spirit of the law, especially in his epistle to the *Hebrews*, where he shews what a spiritual sense ran through the Mosaical institution and writings. The *letter killeth* by pronouncing death, without any way of remission, on all transgressors; it leaves them under an irrevocable sentence of death: but the *Spirit*, that is *Christ*, (ver. 17.) who is a *quickening Spirit*, (1 Cor. xv. 45.) *giveth life*.

Ver. 7. *Which glory was to be done away:*] Καταργουμένη, *done away*, is applied here to the shining of Moses's face, and to the law, ver. 11. and 13. In all which places it is used in the present tense, and has the signification of an adjective, standing for *temporary*,—or of a duration whose end was determined; and is opposed to τὸ μένοντι, *that which remaineth*; that is to say, that which is lasting, and has no pre-determined end set to it; as ver. 11. where the gospel dispensation is called τὸ μένον, *that which remaineth*. This may help us to understand *from glory to glory*, ver. 18. which is manifestly opposed to the *glory done away* in this verse, and so plainly signifies a continued lasting glory of the ministry of the gospel; which, as he tells us there, consisted in their being changed into the image and clear representation of the Lord himself; as the glory of Moses consisted in the transitory brightness of his face, which was a faint reflection of the glory of God appearing to him in the mount.

Ver. 9. *Ministration of righteousness*] Or, of *justification*. So the ministry of the gospel is called, because by the gospel a way is provided for the justification of those who have transgressed. But the law has nothing but rigid *condemnation* for all transgressors, and therefore is called here the *ministration of condemnation*.

Ver. 10. *For even that which was made glorious*] Though the shewing that the ministration of the gospel is more glorious than that of the law, be what St. Paul is treating of here, thereby to justify himself, if he has assumed some authority and commendation to himself in his ministry and apostleship; yet, in his thus industriously placing the ministry of the gospel in honour above that of Moses, may he not possibly have an eye to the *judaising* false apostle of the Corinthians, to let them see what little regard was to be had to that ministration, in comparison of the ministry of the gospel?

Ver. 11. *If that which is done away*] St. Paul here mentions another pre-eminence and superiority of glory in the gospel over the law; namely, that the law was to cease and be abolished, but the gospel to remain, and never to be abolished.

Ver. 12. *That we have such hope,*] That St. Paul, by these words, means the honourable employment of an apostle and minister of the gospel, or the *glory* belonging to his ministry in the gospel, is evident from the whole foregoing comparison which he has made between the *ministry* of the law and of the gospel, and not between the *law* and the *gospel* themselves. The calling of it *hope* instead of *glory* here, where he speaks of his having it, is the language of modesty, which more particularly suited his present purpose; for the conclusion which in this verse he draws from what went before, plainly shews his design in this discourse to be, the justifying his speaking freely of himself and others. His argument is to this effect: “Having therefore so honourable an employment, as is the ministry of the gospel, which far exceeds the ministry of the law in glory;—though even that gave so great a lustre to Moses's face, that the children of Israel could not, with fixed eyes, look upon him;—I, as becomes one of such hopes, in such a post as sets me above all mean considerations and compliances, use great freedom and plainness of speech in all things which concern my ministry.”

Ver. 13. *Could not steadfastly look, &c.*] St. Paul is here justifying in himself, and to other ministers of the gospel,

steadfastly look ⁹ to the end of that which is abolished:

14 But ⁹ their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ.

15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.

16 Nevertheless when ¹ it shall turn to the

Lord, the veil shall be taken away.

17 Now ¹ the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty.

18 But ¹ we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, ² are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as ^{*} by the Spirit of the Lord.

⁹ Rom. 10. 4. Gal. 3. 23, 24. Col. 2. 17. Heb. 10. 1. ^{*} Ch. 4. 3, 4. If. 6. 0, 10. Ezek. 17. 2. Mat. 13. 11—15. John, 9. 39. & 12. 40. Acts, 28. 26. Rom. 11. 8, 25. Pl. 69, 23. ¹ Rom. 11. 23, 26. Mat. 13. 11. 1 Cor. 2. 10. Hof. 3. 5. & 6. 3. If. 11. 9. & 48. 17. & 54. 13. Jer. 31. 34. If. 25. 7. & 29. 18. ² John, 4. 24. & 6. 63. 1 Cor. 2. 10. Ch. 4. 13. Rom. 8. 15. Gal. 4. 6. ¹ 1 Cor. 13. 12. Ch. 1. 4, 6. & 5. 7. Col. 1. 27. 2 Tim. 1. 10, 11. 1 Tim. 1. 11. 15. ² Rom. 8. 29. 1 Cor. 15. 49. Col. 3. 10. Eph. 1. 4, 5. & 2. 10. & 4. 24. Ch. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. & 5, 6, 22, 23. 2 Pet. 1. 5—9. John, 17. 17. ^{*} Or of the Lord the Spirit.

the plainness and openness of their preaching, which he had asserted in the preceding verse. These words therefore here must, of necessity, be understood, not of Moses, but of the ministers of the gospel; namely, that it was not the obscurity of their preaching, not any thing veiled in their way of proposing the Gospel, which was the cause why the children of Israel did not understand the law perfectly, and see Christ the end of it in the writings of Moses. What is said in the next verse plainly determines the words to this sense: "We the ministers of the Gospel speak plainly and openly, and put no veil upon ourselves, (as Moses did,) whereby to hinder the Jews from seeing Christ in the law; but that which now hinders them is a wilful blindness of their minds." This seems to be obviating an objection, which some of the Corinthians might make to the Apostle's boasting of so much plainness and clearness in his preaching; as much as to say, "If you preach the Gospel, and Christ contained in the law, with such a shining clearness and evidence, how comes it that the Jews are not converted to it?"—His reply is, "Their unbelief comes not from any obscurity in our preaching, but from a wilful blindness." See Rom. x. 2—4. Some, instead of, *that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look, &c.* read, *denoting, that the children of Israel did not look, &c.*

Ver. 14. *Untaken away* — which veil is done away in Christ.] Not discovered that in Christ it is done away. Castalio. Not uncovered, because in Christ [only] it is done away. Piscator, Bengelius, and Heylin.

Ver. 15. *When Moses is read,*] St. Paul possibly alludes here to the custom of the Jews, which continues still in the synagogue, that, when the law is read, they put a veil over their faces.

Ver. 17. *Now the Lord is that Spirit:*] Now where the Lord is, the Spirit is. Le Clerc. Now the Spirit is the Lord; and where that Spirit is, there is the liberty of the Lord. Wells. These words, according to Mr. Locke, relate to ver. 6. where St. Paul says, he is a minister, not of the law, nor of the outside and literal sense, but of the mystical and spiritual meaning of it; which here he tells us is Christ. And he adds, *there is liberty*, because the Spirit is given only to sons, or those that are free. See Rom. viii. 15. This verse may be paraphrased, "Now

" the Lord Jesus Christ is that Spirit of the law of which
" I spoke before, to whom the letter of it was intended
" to lead the Jews; and it is the office of the Spirit of
" God, as the great agent in his kingdom, to direct the
" minds of men to it: and let him be universally sought
" in this view; for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there
" is liberty; a moral, liberal, and filial disposition, to
" which, under the influence and operation of the Spirit,
" the Gospel brings those who are subject to bondage un-
" der the imperfect dispensation of Moses."

Ver. 18. *But we all, with open face*] St. Paul justifies his freedom and plainness of speech, by his being made by God himself a minister of the Gospel, which is a more glorious ministry than that of Moses in promulgating the law. This he does from ver. 6. to ver. 12. inclusively: thence to the end of the chapter, he justifies his liberty of speaking, in that he, as a minister of the Gospel, being illuminated with greater and brighter rays of light than Moses, was to speak, as he did, with more freedom and clearness than Moses had done. This being the scope of St. Paul in this place, it is plain that all, from the words, *which put a veil upon his face*, ver. 13. to the beginning of this verse, is a parenthesis; which being so read, the comparison between the ministers of the Gospel and Moses stands clear. "Moses with a veil covered the brightness and glory of God which shone in his countenance; but we, the ministers of the Gospel, with open countenances, reflecting as mirrors the glory of the Lord, &c. So Mr. Locke would understand the word *κατοπτρίζομενοι*, and not *beholding as in a mirror*, because the comparison is between the ministers of the Gospel and Moses, and not between the ministers of the Gospel and the children of Israel. Now the action of *beholding* was the action of the children of Israel; but that of *shining or reflecting the glory* received in the mount, was the action of Moses; and therefore it must be something answering to that in the ministers of the Gospel, wherein the comparison is made; as is farther manifest in another express part of the comparison, between the *veiled face* of Moses, ver. 13. and the *open face* of the ministers of the Gospel in this verse. The face of Moses was veiled, so that the bright shining or glory of God remaining on it, or reflected from it, might not be seen. But the faces of the ministers of the Gospel are open,

C H A P. IV.

He declareth how he hath used all sincerity and faithful diligence in preaching the Gospel; and how the troubles and persecutions which he daily endured for the same, did redound to the praise of God's power, to the benefit of the church, and to the Apostle's own eternal glory.

[Anno Domini 58.]

THEREFORE seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

^a 1 Cor. 7. 25. Ch. 3. 6. & 5. 18. Eph. 3. 7, 8. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 12. Ch. 2. 14. 2 Tim. 2. 1. Phil. 6. 13. ^b Ch. 1. 12. & 2. 17. & 5. 18. & 6. 4. & 11. 3, 6, 13. Eph. 4. 14. & 5. 3, 12. 1 Thes. 2. 3, 5. ^c Or *same*. ^d Rom. 2. 16. Col. 1. 23. Eph. 3. 2. ^e Mat. 11. 25. 1 Cor. 1. 18. Ch. 2. 15, 16. & 3. 14. 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11. If. 6. 9, 10. ^f Mat. 4. 8, 9. John, 8. 44. & 12. 31. & 14. 30. & 16. 11. Eph. 2. 2. & 6. 12. Pf. 17. 14. ^g 1 Kings, 22. 22. If. 6. 10. Mat. 11. 25. 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11.

that the *bright shining* of the Gospel, or the glory of Christ, may be seen. Thus the justness of the comparison stands fair, and has an easy sense. *We are changed into the same image*, imports, "The reflection of Christ from us is so bright and clear, that we are changed into his very image; whereas the light which shone in Moses's countenance, was but a faint reflection of the glory which he saw when God shewed him his back-parts." Exod. xxxiii. 23. *From glory to glory* means, "With a continued influx and renewing of glory;" in opposition to the shining of Moses's face, which decayed and disappeared in a little time. See on ver. 7. The next clause should be rendered, *even as from the Lord the Spirit*; that is, "As if this irradiation of light and glory came immediately from the source of it, the Lord himself, who is that Spirit, whereof we are the ministers, ver. 6. which giveth life and liberty, ver. 17." The *liberty* there spoken of is *παρρησία*, mentioned ver. 12. and the subject of St. Paul's discourse here:—as is further manifest from what immediately follows in the first six verses of the next chapter, wherein the attentive reader may find a clear comment on the present verse, which is there explained in the sense here given. It may be proper, however, to observe, that there are some who do not entirely agree with this interpretation. Dr. Doddridge paraphrases the verse thus: "In consequence of the liberty enjoyed by virtue of the Gospel, we all, who have been so happy as suitably to welcome it, with unveiled face attentively beholding, as by a glass or mirror, the glory of the Lord reflected from his word, are transformed into something of the same resplendent image of the blessed Redeemer, whose shining face we there see. And the more steadfastly we behold this illustrious and amiable form, the more do we partake of it, proceeding gradually from glory to glory; and all this is as proceeding from the Lord the Spirit." Dr. Heylin observes, that instead of *beholding as in a mirror*, he thinks the original imports *receiving as on a mirror*. Theodoret, explaining this verse, says, "As clear water represents the face of those who look on it, so the pure heart becomes as it were a mirror and effigies of the divine glory." Therefore the transformation is not imputed ultimately to the seeing our God, but to his regard

2 ^b But have renounced the hidden things of ^{*} dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

3 But if ^c our gospel be hid, ^d it is hid to them that are lost:

4 In whom ^e the god of this world hath ^f blinded the minds of them which believe not,

to us, whereby he impresses his image on the pure heart, as a polished mirror, while it persists in his presence steadily, and with an uninterrupted serenity. I think then that the verse before us may be thus rendered: *We, on whom the unveiled face of the Lord impresses his glory, as on a mirror, are transformed into his resemblance, &c.*

Inferences.—Who can forbear wishing, that the infinite importance of the Gospel message may be deeply impressed upon all who preach, and all who hear it? Life or death is in question,—eternal life or eternal death: and while it is from day to day reviving its thousands, it is to be feared, that in some places it is, by the righteous judgment of God on hard and impenitent hearts, aggravating the guilt and misery of its thousands.

How awful is the work of dispensing this Gospel! Who can pretend to be *sufficient for such things as these*? Who, that considers the nature and importance of the ministerial work, can undertake or pursue it but with fear and trembling? Yet, insufficient as they ought humbly to acknowledge themselves to be, to reckon upon any thing as from themselves, there is a sufficiency in God imparted to faithful ministers: In consequence of which, they are often made to triumph in Christ, borne on in a holy superiority to all the difficulties of their work, and seeing that their labour is not in vain in the Lord. Well may that support them under the discouragements which in other instances they feel, when the fruit of their labours does not immediately appear; yea, when the present state of many under their care is directly contrary to what they could desire. For their work is still with the Lord, and they are *a sweet savour to God in them that perish*, as well as in them that are saved. Let them therefore gird up the loins of their mind, and exert themselves with the utmost vigour; rejoicing in this, that God will on the whole be glorified, and they, faithful unto death, shall be finally accepted, and through his abundant grace be amply rewarded.

But, as they desire to secure this acceptance, they should never allow themselves, by any foreign mixtures, to adulterate the word of God; solicitous to speak it in its uncorrupted sincerity, as in the sight and presence of God, and as those who know it is not their business to devise a mes-

left the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

⁶ John, 8. 12. & 12. 35. Ch. 3. 8. 11, 18. Acts, 26. 17, 18. Col. 1. 27. ¹ Tim. 1. 11. ² Tim. 1. 10. ² Thes. 1. 8. ³ Phil. 2. 6. Zech. 13. 7. John, 1. 18. Col. 1. 15. John, 14. 9, 10. & 10. 30. Heb. 1. 3. ¹ Mat. 16. 24. ¹ Cor. 1. 13, 23. & 2. 2. & 3. 5, 21. & 9. 19—23. & 10. 31. Rom. 15. 17, 21. Ch. 1. 24. with Jer. 23. 16, 26.

5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

face out of their own heart, but to deliver what they have received of the Lord: so may they hope there shall not be wanting those, who, according to the view which the Apostle gives us of these Corinthians, shall appear as epistles written by the hand of Christ himself, in attestation of their commission from him.

That ministers may more cheerfully hope for and expect such an honour, we should pray that the Spirit of God may lead them into the true sense and meaning of Scripture; that they may not unprofitably amuse themselves and their hearers with vain and cold criticisms on the letter of it, so as to neglect and forget what is most spiritual in its design and meaning; but that they may, under the divine illumination, attain to the mind of the Spirit, and be enabled to make greater proficiency in unfolding and illustrating the important mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and may be to multitudes a savour of life unto life.

Still full in our view stands the glorious glass of the Gospel, from which the lustre of the Redeemer's countenance is reflected: it is our duty daily to behold his image there, and contemplate it with an attentive eye, as being solicitous that we may wear some of those rays; yea, that we may wear them with still increasing lustre; that we may be transformed from glory to glory, and, reflecting these rays, shine as lights in the world.

It will greatly conduce to raise our minds to this laudable temper, if we frequently reflect on the excellence of the Christian dispensation, as a dispensation of the Spirit and of life; whereas the law was the ministration of death: and while from the glory attending the law we infer, with the Apostle, the super-eminent glory of the Gospel, we shall learn also the superior obligation under which it brings us to regard and obey it, and the proportionably greater danger of despising it. The law of Moses was soon to be abolished; the Gospel still remains, and shall remain to the end of time. Let us pray for its prosperity, and do our utmost to promote it; and let us earnestly plead with God, that whereas there is now a veil upon the face of the Jews, even to this day, when the sacred records are read among them, they may turn unto the Lord, and find the veil taken away: that so, by the conversion of Israel as a nation, there may be a glorious accession of evidence to Christianity; and that the Jews themselves may be happy in the blessing of him whom their fathers crucified, and whom they continue so unhappily to reject.

While defending so divine a cause, and enforcing so important a message, may the ministers of the Gospel use all becoming plainness of speech; and may all Christians know more of that liberty which the Spirit of the Lord gives; that God may in all things be glorified through Jesus Christ!

REFLECTIONS.—1st, To silence his traducers, the Apostle was compelled to protest his sincerity; and,

1. He apologizes for seeming thus to commend himself. *Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we as some others, the false Apostles, epistles of commendation to you from other churches, or letters of commendation from you, in order to gain credit and influence? No, we need them not, our conduct speaks for us. And ye yourselves are our epistle, our best letters testimonial, written in our hearts, in the deep affection that we bear you; some read your hearts, where their conversion bore an honourable testimony to the instrument of it; known and read of all men, who observe the work of God's grace evident in you through our labours; forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, the Author of all the gifts and graces which you possess; not in tables of stone, as the law of Moses, but in the fleshy tables of the heart, softened and renewed by grace, where the impression of the gospel-word is deep and effective. And such trust have we through Christ to Godward, that our ministry has been made thus effective to you, to God's glory, your benefit, and our own commendation.*

2. He prevents any suggestion, as if he herein arrogated ought to himself. *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, who cannot from ourselves naturally produce one good thought, and much less by the mere power of our reasoning effect your conversion: no, but our sufficiency is of God, who alone furnishes us with ability, and crowns our labours with success. To him therefore should the praise of all be for ever ascribed. Note; The best of men have always the lowliest thoughts of themselves.*

2dly, The Apostle runs a parallel between the Mosaic and Gospel dispensations, shewing the superior excellency of the latter, and the honour of those who were the ministers of it.

Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, furnishing us with abilities, and giving us success; not of the letter, not ministers of the law, which the Judaizing teachers so affect; but of the Spirit, of the Gospel, which the Holy Ghost accompanies with his divine energy: for the letter, the law, killeth, commanding an immaculate innocence which men cannot perform, and denouncing a curse on the least transgression; but the Spirit, the Gospel, attended with the quickening power of the Holy Ghost, giveth life, bringeth penitent sinners into a state of favour with God, and raises them to spiritual life.

But if the law, which was the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, when the two tables were delivered with such solemn pomp on Sinai, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance, so bright it shone,

which

6 For God, ^k who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath ^l shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God ^m in the face of Jesus Christ.

^k Gen. 1. 3. 14, 15. Ps. 74. 16. & 136. 7—9.
1. 3. Col. 1. 15. John, 14. 9, 10. with Ch. 3. 7, 13.

^l Eph. 1. 17, 18. & 5. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 9. 2 Pet. 1. 19. Acts, 26. 17, 18. Ch. 3. 18.

^m Heb.

which glory was to be done away in a while; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit, in the Gospel, be rather glorious, which is attended with such mighty energy and quickening influence? And how much do its ministers also exceed in glory? For if the ministration of condemnation, which could only denounce wrath on the disobedient, be glory; how much more doth the ministration of righteousness, even of the righteousness of God by faith, exceed in glory? And they who minister this glorious gospel must as much excel the ministers of the law, as righteousness and eternal life are preferable to condemnation and wrath: for even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth, as stars disappear before the rising sun. For if that which is done away, as is now the case with the Mosaic dispensation, was glorious, and introduced with such majesty and splendor; much more that which remaineth, the Gospel dispensation, is glorious: its privileges and blessings are incomparably greater.

3dly, The Apostle's observations from ver. 12. to the conclusion of the chapter, make the inference from the foregoing comparison.

Seeing then that we have such hope in the superior excellence of the Gospel above the law, and trust in the divine power to make it effectual, we use great plainness of speech, freely delivering our message, and affecting no embellishments:—Not as Moses which put a vail over his face, to hide the splendor of his countenance, intimating thereby, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished; they, in general, stopped at the letter and the shadows, and perceived not that all was intended to lead them to Christ, that they might be justified by faith: but their minds were blinded, in general wilfully stupified, (ἐκωπῶν;) for not only then, but until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; besides the natural vail of darkness on the minds of the wilfully impenitent, there was an obscurity in the revelation itself, as wrapped up in types and figures, which covered it in some degree from the truly pious; which vail is done away in Christ, in whom all the types and prophecies received their accomplishment, and who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, into whose hearts he shines with the light of his Gospel: but even unto this day, when Moses is read, the carnal Jews are so hardened through pride, prejudice, and sensuality, that the vail is still upon their heart, and they continue ignorant of him to whom the law and the prophets bear witness. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, either the heart of any individual among them, or the people in general in the last days, the vail shall be taken away, and they will see, know, and receive the true Messiah. Now the Lord Jesus Christ is that quickening Spirit, who alone can effect this mighty work: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, and the Gospel is truly embraced, there is liberty, freedom from darkness, guilt, and bondage, and access with boldness to a reconciled God. But we all with open face, who, through

the illumination of the Spirit, have received the Gospel in the light and love of it, beholding there, as in a glass, or mirror, which distinctly reflects the person and the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image of the adored Jesus, from glory to glory, from grace to grace, (for grace is glory in a degree,) till, if faithful unto death, his likeness is most completely perfected in us to all eternity: and all this is effected even as by the Spirit of the Lord, or by the Lord the Spirit, the great and glorious Agent in this new creation, who is very God, and in the ministration of his Gospel effectually brings the faithful saints to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Lord, thou Spirit of all grace, thus transform my soul into the Saviour's perfect image!

CHAP. IV.

HAVING in the preceding chapter described the excellency of the dispensation of the Spirit, and the transcendent honour and authority which the ministers of that dispensation possessed by virtue of their office, and the abiding inspiration of the Spirit with which they were endowed, the Apostle told the Corinthians, that the consideration of these things animated him and his brethren to diligence in performing the duties of their ministry, ver. 1.—and also to faithfulness. For using no craft or deceit in preaching, but plainly and fully manifesting the true doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, they recommended themselves to every man's conscience, ver. 2.—And therefore if their Gospel was veiled to any to whom it was preached, it was veiled only to those who destroyed themselves by hearkening to their own prejudices and lusts, and of whom, rejecting the Gospel, the devil made use in blinding the minds of others by their sophistry, ver. 3, 4.—Farther, notwithstanding the Apostles possessed such authority and miraculous powers, they did not preach themselves, but Christ, as Lord or Author of the spiritual dispensation of the Gospel; being sensible that they shone upon the world, only with a light borrowed from him, ver. 5, 6.—Lest, however, the low birth and mean station of the Apostles, with their want of literature, should be thought inconsistent with the high dignity which they claimed as *images of Christ*, St. Paul told the Corinthians, that God chose men of their character and station to be Apostles, and committed the treasure of the light of the knowledge of God, to them as to earthen vessels, to shew, that the excellency of the power, by which the world was converted from idolatry, and the preachers of the Gospel preserved amid the evils which pressed them on every side, did not proceed from themselves, but from God, ver. 1.—So that the dignity of the ministry of the Gospel, instead of being diminished, was greatly increased by the low birth of the Apostles, and by the evils which they sustained while executing that ministry; since thereby they had an opportunity of displaying their faith, their fortitude, and their benevolence to mankind, ver. 2—7.—

To

7 But we have * this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

8 ° We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but * not in despair;

* Mat. 13. 44. 52. 1 Cor. 7. 28. & 2. 5. Ch. 3. 5, 6. & 5. 1, 6. & 6. 7. & 12. 9. Eph. 3. 8. Col. 2. 2, 3. 1 Thes. 4. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 8. & 2. 22. 1 Pet. 2. 7. with Judg. 7. 13, 16. Col. 1. 27. ° Ch. 1. 8. & 7. 5. Rom. 8. 35, 36. 1 Cor. 10. 13. Ch. 1. 10. If. 46. 4. * Or not altogether without help, or means.

To illustrate this sentiment, the Apostle gave an affecting description of the sufferings to which he and the rest were exposed, and of the extraordinary support which they received while pressed with these evils, and of their surmounting them all through the assistance of God, ver. 8—14.

Next, to shew the Corinthians how much they, and the whole body of the faithful, were interested in the sufferings of the Apostles, he assured them that they endured all the evils which he had mentioned, for the sake of the persons to whom they preached, that by convincing them of their sincerity, God might be glorified through their conversion, ver. 15.—And therefore they did not flag in their work, although their outward man was daily waiting through the labours and sufferings which they were enduring, ver. 16.—Besides, they knew that their affections fully wrought out for them a most exceeding and eternal weight of glory, ver. 17.—which was the reason that in discharging the duties of their ministry, they did not aim at obtaining the seen things of the present world, which are all temporal, but at obtaining the unseen things of the world to come, which are eternal, ver. 18.

Ver. 1. *We faint not;*] This is to the same purpose with *we use great plainness of speech*, in the 12th verse of the foregoing chapter, and signifies in both places the clear, plain, direct, and disinterested preaching of the Gospel; which is what the Apostle in a great measure means by his figurative way of speaking in the former chapter, and which he more plainly expresses in the five or six first verses of this; the chief business of the former part of this Epistle being, as we have already observed, to justify to the Corinthians his behaviour in his ministry; and to convince them, that in his preaching the Gospel he had been open and candid, without any hidden design, or the least mixture of any secular interest.

Ver. 2. *Have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty;*] All dishonest artifices of false teachers. It would perhaps be better to translate the word ἀπειπάμεθα, which we render *renounced*, by *set at defiance*; which seems more literally to express the original. Some read the latter part of the verse, *But commending ourselves by manifesting the truth to every man's conscience*, &c.

Ver. 3. *If our Gospel be hid, &c.]* If our Gospel be under a veil too, it is veiled to those that are lost—who wilfully reject it, and perish thereby. This has an evident reference to what was said above, concerning the veil on the faces of the Jews; and the text may justly be urged as a proof of the perspicuity of the Apostle's writings in all matters of importance to our salvation.

Ver. 4. *The god of this world]* That is, the Devil; so called, because the men of this world worshipped or obeyed him as their god. It would be a good illustration of the present passage, if it could be proved, as it has been as-

serted by many, that this malignant spirit was so early called by the Jews, סמל, *Semäl*, “the god who blinds.” *Blinded their minds* here answers to *their minds were blinded*, ch. iii. 14. and the 2d and 3d verse of this explains ver. 13, 14. of that chapter. *Of the glorious Gospel of Christ* might be rendered, *of the Gospel of the glory of Christ*. *Glory* here, as in the former chapter, may be put for *shining* and *brightness*; so that the *Gospel of the glory of Christ* denotes the brightness or clearness of the doctrine wherein Christ is manifested in the Gospel. Christ is not only the eternal Son, but he is *the image of the invisible God* in all his perfections and glories.

Ver. 5. *For we preach not ourselves,*] “We aim not at exalting our own authority, extending our reputation, or securing to ourselves any secular advantage; but, renouncing all such views, claims, and desires, we preach Christ Jesus as the supreme Lord of his church: and instead of setting up ourselves for your masters, we declare ourselves to be your servants, for the sake of Jesus; and are willing, out of regard for you, and, above all, out of duty to him, to stoop to the humblest offices of love, by which we may be serviceable to you in your most important interests.”

Ver. 6. *For God, who commanded the light]* “God, who by his powerful word, in the first creation of this world, commanded the light instantaneously to shine out of that darkness which covered the whole face of the deep, (Gen. i. 3.) hath also shined in our once prejudiced and benighted hearts, to impart the lustre of the knowledge of God's glory, discovered, as we before observed, in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ; and thence reflected upon us, and from us to you, for the important purposes of your sanctification and salvation.” This is a continuation still of the allegory of Moses, and the shining of his face, &c. so much insisted on in the foregoing chapter; for the fuller explication whereof, we will add a word or two more to what has been already said upon it. Moses, by approaching to God in the mount, had a communication of *glory* or *light*, which irradiated from his face when he descended from the mount. Moses put a veil over his face, to hide this light or glory; for St. Paul uses both these names for the same thing: but the glory or light of the knowledge of God more fully and clearly communicated by Jesus Christ, is said here to *shine in his face*; and in that respect it is that Christ, in the foregoing verse, is called by St. Paul *the image of God*; and the Apostles are said, in the last verse of the preceding chapter, to be *transformed into the same image from glory to glory*; that is, by their large and clear communications of the knowledge of God in the Gospel, they are said to be transformed into the same image; to represent, as mirrors, the glory of the Lord, and to be as it were the images of Christ, as Christ is the image of God.

Ver.

9 ^r Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

10 ^r Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 ^r For we which live, are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

12 So then ^r death worketh in us, but life in you.

13 We having ^r the same spirit of faith,

according as it is written, ^u I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

14 ^r Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you.

15 ^r For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

16 ^r For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet ^r the inward *man* is renewed day by day.

^r Pf. 37. 24. If. 43. 2. Job, 5. 17—19. Ch. 1. 10. & 12. 9. Heb. 13. 5. If. 41. 10. 14. ⁹ Gal. 6. 17. Rom. 8. 17, 19. 1 Cor. 15. 31. Ch. 1. 5. 9. Phil. 3. 10, 11. 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 4. 13. & 5. 10. ^r Pf. 44. 23. Mat. 5. 11. Rom. 8. 36. 1 Cor. 4. 9. & 15. 31. 49. Ch. 6. 9. Col. 3. 3, 4. John, 14. 19. ^r Ch. 13. 9. 1 Cor. 4. 10. ^r Act. 15. 11. 1 Cor. 6. 17. ^u Pf. 115. 10. Ch. 3. 12, 17. ^r Rom. 8. 11. 1 Cor. 6. 14. Act. 2. 24. John, 11. 25. 1 Cor. 15. 20—23, 45, 49—57. ^r Rom. 8. 28. 1 Cor. 3. 21. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 2. 10. Ch. 1. 6. 11. Eph. 3. 10, 21. 1 Pet. 4. 11. ^r Ver. 2. Pf. 27. 13. & 119. 81. If. 40. 29—31. & 41. 10—16. & 46. 3, 4. ^r Rom. 7. 22. Eph. 3. 16. Col. 3. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 4. If. 40. 31.

Ver. 7. We have this treasure in earthen vessels,] Vessels of clay which have been baked, and are brittle. The word rendered *earthen*,—*ὄσπαιτοις*,—sometimes signifies *shells*, which are often made use of to preserve things of value in the cabinets of the curious; and these being likewise brittle, convey the same idea as the former,—that of the frailty of the human body, and the value of the treasure deposited in them.

Ver. 8. We are troubled on every side,] This and the following verses contain a beautiful and pathetic detail of the sufferings of the Apostles; and the contrast which runs through them gives an air of sublimity to the whole, at the same time that it conveys a noble idea of the intrepidity of the first Christians. This passage may at first seem a digression, but nothing could be more pertinent to the Apostle's grand purpose. He aimed at recovering the affections of these Corinthians, which were much alienated from him: to this end he freely opens his heart towards them, and tenderly represents the many and grievous pressures and hardships to which love to souls, and love to theirs among the rest, exposed him. This seems to be the true key to this beautiful and pathetic passage. Instead of *not distressed*, Dr. Heylin reads, *not crushed*; and Dr. Doddridge, *not utterly over-pressed*. *Στενοχωρημένοι* properly signifies *crushed in a strait passage*.

Ver. 10. Always bearing about in the body, &c.] “So that the cruelties which were exercised in putting Christ to death, seem to be acted over again upon us by the rage of the enemy. Yet all this is, in effect, not that an immediate period should be put to our life and ministry, as they desire, but that the life also of Jesus, now triumphant above all hostile power, may be more evidently manifested in the preservation of this our feeble body, which enemies, so many and so mighty, are continually endeavouring to destroy.”

Ver. 12. So then death worketh in us,] Or, *is wrought in us*. “So that the preaching of the Gospel procures suf-

ferings and danger of death to me, but to you it procures life; that is, the energy of the Spirit of Christ, whereby he lives in and gives life to, those who believe in him.”

Ver. 13. We having the same Spirit, &c.] Dr. Heylin reads this, *We having the same spirit of faith* [which David had] when he said *I believed, and therefore have I spoken*;—*we also believe, &c.* And he observes, that by the *spirit of faith* is meant the disposition which faith produces. *So spirit of meekness, &c.* Preachers who speak in this *spirit of faith*, that is to say, having in themselves a full conviction of the truths which they deliver, will through grace transfer somewhat of that conviction into the breasts of their hearers. Such consider, that they and their audience must appear together before Christ, ver. 14. and are careful to deliver nothing, but what they may avow in the day of judgment. See on Pf. cxvi. 10.

Ver. 15, 16. For all things are for your sakes,] “For I do and suffer all things for your sakes, that the exuberant favour of God may abound by the thanksgiving of a greater number to the glory of God.” That is, “I endeavour by my sufferings and preaching to make as many converts as I can; that so the more partaking of the mercy and favour of God, of which there is a plentiful and inexhaustible store, the more may give thanks unto him; it being more for the glory of God, that a greater number should give thanks, and pray to and love him. For which cause I faint not.”—Concerning the word *faint* see on ver. 1. Here St. Paul gives another proof of his sincerity in his ministry; viz. the sufferings and the danger of death which he daily incurs by his preaching the Gospel. And the reason why those sufferings and danger deter him not, nor make him faint at all, he tells them is, the assurance he has that God through Christ will raise him again, and reward him with immortality in glory. See ver. 17. and ch. v. 9, &c.

Ver.

17^b For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory ;
 18 While we look not at the things which

are seen, but at the things which are not seen : for the things which are seen are temporal ; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

^b Rom. 8. 18, 37. Pf. 30. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 4, 7. & 5. 10. Mat. 5. 12. 2 Thes. 1. 5. 1 John, 3. 2. Pf. 34. 19. Is. 45. 17. & 6. 19, 20. ^c Rom. 8. 24. Heb. 11. 1, 26. & 10. 35.

Ver. 17. For our light affliction,] This is one of the most emphatical passages in St. Paul's writings; in which he speaks as much like an orator as an Apostle. The lightness of the trial is expressed by τὸ ἕλαφρον τῆς θλίψεως, the lightness of our affliction; as if he had said, "It is even levity itself, in such a comparison." On the other hand, the καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν, which we render, far more exceeding, is infinitely emphatical, and cannot be fully expressed by any translation. It signifies that all hyperboles fall short of describing that weighty, eternal glory, so solid and lasting, that you may pass from one hyperbole to another, and yet when you have gained the last, it is infinitely below it. It is every where visible what an influence St. Paul's Hebrew had upon his Greek: כבד kebed, signifies to be heavy, and to be glorious; St. Paul in his Greek unites these significations, and says, weight of glory. See Blackwall's Sacred Classics, vol. i. p. 332. Doddridge and Locke.

Ver. 18. While we look not at, &c.] Or, while we aim not at. This is the exact signification of the Greek word σκοπεῖν; and our English word "scope," or "mark aimed at," is derived from the same Greek word.

Inferences.—How great is their mercy, who are put into the gospel ministry, qualified for it, and faithful in it; and who, notwithstanding all opposition and reproach, hold on their way without fainting, and seek to be approved of God, and recommended to the consciences of their hearers, by an open publication of the truth, without sinister views, and without craft or guile! They do not preach themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord in all his characters, and take pleasure in serving the spiritual and eternal interests of the church, for his sake. And O how excellent is the evangelical treasure, which is put into such weak, despicable, and mortal creatures, for the enriching of others, as well as of their own souls, that all the good sound in them, and done by them, may the better appear to be entirely of God, and not at all of themselves! If any, that enjoy a clear ministration of the Gospel, continue to be ignorant of its important truths, and unimpressed by them; it is because they are wilfully wandering in the lost state of nature, under the power of the prince of darkness, whose great business and design is to keep them stupid and blind, lest he should lose his vassals, through the illumination of their minds, by the glorious gospel of Christ, who is both the essential and representative image of God the Father: but O with what convincing evidence, power, and advantage, does this blessed Gospel appear, when God by his Spirit unveils its glory and sheds its illustrious, amiable, and penetrating light, in the hearts of his faithful servants and people! They may indeed be in deep distress, but they shall not be utterly overwhelmed: they may resemble

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their great Lord and Master in sufferings for his sake; but, by their holy fellowship with him in his death, they shall be supported under them, and carried through them; and the powerful life of Christ shall be manifested in their preservation, till at length, like their exalted Head and Saviour, they shall be raised up, in high favour and acceptance with God, to a blessed immortality, together with the whole multitude of persevering believers, that glory may redound to his name, through their united praises. They that are fully persuaded of these things by the faith of the operation of his Spirit, which, for substance, is the same in ministers and private Christians, and in Old and New Testament-saints, will neither be ashamed to speak of them, nor faint under any difficulties or discouragements that surround themselves. O how invaluable are the spiritual improvements and final issues of all our present tribulations, when, as the outward man perishes, the inward man is daily renewed, and grace is ripening apace for glory! And how light and momentary are all the afflictions of this life, compared with that superabounding and eternal weight of glory, which lies beyond them; and for the highest enjoyment of which God, in the riches of his free favour and love, through Jesus Christ, prepares the faithful by means of what they endure in the body! Experience will help our faith, with respect to these real and vast importances, whilst our governing views and regards are, not to the transitory things of this visible world, but to the infinite, though unseen felicities of the heavenly state, which abide the same, without diminution or alloy, for ever.

REFLECTIONS.—1st. The Apostle, having shewn the excellence of the Gospel above the law, passes on to give an account of the diligence and sincerity with which he and his companions discharged their ministry.

1. They laboured with perseverance and fidelity. Therefore seeing we have this ministry from the Lord, as we have received mercy, and support under all our infirmities, we faint not, amidst our greatest trials cheerfully holding on unwearied in our glorious course; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, abhorring every thing scandalous or reproachful; using no cover or concealment, not walking in craftiness, to beguile unstable souls by any mean arts; nor handling the word of God deceitfully, corrupting the pure truth by any base alloy of our own, or attempting to accommodate it to the taste of our hearers; but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, in all plainness of speech applying the Gospel to men's hearts, under a deep sense of the solemn account we must shortly give of our ministry. Note; (1.) The business of ministers is not to adapt their words to men's humours, but to strike at their hearts. (2.) They who

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In his assured hope of immortal glory, and in expectation of it, and of the general judgment, the Apostle laboureth to keep a good conscience; not that he may herein boast of himself, but as one that, having received life from Christ, endeavoureth to live as a new creature to Christ only, and by his ministry of reconciliation to reconcile others also in Christ to God.

[Anno Domini 58.]

FOR we know that, if ^b our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we

^a Ch. 4. 1, 2, 13, 16. ^b Job, 4. 19. ^c 2 Pet. 1. 13, 14. ^d Ch. 4. 7. ^e Heb. 11. 10, 11, 16. ^f Ver. 8. ^g Phil. 3. 21. ^h 1 Thes. 4. 17. ⁱ Rom. 8. 23, Phil. 1. 23. ^j 1 Cor. 15. 47. ^k 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. ^l John, 17. 24. ^m Mat. 22. 11. ⁿ Rom. 13, 14. ^o Gal. 3. 27. ^p Rev. 3. 18. & 12. 1. & 16. 15. & 19. 8, 14. ^q 1f. 61. 10. ^r Rom. 8. 23. & 7. 24. ^s 1 Cor. 15. 51—55. ^t 1f. 25. 8.

have ^c a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For ^d in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

3 ^e If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4 ^f For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

who lay their hands to the gospel plough, must never faint, or look back, whatever trials they may meet with in the discharge of their office.

2. He obviates an objection, How, if he spoke so plainly, the truth was yet received by so few comparatively. *But if our Gospel, after all the pains we take, be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, who wilfully persist in their impenitence and unbelief, and wilfully reject the counsel of God against their own souls; in whom the god of this world, the devil, hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, increasing and confirming, by his malignant influence, the native hardness and darkness of their hearts, by his allurements or discouragements keeping them safe under his dominion, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, should shine unto them, enlighten their darkness, and convince and convert their souls—and they wilfully submit to all this!* Note; (1.) The devil has the general sway in this world; and is, though men in general perceive it not, the real object of their worship. (2.) The way in which Satan's kingdom is maintained in the world is by the prejudices that he raises against the glorious gospel of Christ.

3. He declares their integrity. *For we preach not ourselves, not our own inventions, nor seek to promote our own honour or interests, but Christ Jesus the Lord, making him the grand subject of all our discourses, his person, offices, and grace; and acknowledging ourselves to be more than your servants for Jesus' sake, whose glory we seek to advance in the salvation of your souls. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, by his almighty word at the beginning, hath shined in our hearts, dispelling the thick clouds of spiritual darkness, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, as it appears in that glorious gospel of which he is the sum and substance, and wherein all the divine perfections are exalted to the highest. But we have this treasure of the Gospel in earthen vessels, committed to frail, poor, and perishing worms, such as we are, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. When such weak instruments are enabled to bear up under all persecutions, and are made so amazingly successful in their labours, it must with the strongest demonstrations be evident, that the work is*

more than human, even of divine operation. Note; (1.) None can illumine the darkness of a fallen soul, but he that at first said, *Let there be light, and there was light*; but he is willing to do this for every sinner that will but yield to his grace. (2.) The weaker the instruments are, the more is the power and grace of God magnified, who worketh by them, and makes their ministry effectual to the salvation of penitent sinners.

2dly, Many were the dangers to which, for the Gospel's sake, the ministers of Christ were exposed; yet none of these things moved them.

1. Their trials were great. *We are troubled on every side, with manifold afflictions in every place, yet not distressed with anxiety, or discomposed as if we had no way to escape; we are perplexed, and in doubt what step to take, but not in despair of the Lord's help and interposition; persecuted by wicked men with unrelenting malice, but not forsaken of God, so as to be given up for a prey to their teeth; cast down through the infirmity of our flesh, but not destroyed; on the contrary, comforted and supported, and triumphant over the power of evil: always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, carrying the marks of our sufferings, which shew that we belong to our crucified Master, who sympathizes with us and counts our griefs his own; that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body, he, as the living principle within, sustaining us under all our conflicts. For we which live spiritually by his grace, and amidst our continual persecutions are still preserved, are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, each day in jeopardy, and ready to be cut off for the testimony which we bear, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh, it being evidently seen, by the protection which he vouchsafes to us, that he is risen and at the right hand of God, and that his Spirit has quickened us to newness of life; while with unshaken courage, patience, and perseverance, in the midst of our sufferings, we desire to finish our course after his example. So then death worketh in us, and we, who are Christ's ministering servants, are exposed to the greatest dangers; but life in you, who enjoy its comforts in peace: and even our sufferings, as they are a confirmation of the Gospel which we preach, are, through grace, the means of advancing your spiritual life.*

2. If

5 Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given

unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Therefore *we are* always confident, know-

11. 29, 31. & 45. 20, 21. Rom. 8. 16, 23. Col. 1. 12. Ch. 1. 21, 22. Ver. 15. Eph. 2. 10. & 4. 32. & 1. 13, 14. 2 Tim. 1. 14. 1 John, 3. 24.

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2. If their trials were great, their supports were greater. (1.) They stood by faith. *We having the same spirit of faith with the saints of old, which animated the divine Redeemer, and is wrought by the Holy Ghost in us and you; according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken,—we also believe, and therefore speak,* fully persuaded of the heavenly doctrines which we preach, and confident that the Lord will support us in our testimony to his gospel. (2.) They were upheld by the hope of a joyful resurrection, knowing, with humble assurance, *that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus,* in virtue of our union with him, *and shall present us with you,* even with all his faithful saints among you, (for the professors at Corinth were not all saints) and with all his persevering people every where, faultless before the throne of his glory; and the expectation of this raises us above all the fears of death. (3.) The consciousness that God would be glorified by the salvation of many, who would humbly accept of the offers of his grace, supported and quickened them. *For all things are for your sakes;* all our labours and sufferings are intended to promote your present and eternal happiness; *that the abundant grace held forth in our ministrations, might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God,* who, embracing the gospel, and made partakers of its inestimable blessings, cannot but with ceaseless praises adore and magnify that gracious God, who hath called them to his kingdom and glory, and, if they be faithful unto death, will assuredly confer it upon them. *For which cause we faint not;* but for your sakes, and God's glory, patiently and cheerfully persevere. (4.) Their own souls were profited by their afflictions, which was another reason why they should bear up under them. *But though our outward man perish through our hardships, labours, and sufferings, yet the inward man is renewed day by day,* with fresh supplies of grace, strength, and consolation, growing more meet for the eternal world to which we are going; and we may well be content with every outward cross that tends to bring us thus nearer to our crown. (5.) The near and assured prospect of glory was their grand support and comfort. *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment,—* so faith teaches us to judge,—our afflictions are *light,* compared with the weight of glory which we expect, and *momentary,* however long continued through life, if viewed against the eternity which succeeds to the faithful saints:—and what is more,—*it worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* The words are amazingly emphatical, (Καὶ ὑπερβαλὼν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν, αἰώνιον βῆρος δόξης,) and such as no translation can fully render. Steadily, therefore, we persevere, *while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen,* the glorious objects above, which faith realizes to the soul; *for the things which are seen are temporal,* transitory, and momentary; *but the things which are not seen are eternal,* glorious beyond conception, and to be enjoyed by the faithful without measure and without end.

TO shew what the things were which the Apostles aimed at, and by the hope of which their inward man was daily recruited, St. Paul mentions in this chapter that eternal habitation in heaven which the faithful are to obtain after death, because there all the objects of their desires will be found, and be enjoyed by them in their utmost perfection, ver. 1.—And knowing that their heavenly habitation will be infinitely preferable to their earthly dwelling, they earnestly desire to be introduced into it, ver. 2.—And being a happiness which they were sure of obtaining, if they continued perseveringly to cleave to Christ, they were certain that, although they were deprived of their earthly habitation by their persecutors, they would not be found destitute of a habitation after death, ver. 3. Their strong desire, however, to be introduced into their heavenly habitation, did not proceed from discontentment with their present suffering state, but from the hope of having their mortality then changed into immortality, ver. 4. Now, said the Apostle, he who hath wrought in us this strong desire and hope, is God himself, who hath bestowed on us the gifts of the Spirit, as an earnest of what we hope for, ver. 5.—They were therefore at all times bold in preaching the gospel, both knowing that while they were at home on earth in the body, they were from home from the Lord, and being well pleased to go out of the body, and be with the Lord, ver. 8.—For which reason, whether they remained on earth, or were to be removed by death, they earnestly endeavoured to behave in such a manner as to please Christ, before whose tribunal all men must appear, to receive in their body according to the deeds which they have done, ver. 9, 10.—The Apostle, therefore, knowing the terribleness of Christ's displeasure, was at the greatest pains in persuading men to believe the future judgment; and by his earnestness in preaching that judgment, was approved of God, and he hoped also of the Corinthians, to whom he had made known that interesting event, ver. 11.

But that what he had said, in commendation of his own faithfulness in the ministry of the gospel, might not be imputed to vanity, he told the Corinthians that he had mentioned these things to afford them a solid ground of rejoicing in him, through and in submission to divine grace as an Apostle, and to enable them to answer those who boasted in the false teacher, on account of merely external, and not on account of real qualities, ver. 12.—Farther, because the faction represented the Apostle as a madman, for preaching the gospel at the hazard of his life, without reaping any worldly advantage from it, he assured the Corinthians, that whether in so doing he acted in the opinion of the faction as a madman, it was for the glory of God; or whether he acted, in the opinion of the sincere part of the church, as one in his right mind, by shunning persecution, it was for the sake of his disciples, that he might be con-

ing that, whilst ¹ we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord :

7 ¹ (For we walk by faith, not by sight :)
8 We are ^k confident, *I say*, and ^l willing

¹ Chron. 29. 15. Ps. 39. 12. & 119. 19. Phil. 1. 23. Heb. 11. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 11. ¹ Heb. 11. ¹ Gal. 2. 20. Hab. 2. 4. Rom. 8. 24, 25. ¹ Cor. 13. 12. Ch. 3. 18. & 4. 14. ¹ Pet. 1. 8. ¹ John, 3. 2. Ver. 6. Deut. 12. 9. ^k Heb. 11. 1, 13. Ver. 1. ² Tim. 1. 12. & 4. 7, 8. ^l Ver. 2, 4. Phil. 1. 23.

tinued the longer with them, ver. 13.—and in either case he was moved by a strong sense of the love of Christ, in dying for all, ver. 14, 15.—Therefore, as an Apostle of Christ, he knew no distinction between Jew and Gentile; nor in preaching the gospel did he make any distinction between them, but offered the same terms of salvation to all, ver. 16.—Declaring that if any man believeth in Christ, whether he be a Jew or a Gentile, he is a new creature, ver. 17.—created by God, who hath reconciled him to himself through Jesus Christ, and who hath given to the Apostles the ministry of the reconciliation, ver. 18.—which consists in publishing that God is by Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting to them their trespasses, ver. 19.—The Apostles, therefore, in Christ's stead, earnestly besought men to be reconciled to God, ver. 20.—and to persuade them to be reconciled, they represented to them that him who knew no sin, God had made a sin-offering for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, ver. 21.—Now, of all the arguments which the ministers of the gospel can propose, to persuade sinners to be reconciled to God, this instance of God's love to them is by far the greatest and most affecting; and therefore ought to be much insisted on by them in their discourses to the people.

Ver. 1. *For we know, &c.*] We, as has been said but now, having eternal glory in view, do not droop in our work, nor faint under our manifold afflictions: for we are not only persuaded, upon the testimony of God in his word, that there is a rest provided for his faithful people, but by the witness of his Spirit with our spirits, as his children, we are likewise fully assured that we ourselves have a personal interest in it; and that, when these frail bodies, in which our souls now dwell, as in their house and home, (ver. 6.) during our state of pilgrimage and warfare upon earth, and which were originally formed out of it, and are like mean and moveable tents, that are erected but for a little while, and must quickly be taken to pieces, and pulled down: as soon, I say, as this mortal frame shall be dissolved, whether by a natural or violent death, we make no doubt but that *our spirits*, which will then *return to God, who gave them*, (Eccles. xii. 7.) shall be immediately possessed of a much more glorious habitation; which we already have in title, through Jesus Christ, and which he has graciously prepared for his faithful saints; even a secure, firm, and delightful mansion for our souls, in the immediate presence of Christ; (ver. 8.) a mansion not of human, temporary fabric, like tents and tabernacles that are made by the hands of men, but built, like a celestial palace, on immovable foundations, by the immediate power of God himself, (Heb. xi. 10.) for our eternal residence, in a manner suitable to his own excellent greatness and goodness, past all danger of remove, or decay, in the highest heaven: and we are satisfied that, at Christ's second appearing, this mortal body shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body,

by his Almighty power; and that then we shall be clothed again with our immortalized bodies, and so in our whole persons be ever with the Lord. (*Phil. iii. 21. 1 Thess. iv. 17.*)

Ver. 2. *For in this we groan,*] The following seems the best and most unexceptionable exposition of the very difficult passage before us: “And in this view we groan, through that intenseness of spirit with which we are earnestly and perpetually desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven; since, being so clothed upon, we should not be found naked, and exposed to any evil and inconvenience, how entirely soever we may be stripped of every thing that we can call our own here below. And moreover we who are yet in this tabernacle do groan, not only with those longings after a blessed immortality, but also being burthened with the present weight of many infirmities and calamities. For which cause, nevertheless, we would not be unclothed or stripped of the body; for that is what we cannot consider as in itself desirable; but rather, if it might be referred to our own choice, clothed upon immediately with a glory like that which shall invest the saints after the resurrection; that so what is mortal, corruptible, and obnoxious to these disorders, burdens, and sorrows, may all be so absorbed and swallowed up by life, as if it were annihilated by that divine vigour and energy which shall then exert itself in and upon us.” See 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54.

Ver. 5. *Now he that hath wrought us, &c.*] “To these noble views and sublime desires.” This is a most emphatical manner of speaking; not only asserting that God is the author of it, but ascribing Deity to the author. As if he had said, “None but God could have raised us to such a temper.” The Spirit is frequently mentioned as the pledge and earnest of immortality; more particularly Ephes. i. 13, 14.

Ver. 6. *We are always confident*] *Undaunted,—of good courage:* and so ver. 8. The original here, and in ver. 8. implies the same with *we faint not*, ch. iv. 1. and 16. “I go on undauntedly without fainting, preaching the gospel with sincerity and direct plainness of speech.” The conclusion which he draws here from the consideration of the resurrection and immortality, is the same which he makes upon the same ground, ch. iv. 14, 16. The word *Ἐνδημῶντες*, which we render *at home*, properly signifies, *are sojourning*, and should certainly be so rendered, it destroying the Apostle's whole argument to translate it, “while at home in the body;” as it is clearly his design to intimate that this is not our *home*.

Ver. 7. *For we walk by faith, &c.*] “We now walk and conduct ourselves in the whole course of our life, by the faith of objects as yet unseen, and not by the sight of those glories, or by a regard to those things which we can see.” Comp. Gal. iii. 11. Heb. x. 38.

Ver. 8. *And willing rather to be absent, &c.*] This may be

rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore ^m we * labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 ⁿ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; ^o that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

11 ^p Knowing therefore the terror of the

Lord, we persuade men; but ^q we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

12 For ^r we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to *answer* them which glory [†] in appearance, and not in heart.

13 For whether we be ^s beside ourselves, *it is* to God; or whether we be sober, *it is* for your cause.

* Rom. 15. 20. 1 Thes. 4. 1. 11. Mat. 25. 21. 23. Luke, 19. 17. ^o Or *endeavour*. ⁿ Rom. 14. 10—12. Eccl. 12. 14. Acts, 10. 42. & 17. 31. Rev. 20. 11, 12. John, 5. 22, 27. ^p Job, 24. 11. Pl. 62. 13. Eccl. 12. 14. Jer. 17. 10. & 32. 19. Matt. 16. 27. & 25. 32. Rom. 2. 6—10. 1 Cor. 3. 8. & 4. 5. Gal. 6. 5, 7. Eph. 6. 8. Rev. 2. 23. & 22. 12. & 23. 12, 13. ^q Job, 31. 23. Heb. 10. 31. Jude, 23. If. 33. 14. Nab. 1. 6. with Col. 1. 28, 29. 2 Tim. 4. 25. Acts, 20. 18—27, 31. Ch. 12. 5. ^r Ch. 1. 12. & 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 11. 6. 1 Thes. 2. 3—13. ^s Ch. 1. 14. & 3. 1. & 10. 8. & 11. 12—15. [†] Gr. *in the face*. ^t Ch. 11. 1, 16, 17. & 12. 6, 11. with 1 Cor. 10. 31. & 4. 3, 4. & 9. 17—23. 2 Tim. 2. 10. 1 Thes. 2. 3—11.

be understood as spoken with respect to death; and then it will imply, that a Christian, as soon as he dies, is present with Christ: or it may mean, that he wished for Christ's coming, that his whole man might be translated from this state of absence. Some have argued from this text, not only against the sleep of the soul during the intermediate state; but that pious souls, when departed from our world, go into the highest heaven, where they dwell with Christ; and are not, as some have supposed, in a place where they have only a transitory sight of him on some extraordinary occasions.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore we labour,*] *We make it the height of our ambition, ὁ ὀρέομαι εἶναι, whether staying in the body, or going out of it: that is, "Whether I am to stay longer here, or suddenly to depart."* The foregoing verse leads us to this sense. From ch. iv. 12. to this place, St. Paul, to convince the Corinthians of his uprightness in his ministry, has been shewing that the hopes and sure expectation which he had of eternal life, kept him steadfast and resolute in an open sincere preaching of the gospel, without any deceitful artifice; in which his argument stands thus: "Knowing that God, who raised up Christ, will raise me up again, I, without any fear or consideration of what it may draw upon me, preach the gospel faithfully; making this account, that the momentary afflictions which I may suffer for it here, and which are but slight indeed, in comparison of the eternal things of another life, will exceedingly increase my happiness in the other world, where I long to be; and therefore death, which brings me home to Christ, is no terror to me. All my care is, that whether I am to stay longer in this body, or quickly leave it, living or dying I may approve myself to Christ in my ministry." In the next two verses the Apostle has another argument to fix in the Corinthians the same thoughts of him; and that is, the punishment which he shall receive at the day of judgment, if neglecting to preach the gospel faithfully, and not endeavouring sincerely and earnestly to make converts to Christ.

Ver. 11. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade, &c.* "We convince men, and persuade them to be Christians, through divine grace, and by that means are manifested to God as his servants, and to your consciences." Mr. Locke's paraphrase is, "Knowing therefore this terrible judgment of the Lord, I preach the gospel, persuading men to be Christians; and with what integrity I discharge that duty is manifest to God; and I trust also you are convinced of it in your consciences." See the *Inferences and Reflections*.

Ver. 12. *For we commend not ourselves again*] From this place, and several others in the epistle, it cannot be doubted but that St. Paul's speaking well of himself had been objected to him as a fault; and in this lay his great difficulty, how to deal with this people. If he answered nothing to what was talked of him, his silence might be interpreted guilt and confusion. If he defended himself, he was accused of vanity, self-commendation, and folly. Hence it is that he uses so many reasons to shew, that his whole carriage was upon principles far above all worldly considerations; and tells them here, once for all, that the account which he gives of himself is only to furnish them who are his friends, and adhered to him, with matter to justify themselves in their esteem of him, and to reply to those who opposed him. Of this also the last clause may be understood; for it is manifest from ch. x. 7, 15. and xi. 12, 22, 23. that his opposers pretended to something in which they gloried, though St. Paul assures us that they were satisfied in conscience that they had no solid ground of glorying.

Ver. 13. *Whether we be beside ourselves,*] From this verse to ch. vi. 12. St. Paul gives another reason for his disinterested carriage in preaching the gospel; and that is, his love to Christ, who by his death having given him life, who was dead, he concludes, that in gratitude he ought not to live to himself any more: and therefore, being as in a new creation, he had now no longer any regard to the things of this world; but being made by God a minister

14 For ' the love of Christ constraineth us ; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead :

15 * And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

16 * Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh : yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more.

17 Therefore, ' if any man *be* in Christ, * *he is* a new creature : old things are passed away ; behold, all things are become

new.

18 * And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, ' and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation ;

19 To wit, that ' God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them ; and hath ' committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then we are ' ambassadors for Christ, as though ' God did beseech *you* by us : we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

' Luke, 7. 47. 2 John, 4. 10, 19. Pl. 110. 3. Song, 1. 4. Rom. 5. 1. 1 Tim. 2. 6. John, 11. 51, 52. 1 Pet. 4. 1, 2. * Rom. v. vi. & 14. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. 1 Thes. 5. 10. Tit. 2. 14. Gal. 1. 4. & 2. 20. 1 Pet. 4. 2. Eph. 5. 2—17. Luke, 1. 74. * Mat. 12. 50. John, 15. 14. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. Phil. 3. 8—14. Col. 3. 11, with 1 Cor. 19. 18. 1 Thes. 5. 12. Jam. 2. 1. John, 20. 17. & 6. 63. & 7. 5. 1 Cor. 1. 10. Eph. 2. 10. & 1. 3. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. John, 3. 3, 5, 6. Ezek. 35. 26. Eph. 4. 23, 24. Col. 3. 10. If. 65. 17. Rom. 6. 4—6. & 8. 9, 10. Ch. 4. 16. If. 43. 18. 1 Thes. 5. 24. Mat. 16. 24. Rev. 21. 5. * Or let him be. * Rom. 11. 36. John, 3. 16. Jam. 1. 17. Rom. 5. 10. Eph. 2. 16. Col. 1. 20. 1 John, 2. 2. & 4. 9, 10. Rom. 3. 2—26. * Mark, 16. 15, 16. Mat. 28. 19. Rom. 1. 5. & 15. 19. * Rom. 3. 24—26. Pl. 32. 1, 2. If. 43. 25. & 44. 22. * Gr. put in us, ver. 8. * Mal. 2. 7. Job, 33. 23. Ch. 3. 6. Eph. 6. 20. * 2 Kin. 17. 13. 2 Chron. 36. 15. Neh. 9. 29. Jer. 44. 4. Mat. 28. 19, 20. Mark, 1. 5. Mat. 10. 40.

ster of the gospel, he minded only the faithful discharge of his duty in that ministry, and pursuant thereunto took care that his behaviour should be such as he describes, ch. vi. 3—10. *Beside ourselves* means, "in speaking well of myself in my own justification." Whoever observes what St. Paul says, ch. xi. 1, 16, 21. xii. 6, 11. will scarcely doubt but that the speaking of himself as he did, was, by his enemies, called *glorying*, and imputed to him as folly and madness.

Ver. 14. *Constraineth us ;*] "Bears us away, like a strong and resistless torrent." Thus much is implied by the original word *συνίξει*. See Philip. i. 23.

Ver. 16. *Henceforth know we no man, &c.*] "From this time we have no longer any partial regard to the Jew more than to the Gentile, on account of the descent of the former. We do not now esteem any one for the advantages of this world, riches, learning, or eloquence ; and even they who have seen and conversed with Christ while he was on earth, have now no claim to be preferred before us. No man knows Christ to any lasting advantage, any otherwise than in proportion as he experiences his power, and obeys his laws : for he governs and instructs us now, as a heavenly King, by his Spirit." Some interpret the last clause thus : "Nay, if we have known Christ after the flesh, and governed ourselves by any carnal expectations from the Messiah, as a temporal prince, who should render our nation the terror of the whole world, and raise us to universal monarchy, henceforth we know him in these views no more, but entertain quite different sentiments concerning him."

Ver. 17. *Therefore, if any man be in Christ, &c.*] Galatians, vi. 14, 15. may give some light to this place. To connect this and the preceding verse with St. Paul's discourse here, they must be understood in reference to the

false apostle, against whom St. Paul is here justifying himself ; making it a grand point, in this as well as his former epistle, to shew that what the false Apostle gloried in was no just cause of boasting. Pursuant to this just design of sinking the authority and credit of that false apostle, St. Paul, in this and the following verses, insinuates these two things : 1. That the ministry of reconciliation being committed to him, they should not forsake him to hearken to and follow that pretender. 2. That they being in Christ, and so a new creation, should, as he does, *not know any man in the flesh*,—not esteem or glory in that false apostle, because he might perhaps pretend to have seen our Saviour in the flesh, or to have heard him, or the like. The original word *Κτίσις*, signifies *creation*, and is so translated. Rom. viii. 22. and the passage may either mean, as above, that if any one be in Christ, it is as if he were in a new creation, wherein all former relations, considerations, and interests are ceased, and all things in that state are new to him ; or it may imply (and I doubt not but the word takes in both) that there is a new creation in his heart,—his appetites, apprehensions, and pursuits being changed, and his life actually amended and fully reformed.

Ver. 18. *And all things, &c.*] *Now, &c.*

Ver. 19. *To wit, that God was in Christ,*] *Namely, &c.* Doddridge. *For God was in Christ, &c.* Heylin.

Ver. 20. *We are ambassadors for Christ,*] The Apostles were so in a peculiar sense ; but if it be the will of Christ that ministers, in all ages, should press men to accept the treaty of reconciliation established in him, then it is evident they may be called *his ambassadors*, even though such a phrase had never been used in scripture. The term *ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ* plainly means, *in Christ's stead*, as we render it. When Christ was in the world, he pressed this treaty of reconciliation ; and we rise up in his stead to urge it still further. See Matth. v. 24.

Ver.

21 ' For he hath made him *to be sin* be made the righteousness of God in for us, who ' knew no sin ; ^b that we might him.

^a If. 53. 4-6. 10-12. Dan. 9. 24. Zech. 13. 7. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. Mat. 20. 28. John. 1. 29. Rom. 3. 24, 25. & 4. 25. & 5. 6, 8. & 8. 3-5. 13. Eph. 2. 2. 1 John 3. 2. & 4. 9. 0. Pl. xxii. lxi. ^b If. 53. 9. 1 Pet. 2. 22. & 1. 19. Job. 7. 26. Luke, 1. 35. 1 John, 3. 5-10. 1. 30. & 3. 40, 29. Mat. 1. 15. ^c If. 47. 21. & 45. 24, 25 & 53. 4, 5, 11. & 54. 17. & 61. 10. Jer. 23. 6. & 33. 16. Dan. 9. 24. Rom. 1. 17. & 3. 21-26. & 3. 1-4. & 5. 15-21. & 4. 24, 25. & 10. 4. 1 Cor. 1. 0. Phil. 3. 9. Rev. 1. 5. & 5. 9. & 7. 14. & 19. 8, 14.

Ver. 21. *Made him to be sin, &c.*] "*A sin-offering* for us, that, by the sacrifice of himself, he might expiate the guilt of our transgressions, and that so we might be made accepted in him, and furnished with a plea as prevalent for our justification and admission into the divine favour, as if we had retained our innocence untainted, and in every respect conformed ourselves to the righteousness which the law of God required and demanded." There is an evident and beautiful contrast between Christ's being made *sin*, and our being made *righteousness*; that is, our being forgiven and placed in a state of acceptance and favour with God, through Christ, although all sin is perfectly hateful to God.

Inferences, drawn from ver. 10, 11.—It is the privilege and distinguishing character of a rational being, to be able to look forward into futurity, and to consider his actions, not only with respect to the present advantage, or disadvantage, arising from them; but to view them in their consequences, through all the parts of time in which himself may possibly exist, and to eternity. If, therefore, we value the privilege of being reasonable creatures, the only way to preserve it is to make use of it; and, by extending our views into all the scenes of futurity, in which we ourselves must bear a part, to provide for solid and durable happiness, through the power of almighty grace. With respect to that principal point, that very grand article of religion,—the expectation of a life after this,—we may observe, that as the wisest men thought there must be, so the gospel assures us there will be a *day*, in which God will judge the world in righteousness, and render to every man according to his works. If this doctrine, indeed, has had a larger and more extensive influence, through the authority of the gospel, than it could have had by the light of any inferior dispensation, the world has then received an advantage by the encouragement given to holiness and virtue, and the restraint laid upon vice by these means, which ought ever to be acknowledged with thankfulness; although the gospel, in other respects, yields the strongest motives to gratitude, as well as the most powerful encouragements to universal obedience.

The gospel has communicated to us the knowledge of many circumstances which were not discoverable but by the means of revelation: three of these are the following:—that there shall be a resurrection of the body; that Christ shall be the judge of the world; and that the rewards and punishments in another life shall be in proportion to our experience and behaviour in this. We will briefly consider these particulars, and shew for what purpose they were revealed.

1. The resurrection of the body was revealed to give all men a plain and a sensible notion of their being subject to a future judgment. Death is, in some sense, the destruction of the man: sure we are that the lifeless body is no man;—and the spirit, in its state of separate existence, is

not properly man; for man is made of soul and body; and therefore to bring the man into judgment to answer for his deeds, the soul and body must be brought together again. This doctrine, established upon the authority of the gospel, effectually removes all difficulties that affect our belief of a future judgment, considered with respect to religion and morality: for the grand point in which religion is concerned in the present instance, is to know, whether men shall be accountable hereafter for their actions here. Reason tells us that they ought to be so; but a great difficulty arises from the dissolution of the man by death; a difficulty followed by endless speculations upon the nature of the soul, its separate existence, its guilt in this separate state, with respect to crimes committed in another, and in conjunction with the body, &c. But take in the declaration of the gospel, that soul and body shall be as certainly united at the resurrection, as they were divided by death, and every man be completely himself again; and there is no more difficulty in conceiving that men may be judged for their iniquities hereafter, than there is in conceiving that they may be judged here, when they offend against the laws of their country. But some have asked, "What body shall be raised, since no man has exactly the same body two days together? New parts are perpetually added by nutrition, old ones carried off by perspiration; so that in the compass of a few years, a human body may be almost totally altered." But this objection, plausible as it may seem, has nothing to do in the present case: religion is concerned only to preserve the identity or sameness of the person, as the object of future judgment; and has nothing to do with that kind of identity against which the objection can be supposed to have any force. Were the case otherwise, the difficulty would be really as great in human judgments now, as in the divine judgment hereafter. Suppose a murderer at twenty should not be discovered till he was sixty, and then brought to trial; would common sense admit him to plead that he was not the same person who committed the fact; and to allege, in proof of it, the alterations in his body for the last forty years? Suppose then that, instead of being discovered at sixty, he should die at sixty, and should rise either with the body he had at sixty, or twenty, or any intermediate time,—would not the case be just the same with respect to the future judgment?—This shews, therefore, that the article of the resurrection, so far as it is a support of religion and of a future judgment, stands quite clear of this difficulty.

But the prejudices which affect infidels, or sceptics; most, on considering this article of the resurrection, arise from the weakest of all imaginations,—that they can judge from the settled laws and course of nature what is or is not possible to the power of God. It is very true, that all our powers are bounded by the laws of nature, except when supernatural power is given from on high: but does it follow that God's power must be so bounded, who appointed these

CHAP. VI.

The Apostle declares that he hath approved himself a faithful minister of Christ, both by his exhortations, and by integrity of life, and by patiently enduring all kinds of affliction and disgraces for the gospel; of which he speaketh the more boldly among them, because his heart is open to them; and he expecteth the like affection from them again; exhorting them to flee the society and pollution of idolaters, as being themselves temples of the living God.

[Anno Domini 58.]

WE then, as ^a workers together with him, beseech you also that ^b ye receive not

^a 1 Cor. 3. 9. Ch. 5. 18—20. ^b Heb. 12. 15. Ch. 11. 2. Tit. 2. 11. Acts, 14. 3. Ch. 5. 18, 19. ^c If. 49. 8. & 61. 2. Luke, 4. 19. & 9. 5, 9, 42, 44. Rom. 12. 11. Heb. 7. 7, 13. & 4. 7. ^d Rom. 14. 13. 1 Cor. 8. 9, 13. & 9. 12, 22. & 10. 23, 27. Acts, 24. 16. Ch. 4. 12. ^e 1 Thes. 2. 3—11. Mat. 18, 6, 7. 2 Tim. 2. 15. & 4. 2, 5. Col. 4. 17. 1 Pet. 5. 1—4. Rev. 3. 10. 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2, 9—17. Ch. 1. 4, 12. & 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 5. 11. & 11. 6. & 12. 10. 2 Tim. 2. 10. & 2. 10—12. Rom. 2. 29. & 8. 35. ^f Gr. commanding. ^g Ch. 11. 23—7. 1 Cor. 4. 9—12. 2 Tim. 3. 10—12. Acts, 13. 50. & 14. 5, 10. & 16. 22, 23. & 17. 5. & 18. 12. & 19. 23. & 22. 22—24. 1 Cor. 15. 10, 58. Phil. 4. 12. Col. 1. 29. 1 Thes. 2. 9. & 3. 5. 1 Tim. 4. 10—16. ^h Or in *teffings* to and fro.

these laws of nature, and could have appointed others, if he thought proper? We cannot raise a dead body; our hands are tied up by the laws of nature, which we cannot surpass; neither can we create a new man: but we certainly know, from reason and experience, that there is one who can: and what can induce us to suppose that he cannot give life to a body a second time, who, we can certainly know, gave life to it at first?—These matters, therefore, we may safely refer to the power of the Almighty, to which all nature is obedient, and upon which we may securely depend for the performance of divine promises,—how unpromising soever, to our short-sighted intellect, the circumstances may be which attend them.

Indeed, the gospel has removed all difficulties which lie in the way of our considering ourselves as accountable creatures, and subject to the future judgment of God. It is not the spirit, or soul *alone*, but the *whole* man, who is to be brought to that judgment; and plain sense must see and acknowledge the reasonableness of judging a man hereafter for the crimes committed in this life, as evidently as it sees the reasonableness of judging him here, when his crimes happen to be detected. So that revelation has brought faith and common sense to a perfect agreement.

2. And this gospel revelation, secondly, has made known to us that *Christ shall judge the world*. We need not multiply texts to this purpose. John, v. 22, 27. Acts, x. 42. xvii. 31. are fully sufficient to establish a doctrine so very well known to all Christendom.

But it is material to observe, that this authority is given to Christ, *because he is the son of man*, as he himself assures us, John, v. 27. and that the Person ordained to be judge is, in respect to one of his natures, a man;—even *the man whom God raised from the dead*, as St. Paul asserts, Acts, xvii. 31. How happy is it for us to have a judge,—I had almost said so *partial*, but I may well say so *favourable* to the faithful, that he was content to be himself the sacrifice, to redeem us from the punishment due to our sins! When we consider ourselves,—how weak we are,—how frequently we have been doing wrong;—and contemplate the infinite

the grace of God in vain.

2 ^c (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.)

3 ^d Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

4 But ^e in all things ^{*} approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

5 ^f In stripes, in imprisonments, [†] in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;

majesty, holiness, and justice of God; what account can we hope to give of ourselves to him, *whose eyes are purer than to behold iniquity*? But see, God has withdrawn his terrors, and comes as a man, to be the Judge of men; so that we may say of our judge, what the Apostle to the Hebrews says of our High Priest, *We have not a judge who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin*.

It may, perhaps, be thought that this is drawing consequences upon the ground of vulgar apprehensions, and that, in reality, there is no difference; whether God judge us in the divine nature, or commit the judgment to the Son of man: for, since Christ shall come in his humanity, not only in the power, but in the wisdom and justice of his Godhead also, to judge the world, what difference can there be in the judgment, since in both cases it must be guided and formed by the wisdom and justice of God?—True it is, that a mere man is not qualified to be a judge of the world: the knowledge of hearts is necessary to the right discharge of that office; a knowledge with which no mere man was ever endowed. But still, if *man* is to be judge, the sentiments, notions, and *feelings* of the man, however guided and influenced by the wisdom of his godhead, must preside over and govern the whole action; otherwise the man will not be judge.

Hence then we may answer some difficulties which speculative men have brought into the subject of a future judgment. Some have imagined that justice, mercy, and goodness in God, are not of the same kind with justice, mercy, and goodness in them; and therefore that we can never, from our notions of these qualities in man, argue consequentially to the attributes of God, or to the acts flowing from these attributes: the result of which is, that when we talk of God's justice, or mercy, in judging the world, we talk of something which we do not understand. But if men would consult scripture, these difficulties would not meet them in their way: for surely we know what justice, mercy, and goodness mean among men; and since the scriptures assure us that *the man whom God raised from the*

6^s By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, 7^b By the word of truth, by the power of

^s 1 Cor. 4. 12. & 7. 7. & 9. 22. Acts, 20. 26, 27. Ch. 4. 2. & 11. 2, 28. & 12. 14, 15. 1 Tim. 5. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 10. 1 Thes. 2. 2—11. 1 Cor. 2. 4. Ch. 10. 4. 5. & 4. 2. & 1. 12. & 12. 12. Eph. 6. 11. 13. 2 Tim. 4. 7.

the dead is ordained Judge of the world, we may be very certain that the justice, mercy, and goodness to be displayed in the future judgment, will be such as all men have a common sense and apprehension of; unless we can imagine that a new rule is to be introduced, to which the Judge, and those to be judged, are equally strangers. Upon this foot of scripture then we may certainly know what the justice, mercy, and goodness are by which we must finally stand or fall; and this point being secured, the speculation may be left to shift for itself.

3. Let us then go, thirdly, one step farther, and view the consequences of this judgment;—this solemn judgment, which every mortal must undergo. If we consult the scriptures, we shall find no evidence of any farther change to be made in our future state, after judgment has once passed upon us. That we are accountable, and shall therefore be judged, reason testifies; but can see nothing relating to us after judgment, except the reward or the punishment consequent upon it.

As reason can shew us nothing beyond judgment, but that state and condition which are the effect of it: so the Holy Scripture declares, that nothing else there shall be, by describing the rewards and punishments of another life as having perpetual duration. Life eternal is prepared for the righteous, and everlasting punishment for the wicked. The fire prepared to receive them is never to go out, the worm prepared to torment them will never die: so that in this view our all depends upon the judgment which shall be finally passed on us at the second coming of our Lord; and therefore there is a justness of thought, as well as great charity to the souls of men, in what the Apostle adds,—*Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.*

If the Christian revelation has cleared our doubts, by bringing life and immortality to light through the gospel; if it has given us ground for hope and confidence, by assuring us that we shall be judged by him who so loved us, that he gave himself for us, and submitted to die that we might live; it has also given us ground to be watchful and careful over ourselves, and to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, through the grace of God. For it is a fearful thing to be called to answer for ourselves before the great Searcher of all hearts:—to answer to Him who loved us, for despising the love that he shewed us!—to answer to Him who died for us, for having crucified him afresh, and put him to open shame; and for having accounted the blood of the covenant an unshy thing! This will be the sad case of every impenitent sinner. The view of this misery and distress, which sinners are calling upon themselves by their iniquity, moved the Apostle, and must ever move those who are called to the ministry of the word of God, to warn men to flee from the wrath which is to come. We know the terror of the Lord, and therefore persuade men. Happy would it be, if, knowing and considering these terrors, men would suffer themselves to be persuaded in time, and haste for

refuge unto the everlasting hope set before them, in Jesus Christ our Lord!

REFLECTIONS.—1st. No wonder, with eternal glory full in his view, that the Apostle fainted not. He enlarges on the delightful theme, which cannot but minister something of the like courage and consolation to every gracious soul. We have,

1. The Apostle's expectation and desire, which every faithful servant of Jesus can, in a measure, adopt as his own. *For we know*, by the evidence of God's word, the testimony of our conscience, and the witness of the Spirit; yea, all the faithful saints of God may have a humble confidence, *that if our earthly house of this tabernacle*, the frail body in which we as pilgrims at present sojourn for a day, be dissolved, and return to the dust whence it came, *we have a building of God*, infinitely more magnificent, *an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens*, a celestial palace, prepared for the everlasting residence of all the faithful, and suited to the excellence of the glorified soul. *For in this tabernacle of clay we groan earnestly*, loaded with many afflictions, and *desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven*, and to arrive at the celestial city, where sin and sorrow shall never enter more: *if so be, that being thus clothed with robes of light and purity, we shall not be found naked*, exposed any longer to the storms of this wretched world, but be in eternal joy and felicity. *For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened*, longing for our perfect state of happiness, when we shall be for ever released from the burthens of outward afflictions: *not for that we would be unclothed*, and wish to part with our bodies, *but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life*; translated as Enoch, or changed in a moment, as their bodies shall be who are alive at the coming of the Lord. Note, (1.) Our present abode is a wretched tabernacle, which must quickly be taken down. Are we panting after that eternal mansion which is prepared for the faithful saints of God? (2.) To a soul that has ever tasted of the bitterness of sin, and groaned under the trials and temptations of this mortal state, the exchange of worlds is a consummation devoutly to be wished for.

2. The Apostle mentions the ground of his expectation and hope. *Now he that hath wrought us for this self-same thing is God*, whose mighty energy has spiritualized our souls, and led them up to seek those high and heavenly things: *who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit*, in his graces, consolations, and abiding residence in our hearts. *Therefore we are always confident* in the humble assurance of support under all our trials, till they shall happily end; *knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord*, and, like pilgrims, distant from our true home and rest. *For we walk by faith, not by sight*, looking above all present objects to the eternal world, and having our hearts influenced, and our conduct regulated accord-

God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

8¹ By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report : as deceivers, and yet true ;

1 Cor. 4. 7—12. Mat. 10. 25. & 27. 63. John, 7. 12. Act, 17. 33.

ingly ; we are confident, I say, in the experience of God's present love ; and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord ; well pleased, if God so willed, to bid an eternal adieu to all our infirmities and afflictions, and enter immediately into the beatific vision of our Lord. *Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.* This is our holy ambition, so to be found in him, sprinkled with his blood, and walking under the influence of his grace, that now, and in the day of his appearing and glory, both our persons and services may meet with his approbation. *Note, (1.)* None enter the heavenly world, but those who have the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts, and are made meet for the inheritance among the faints in light. *(2.)* Faith in God's promises inspires confidence of their fulfilment ; we know that we have not followed cunningly-devised fables. *(3.)* They who, by faith, behold the glories of a better world, cannot but with pleasure look forward to the happy change. *(4.)* The stronger our hope of heaven is, the more enlivened will be our diligence in the way that leads thither.

3. He reminds them of the awful day which approached, as a spur to himself, and a warning to them. *For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ,* where, without disguise, every man's real character will appear, *that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad ;* admitted graciously to the reward of eternal blessedness, or sinking under righteous vengeance into the abyss of endless misery. *Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord,* and the fearful end of the hypocrite and ungodly, *we persuade men,* by every alarming and alluring motive, to fly from the wrath to come, and embrace the gospel which we proclaim. *But, whether they will hear or forbear, we are made manifest unto God,* who knows our simplicity in all our ministrations, *and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences ;* for our labours and sufferings bear witness to the unfeigned concern that we have shewn for your souls. *Note, (1.)* The sense of an approaching judgment should awaken a holy solicitude to be ready for it. *(2.)* Gospel ministers must use the terrors of the Lord to rouse the lethargic sinner, and urge him to fly from his impending ruin.

2dly, The Apostle,

1. Prevents an insinuation which might have been suggested by his enemies, as if he meant to commend himself. *For we commend not ourselves again unto you, nor speak this with a view to ingratiate ourselves into your good opinion, but to give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart,* furnishing you with arguments to silence the vain boastings of those Judaizing teachers, who would malign and traduce us. *For whether we be beside ourselves, and in our zeal for the gospel talk as men distracted, as they would insinuate, it is to God, and for his glory, that we thus speak ; or whether we be sober, and, as the wiser part among you justly think, say nothing but the words of truth and soberness, it is for your cause, whose salvation we seek to promote.*

7

2. He declares the noble principle which influenced his preaching and practice. *For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge,* and have determined, on maturest deliberation, *that if one died for all, for sinners of all degrees, whether Jews or Gentiles, without distinction, then were all dead, alike in need of his redemption, by nature the children of wrath, and under the curse of a broken law ; and that he died for all, that they which live, not only redeemed by his blood, but quickened by his Spirit, should not henceforth live unto themselves, for their own ease, interests, or honour, but unto him which died for them, and rose again,* devoting themselves to his blessed service, who purchased them at so dear a rate. *Note, (1.)* A sense of Christ's love upon the heart is the only genuine principle of true obedience. *(2.)* We then truly live, when the Redeemer's glory is made the grand aim of all our conversation.

3dly, From the foregoing premises,

1. The Apostle determines, without respect of persons, to preach the gospel alike to Jews and Gentiles, who are both redeemed by the same Lord. *Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh,* paying no regard to any external privileges of descent from Abraham, or to circumcision : *yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, and many of us formerly thought, during his abode on earth, that he was come to erect a temporal kingdom, and exalt the Jewish nation to the pinnacle of human glory, yet now henceforth know we him no more ;* these foolish prejudices are removed ; we have got an acquaintance with the spiritual nature of his salvation, and know that the great design for which he became incarnate was to advance the divine glory in the recovery of lost souls, whether Jews or Gentiles, without distinction, even of as many as will believe in his name.

2. He urges, as the main point of Christianity, a real change of heart. *Therefore if any man be in Christ, vitally united to him, he is a new creature,* though the same person, yet morally so renewed in the Spirit of his mind, and so spiritualized in understanding, will, and affections, that he is quite different from his former self : *old things are passed away ;* his naturally corrupt principles and practices are laid aside, and *behold, with wonder, the amazing alteration ; all things are become new ;* he has new light in his mind ; a new bias given to his will and affections ; his whole course of life is altered ; his principles, prospects, ways, thoughts, pursuits, company, are as directly opposite to what they were before, as if he were really another man. Reader, hast thou experienced this change ?

3. This new creation is God's work, and wrought, by means of his gospel, for and in all who will yield to be saved by his grace. *And all things are of God, who planned and executes the wondrous scheme of our redemption for all his faithful saints ; and hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, through his atoning blood, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation ; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world, Gentiles as well as Jews, unto himself, by that amazing expedient of the substitution of his own*

Son

9^k As unknown, and yet well-known; as dying, and behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; 10^l As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as

¹ Ch. 4. 2. & 5. 11. Pl. 118. 18. If. 26. 19. Rom. 8. 36. 1 Cor. 4. 9. & 15. 31, 32. Ch. 1. 8. & 4. 10. 11. & 11. 6. Gal. 6. 17. Mat. 5. 12. Act. 5. 41. & 16. 25. Heb. 10. 34. Rom. 5. 3. Jam. 1. 2. & 2. 5.

Son in the sinner's stead, *not imputing their trespasses unto them*, but laying upon him the iniquities of us all; and *bath committed unto us the word of reconciliation*, that we should publish this gospel of peace to every creature. *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ*, sent, in his name, to heal the dangerous breach between the holy God and the sinful soul, *as though God did beseech you by us*, under whose commission we act with authority, and speak in his name: *we pray you*, by every endearing argument, as you value your immortal souls, and urge you, *in Christ's stead*, whose person we represent, and whose gospel we minister, *be ye reconciled to God*; submit to the righteousness which is of God, by faith; accept his proffered pardon and grace; bow humbly at his feet; without reserve yield up yourselves to him, that the reconciliation may be mutual. *For he hath made him to be sin*, a sin-offering, *for us*, who knew no sin of his own, but willingly took our iniquities upon himself, and suffered for them, making a full atonement and satisfaction to the justice of God; *that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, by virtue of our faith in him, and union with him. My soul, with wonder and delight hear and embrace these glad tidings; and may thy whole and constant trust be in his infinite merit!

CHAP. VI.

THE Apostle having affirmed in the foregoing chapter that the ministry of reconciliation was committed to the preachers of the gospel; he intreated his fellow-labourers in that ministry, the bishops and pastors at Corinth, to exert themselves with the utmost fidelity and diligence in their work; because if they were either unfaithful or negligent, they would be guilty of receiving that honourable ministry in vain, ver. 1.—Then he put them in mind of God's promise to assist his faithful servants, and, by adding, *Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation*, he insinuated that there are seasons in which God more especially blest the labours of his servants, which, therefore, ought not to be neglected by them. And to carry the matter home to their conscience, he told them that the season then present was such a day of salvation, ver. 2.—These earnest exhortations the Apostle addressed to his fellow-labourers, that they might give no encouragement to any one to commit sin, either by their negligence, or by their teaching a lax morality, like the false apostle; because it would occasion the ministry of the gospel to be blamed, as encouraging licentiousness, ver. 3.—He therefore besought them to establish themselves, through divine grace, as faithful ministers of Christ, by their virtues, both passive and active; and also by sound doctrine, and by a right behaviour, both in private and in public, ver. 4—10.

Having thus exhorted his fellow-labourers, the Apostle addressed the Corinthian brethren in general, telling them, *his mouth was opened to them, his heart was enlarged*; he spake plainly to them, from love. And, as a reward, he desired an equal return of affection from them, ver. 11,

12, 13.—Then proceeded to give an advice, which he knew would be disagreeable to some of them; namely, not to join themselves in marriage with idolaters and unbelievers, because, the principles and practices of such persons being directly contrary to the principles and manners of Christ's disciples, the Corinthians could have no prospect of union and peace in such marriages, ver. 14, 15.—Or, although love and peace were maintained, their idolatrous spouses tempting them to join in the worship of idols, they might lose that holiness which rendered them the temple or dwelling of God, ver. 16.—as was plain from what God said to the Israelites, *Come out from among them*, &c. *and ye shall be to me sons and daughters*, ver. 17, 18.—Then to shew that these promises were made to the disciples of Christ, as well as to the disciples of Moses, the Apostle added, as the conclusion of his discourse on this subject, chap. vii. 1. *Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit*, &c.

Ver. 1. We then, as workers together with him] *As the joint-labourers of God*. Doddridge. *As instruments employed by God*. Heylin. See 1 Cor. iii. 9. *Receiving the grace of God in vain*, is the same with *believing in vain*, 1 Cor. xv. 2. That is, receiving the doctrine of the gospel for truth, and professing Christianity, without experiencing its power, and performing what the gospel requires.

Ver. 2. For he saith] See on Isai. xlix. 8. 'The Apostle's reasoning is, God, addressing himself in the passage produced from Isaiah to the Messiah, speaks of a limited time, in which the Messiah's petition, speaking *more humano*, after the manner of men, was welcome to him, and in which he was ready to grant salvation; and *behold, now is the accepted time*,—now is the precious season, when, by the wonderful favour and goodness of God, complete forgiveness and eternal felicity are freely offered. 'This verse should be read in a parenthesis. See the introduction to the chapter.

Ver. 4. In afflictions, &c.] Dr. Whitby thinks that the first word *Θλίψις*, signifies *affliction* in general; the second, *Ἀνάγκη*, more grievous and unavoidable troubles; and the third, *εὐνοχέρια*, such pressures as reduce us to the greatest straits. See on ch. iv. 8. The compound sense, therefore, on the whole, is, "We are, as it were, hemmed in "with inevitable, and, humanly speaking, inextricable "calamities on every side." Beza interprets the word *ἀκαταστάσις*, rendered *tumults* in the next verse, of "such "attacks as a man cannot stand against; but which bear "him hither and thither with violence." He would render it in Latin by the word *exagitationibus*.

Ver. 6. By pureness, by knowledge, &c.] *By purity, or chastity*. Heylin. "By knowledge of those divine truths "which it is our great business to teach others; and by "the due exercise of that knowledge, through the power "of grace, in a constant command over our passions." Dr. Scott by *knowledge* understands *Christian prudence*.

Ver. 7. By the armour of righteousness] "While our enemies "assault

poor, yet making many rich; ^m as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

11 O ye Corinthians, "our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.

12 Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels.

13 Now for a recompense in the same, (I speak as unto ^o my children), be ye also enlarged.

14 Be ye not ^p unequally yoked together with unbelievers: ^q for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And ^r what concord hath Christ with

Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ^s ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and "I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 ^x Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you,

18 ^y And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

^m Prov. 13. 7. & 17. 1. Mat. 6. 32, 33. Luke, 18. 29, 30. 1 Cor. 1. 5. & 16. 17 & 3. 21, 22. Ch. 8. 9. & 11. 8, 9. & 2. 20. Phil. 4. 11, 18. Mark, 10. 28—30. 1 Tim. 4. 8. ⁿ Ch. 2. 2. 3. & 7. 3. & 12. 14, 15. 1 Thes. 23. 1—11. ^o 1 Cor. 4. 14, 15. & 3. 10. Gal. 4. 12—19. If. 8. 18. ^p Lev. 19. 19. Deut. 7. 2, 5. & 22. 9. ^q Ps. 106. 35. 1 Cor. 5. 9, 11. & 7. 39. ^r Ps. 5. 1—7. 1 Kings, 18. 21. Prov. 29. 27. 1 Cor. 10. 14. Eph. 5. 7, 11. Deut. 22. 10. ^s 1 Sam. 5. 3, 7. Deut. 14. 27. & 18. 1. Josh. 22. 25. 1 Kings, 18. 21. Acts, 8. 21. 1 Cor. 10. 7. ^t 1 Cor. 3. 16. & 6. 19. Eph. 2. 21. Heb. 3. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 5. ^u Lev. 26. 12. Ezek. 36. 28. & 37. 26, 27. Rev. 24. 3. ^v Gen. 17. 7. Jer. 31. 33. & 30. 22. & 24. 7. & 32. 38. Ezek. 11. 20. & 36. 28, 37. Zech. 8. 8. & 13. 9. ^w If. 52. 11. Jer. 51. 6. Zech. 2. 6. Acts, 2. 40. Rev. 18. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 20. Ch. 7. 1. with Lev. 11. 24. 29. & 21. 11. ^x Jer. 31. 1, 9, 33. Rev. 21. 7. 2 Sam. 7, 14.

"assault on every side, it is our care still to be clothed and girded about with the armour of righteousness, both on the right hand and on the left; well knowing that armour to be impenetrable." *On the right hand, and on the left,* means on every side;—perfectly and entirely. Some refer it to the Christian's being armed, through grace, against the temptations of prosperity and adversity. Mr. Locke's paraphrase is, "By uprightness of mind, wherewith I am armed at all points, both to do and to suffer." It is scarcely necessary to observe to the reader, how extremely sublime and pathetic this whole passage is. Comp. Philip. iv. 18. 1 Tim. vi. 17. Eph. i. 3. Rev. xxi. 7. 1 Cor. iii. 21—23.

Ver. 11. O ye Corinthians,] Another argument made use of by St. Paul, to justify and excuse his plainness of speech to the Corinthians, is the great affection that he has for them; into an expression whereof he here breaks out in a very pathetic manner. This, with an exhortation to separate themselves from idolaters and unbelievers, is what he insists upon from this place to ch. vii. 16. "O ye Corinthians! my mouth is open to you; my heart is enlarged to you: my affection, my tenderness for you is not strait or narrow. It is your own narrowness makes you uneasy. Let me speak to you, as a father to his children: in return, do you likewise enlarge your affections to me: *be ye not associated with unbelievers,* (ver. 14.) have nothing to do with them in their vices or worship, or by uniting yourselves in marriage to them; *for what fellowship hath righteousness,*" &c. See ch. vii. 1.

Ver. 12. Ye are not straitened, &c.] "There is no want of kindness in our souls toward you; but, alas! there is reason to fear, concerning some of you at least, that your own hearts are too much shut up, through the workings of unbelief, carnality, and coolness of affection, against us, and against the consolations which are in Christ for you, which suit your circumstances, and of which we would fain have you partakers."

Ver. 14. Be ye not unequally yoked, &c.] "Be not associated in marriage, in worship, or in any thing with infidels; for what union can there be," &c. See on ver. 11.

Ver. 15. Hath he that believeth, &c.] Or, *hath a believer,* &c.

Ver. 16. The temple of God;] There seems a peculiar strength in this interrogation; "If God would not endure idols in any part of the land in which he dwelt, how much less would he endure them under his own roof?" No words in our language can equal the force of the Greek, which we render, *I will dwell in them*;—*ἐπινοῶσα ἐν αὐτοῖς*,—"I will take up my indwelling in them." This was a promise made to the Jews on their being converted; and consequently refers to their privileges, as members of the Christian church; which shews the propriety of the application, Jer. xxxi. 33. xxxii. 37, 38.

Ver. 17, 18. And be ye separate, saith the Lord,] As God's promises of dwelling in a peculiar manner among the Jews obliged them to separate themselves from the converse of their heathen neighbours, that they might not be ensnared with their superstitions; much more are *Christians* obliged, by that peculiar gracious presence of God which they enjoy, to separate themselves from all impure and idolatrous worship. It has been questioned whence this quotation is taken. Some say from Jer. xxxi. 1. &c. but that does not sufficiently express the paternal relation,—*I will be a Father,* &c. Others refer it to 2 Sam. vii. 8, 14. which may be applied to *Christ*, and in him to believers. Comp. Heb. i. 4, 5. Some think it is not expressly to be found any where, and that it refers to all the scriptures, where God calls his people by the title of children.

Inferences.—What an honour and encouragement is it to the faithful servants of Christ, that God and they, in a proper order, are embarked and employed in the same glorious cause, which is founded on Christ's acceptance with the

CHAP. VII.

He proceedeth in exhorting them to purity of life, and to bear him like affection as he doth to them. Whereof lest they might seem to doubt, he declareth what comfort he took in his afflictions, by the report which Titus gave of their godly sorrow which his former epistle had wrought in them, and of their loving kindness and obedience towards Titus, answerable to his former boastings of them.

[Anno Domini 58.]

HAVING therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from

all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

2 ^b Receive us; ^c we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man.

3 ^d I speak not *this* to condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.

4 ^e Great *is* my boldness of speech toward you, great *is* my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

^a Ch. 6. 16—18. Rom. 5. 20, 21. & 6. 1—23. 2 Pet. 1. 4—9. & 3. 11—14. Luke, 1. 74, 75. 1 John, 3. 1—3. 1 Pet. 2. 11. 1 Cor. 6. 20. Tit. 2. 11—14. Phil. 2. 12, 13. & 3. 8—14. Mat. 5. 8. 1 Tim. 4. 8. ^b Mat. 10. 14, 40. 2 John, 10. 3 John, 10. ^c Acts, 20. 3. Ch. 4. 2. 1 Thes. 2. 5. Rom. 16. 18. 1 Cor. 6. 12, 13. & 10. 33. Ch. 1. 12. & 2. 17. & 6. 3—12. & 11. 7, 13. & 12. 13, 17. Gal. 4. 17. 2 Thes. 3. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 4—11. 2 Tim. 3. 2—6. Tit. 1. 10. 2 Pet. 2. 14. Jude, 11. 16. ^d 1 Cor. 4. 14. Ch. 3. 3, 4. & 6. 11, 12. ^e 1 Cor. 4. 14. & 6. 1. Ch. 3. 12. & 9. 2. & 6. 11—13. 1 Thes. 2. 19. ^f Col. 1. 24. Jam. 1. 2. Ch. 6. 10. & 2. 14. John, 16. 33. Phil. 2. 17. Mat. 5. 12. Acts, 3. 41. Rom. 5. 3.

the Father, that sinners might be accepted through him! The day of gospel grace is the only day for finding acceptance with God; and therefore every one should see to it, that he receive it without delay, and do not hear of its glad tidings in vain. But how careful should ministers be, to behave in so unblameable a manner, as not to disgrace their sacred office, nor prejudice their hearers against the doctrines they preach! They are to approve themselves faithful, by their purity and knowledge, patience, kindness, and unfeigned love, in all their sufferings, trials, and labours, by the assistance of the Holy Ghost; by a right use of the word of truth and the armour of righteousness, to guard them against temptations on every side, even such as arise from honour and dishonour, from evil report and good report: and they should labour, by divine grace, to behave as true and faithful persons, and to be made manifest as such, in the consciences and esteem of real Christians, while they are traduced as deceivers, or are treated as mean and insignificant wretches, by others. In this way of acquitting themselves, behold how signally God appears for them. How much soever they may be chastened, they are wonderfully kept alive, till their Lord has done his work by them: how sad soever their outward condition may seem to be, they are filled with all joy and peace in believing: and how poor soever they be in this world, they possess all things in Christ, their Head, and are instruments of making many rich toward God. O how freely and affectionately are their hearts and mouths open to their flocks; and what a reasonable return is it, that their people's hearts should be enlarged in like love to them! For they are neither straitened in the love of their pastors, nor in their ministrations of the promises; but all their straitness lies within themselves, in their own carnality and unbelief. And how concerned should believers be for grace, to enable them to live answerable to the exalted privileges by which God has honoured and distinguished them; to abstain from every thing, that has the least aspect of falling in with any corruptions that lie in opposition to the purity of their faith, worship, and obedience; and to take heed that they be not unequally yoked

with unbelievers in any relation, or in any sense, that tends to enslave and defile them. For they can no more, as believers, have Christian fellowship with others in sinful, superstitious, and idolatrous customs, than righteousness and unrighteousness, light and darkness, Christ and *Belial*, or the temple of God and idols can be reconciled and harmonize. And, to encourage the people of God to separate from every thing polluting, and offensive to him, he, who is the Lord Almighty, has promised that, in their relinquishing such things, they shall be no losers; but that he will dwell in them, and commune with them; will receive them into his special care and protection; and will be the best of Fathers to them, and treat them as his sons and daughters.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, We have an account,

1. Of the general exhortation which, as ambassadors for Christ, St. Paul and his fellow-labourers addressed to all their hearers. *We then as workers together with him*, as the instruments that he employs in calling lost sinners to a state of reconciliation with God, *beseech you also*, among others to whom we are sent, *that ye receive not the grace of God in vain*, nor slight his Gospel, remaining empty professors, instead of actual possessors, of the power and life of godliness. *For he saith*, addressing his Son, the Messiah, Isa. xlix. 4—6. *I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee*; answering his prayers, as most acceptable before him, and supplying him with the needful strength to finish the great atonement, and to carry on the work of salvation in his faithful saints: *behold, now is the accepted time*, when the sinners of every nation are invited to partake of the blessings and privileges of the Gospel, and are sure of acceptance with God through his dear Son, if they accept of the invitation: *behold, now is the day of salvation*; seize therefore the present moment, and fly for refuge to Jesus, the hope set before you. *Not!*; (1.) To-day God invites, to-day we should hear and obey; no moment is to be trifled with; every breath that we draw is precarious; to-morrow may not belong to time, but to eternity. What an awakening consideration! How are

5^s For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without *were* fightings, within *were* fears.

^s Acts, 16. 19, 23. 1 Cor. 2. 3. & 15. 32. Ch. 2. 13. & 4. 8—12. & 6. 4—10. & 11. 2, 3. 23—28. & 12. 20.

we called to improve the present now! (2.) Ministers must with importunity and eagerness urge upon dying men the necessity of attending instantly to the things of their everlasting peace, before they be hid from their eyes.

2. Of their carefulness to avoid every occasion of offence. *Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed; behaving so discreetly, both among Jews and Gentiles, as to give no ground of prejudice against that gospel which we preach, but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, becoming the character that we bear; in much patience, meekly resigned, and steadily persevering; in afflictions, of various kinds, which we suffer for our work's sake; in necessities, wanting even food and raiment; in distresses, from which we see no human way to extricate ourselves; in stripes, beaten both in the synagogues and before the heathen tribunals; in imprisonments, cast into dungeons; in tumults, from outrageous mobs; in labours, unceasing; in watchings, in fastings, having our rest broken, and our provision scanty; and sometimes voluntarily denying ourselves food and sleep on a religious account. And in these sufferings we are supported by pureness, acting with the greatest simplicity of intention, and integrity of conduct; by knowledge, fully acquainted with the truths which we deliver; by long suffering, bearing with the perverseness and provocations of opposers; by kindness, in temper and manners gentle and courteous; by the Holy Ghost, of whose gifts, graces, and consolations we abundantly partake; by love unfeigned to God and man; by the word of truth, which unadulterated we deliver; by the power of God, whose everlasting arms are under us, and who, in the miracles that he enables us to work, bears testimony to our doctrine; by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, furnished out of the armoury of God with every thing necessary for our spiritual warfare; by honour and dishonour, not elated with the high esteem of some, nor discouraged by the insolent contempt of others; by evil report, and good report, mentioned with great commendation by our friends, and branded with the most infamous slanders by our enemies; as deceivers, so treated by many, and yet true, proved and found faithful to Christ, and the souls of men; as unknown, represented as men of no figure and despicable, and yet well known; those who are best acquainted with us, are sensible of our real characters, of our importance and usefulness; as dying, and every hour in jeopardy, and behold we live, amidst all our dangers; as chastened from the Lord, and by the hands of men, and not killed, immortal till our work is done; as sorrowful, under manifold temptations, yet always rejoicing in a sense of the divine love and favour; as poor in this world, yet making many rich, with the unsearchable riches of Christ; as having nothing, which we can call our own, dependent on Providence for daily bread; and yet possessing all things, having a present fulness in the contentment that we enjoy, and blessed with all the internal riches of grace.*

2dly, The Apostle's heart glowed with warm affection,

and he cannot but unbofom himself. *O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged; we speak with the greatest freedom, and long for your salvation. Ye are not straitened in us; we love you ardently; we would keep back nothing from you that could promote your spiritual and eternal interests; but ye are straitened in your own bowels, and fail to make the suitable returns of gratitude, or to receive fully the blessings which we communicate. Now for a recompence in the same, (I speak as unto my children from whom I may justly expect the strongest filial regard) be ye also enlarged, in mutual love toward us your faithful ministers, and in your cordial reception of that blessed Gospel, with all its precious doctrines and inestimable privileges, which we declare unto you. As a father then I admonish you, for the credit of your profession, and for the good of your own souls, be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, intermarrying with the unconverted heathen, or otherwise entering into near and close connections with them, particularly not joining in any of their religious services: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? What holy friendship can subsist between a renewed and an unrenewed soul? And what communion, in society and converse, hath the enlightened Christian with the unawakened sinner, any more than light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? What harmony can subsist between the members of Christ and the children of the wicked one? Or what part or lot hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? How can the worshippers of the true Jehovah, and who are themselves his living temple, join with heathens in their idolatrous worship? How absurd is it, and incongruous? For ye are the temple of the living God, where his divine Spirit is pleased to take up his abode; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, in a nobler sense than he ever was in his temple of old, blessing them with his presence and abiding communion; and I will be their God, united to them in love, and making them partakers of my Divine Nature; and they shall be my people, yielding to me a holy and willing obedience. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate from all unnecessary intercourse and familiarity with the surrounding heathen, saith the Lord; and touch not the unclean thing; keep at the greatest possible distance from idolatry and every abomination; and I will receive you as my peculiar people, and will be a Father unto you, shewing you the most endeared affection; and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty, admitted to that high dignity and most inestimable privilege. Note; (1.) A child of God must separate himself from the ways and manners of a world that lieth in wickedness. (2.) God cannot bear a rival in our hearts; no idols must be harboured there.*

CHAP. VII.

LEST the Corinthians might fancy St. Paul had injured them by forbidding them to contract either marriages or friendships with infidels, and left on that account they

6 Nevertheless ^a God, who comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;

7 And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us ¹ your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.

8 ^k For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though *it were* but for a season.

9 ^l Now I rejoice, not that ye were made

sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry ^m after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

10 ⁿ For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: ^o but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

11 For behold this self-same thing, that ^p ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, *what* clearing of yourselves, yea, *what* indignation, yea, *what* fear, yea, *what* vehement desire, yea, *what* zeal, yea, *what* revenge! In all *things* ye

^a Ch. 1. 3, 4. ¹ Thes. 3. 6. ² Thes. 2. 16, 17. Deut. 33. 25. & 32. 36. ^{Ch. 2. 13.} Gen. 22. 14. ¹ Prov. 28. 23. & 9. 8, 9. & 27. 5. P.
^{141. 5.} Mat. 18. 15. ^k 1 Cor. 4. 18—21. Ver. 6, 11. Ch. 2. 4. ¹ Jer. 31. 18—20. Luke, 15. 6, 7, 9, 10. 24. 32. ¹ Pet. 2. 10. ^m Or
 according to God. Ver. 10, 11. Acts, 20. 21. If. 55. 7. ² 2 S. m. 12, 13. Mat. 26. 75. Luke, 13. 13. Jer. 41. 18—20. ^o Mat. 27. 4, 5.
 Heb. 12. 17. Prov. 17. 22. & 15. 13, 15. ^p 1 Cor. 5. 2. Acts, 11. 18. If. 57. 15. & 66. 2. Jer. 3. 12, 13. & 22, 23, 24. & 31. 12, 19. & 50.
^{45.} Esak. 6. 9. & 7. 16. & 16. 63. & 36. 31. Zech. 12. 10—14. ¹ Cor. 5. 13.

they might lose their affection for him, he intreated them to acknowledge and love him as a faithful Apostle of Christ; since neither by his doctrine, nor by his actions, had he injured, or corrupted, or deceived any of them, ver. 2.—And because, in thus speaking, he obliquely insinuated that their new teacher had done these injuries to them, he assured them, that he did not deride their simplicity, in suffering themselves to be so used: for, as he said before, he had the most cordial affection for them, ver. 3.—But he spake freely to them, because he had boasted of their good dispositions, and because their obedience in excommunicating the incestuous person, had filled him with consolation, ver. 4.

Farther, to make them sensible of the greatness of his joy on account of their obedience, he pathetically described his anxiety of mind, occasioned by his not meeting with Titus at the time he expected him, ver. 5. and the pleasure which his arrival, with the good news of their submission and love, had given him, ver. 6, 7.—And as they had taken his admonitions in good part, he told them, he did not repent of having made them sorry for a little while, by his former letter, ver. 8.—since their sorrow was of a godly sort, and had wrought in them, through the grace of God, true repentance, ver. 9, 10.—He told them likewise, that he wrote to them to excommunicate the incestuous person, to shew the care which he took of them in the sight of God, ver. 12.—For which reason, their kind reception of Titus, and their obedience, whereby he was made joyful and his spirit was refreshed, had comforted the Apostle, and filled him with exceeding joy, ver. 13.—And seeing before Titus went to Corinth, the Apostle had boasted to him of the good disposition of the Corinthians, he told them he was glad that his boasting was found true, ver. 14.—In the last place, he informed them, that Titus entertained a most tender affection for them, which was increased by his remembering their obedience to the Apostle, and their kindness to himself, ver. 15.—The Apostle, therefore, rejoiced that he now had confidence in them, in every thing, ver. 16.

Ver. 1. Having therefore these promises,] This verse should certainly have been connected with what goes before, and not have begun a new chapter. Some would read the latter part of it thus: *From all filthiness of the flesh, and perfecting the holiness of the Spirit in the fear of God.* If we understand it according to our version, the meaning is, “Let us endeavour, through divine grace, to purify ourselves from every actual and outward defilement, and from every inward sensual affection which can pollute our hearts, and render them displeasing to God.”

Ver. 2. We have defrauded no man.] The original word signifies, “to indulge a covetous temper, and make a prey of others by it;” and perhaps intimates, that the false teachers, of whom he had so much reason to complain, had done so.

Ver. 4. Boldness of speech] Freedom of speech. Doddridge. The word rendered *exceeding joyful*, *ὑπερπερισσεύουμαι*, is very expressive, and seems to be a word of the Apostle’s own making.

Ver. 6. Nevertheless,] Or, but.

Ver. 8. Though I did repent:] However anxious I might before have been. The original word *μεταμέλεια* strictly expresses an *after-care* and *anxiety* for any thing that has been done; whereas the word *repent* always signifies a wish that it had not been done. Now, as what St. Paul did in writing the former epistle was proper, and done under the direction of the divine Spirit, it does not seem reasonable to suppose that he really repented of it; and therefore the above translation, which is agreeable to the original word, seems proper. The word may also signify a kind of misgiving of heart of the success; which is natural when the reproof, however necessary, is given to a person whom one tenderly loves, and where the event is dubious, as it might be in this instance. Dr. Heylin renders the last clause, *though but for a short time.*

Ver. 10. For godly sorrow, &c.] See the Inferences.

Ver. 11. Yea, what revenge!] What punishment!—namely, of the incestuous person. Heylin. The word *clear* in this verse answers very well to the word *ἀγνός*, in the Greek; but then, “to be clear,” in English is generally

have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

12 Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, ¹ *I did it* not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you.

13 Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, ¹ because his spirit was refreshed by you all.

14 For ¹ if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which *I made* before Titus, is found a truth.

15 And his ¹ inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the ¹ obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him.

16 ¹ I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all *things*.

¹ 1 Cor. 5. 1. with. ch. 2. 9.

¹ Ver. 15. Ch. 8. 16.

¹ Ch. 1. 12, 19. & 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 6, 7.

¹ Gr. bowels. Ver. 13. Phil. 2. 20.

¹ Ch. 2. 9. & 9. 13. Phil. 2. 2, 12.

¹ Phil. 2. 12. 1 Thes. 3, 4. Philem. 21. Ch. 2. 9. & 10. 1-8.

tally understood to signify, "not to have been guilty;" which could not be the sense of the Apostle, he having charged the Corinthians so strongly in his first epistle. His meaning must therefore be, that they had now resolved on a contrary course, and were so far *clear*; that is, were set right, and in a good disposition again, as he describes it in the former part of this verse; and therefore the expression *ἐν τῷ πένθει*, which we render *in this matter*, might perhaps better be rendered *in fact*; that is, "by your sorrow, your fear, &c." It cannot well be translated *in this matter*, understanding thereby the punishment of the fornicator,—for that was not the matter of which St. Paul had been speaking; but the Corinthians siding with the false apostle against him, had been the subject of the preceding part of this, and of the three or four foregoing chapters, wherein he justifies himself against their slanders, and invalidates the pretences of the adverse party. This is what lay chiefly upon his heart, and what he labours both in this and the former epistle to rectify, as the foundation of all the disorders among them; and consequently is that wherein he rejoices to find them all set right. Indeed, in the immediately following verse he mentions his having written to them concerning the fornicator, but it is only as an argument of his kindness and concern for them; but that which was the great cause of his rejoicing, was the breaking the faction, and the reuniting them all to himself in Christ; which he expresses in the word *all*, emphatically used, ver. 13. 15. and thence he concludes thus; *I rejoice, therefore, that I have confidence in you in all things*, ver. 16. His mind was now at rest: the partisans of his opposer having forsaken that leader in whom they had so much gloried, and being all through the blessing of God now come over to him, he doubted not but all would go well, and therefore here drops the subject.

Ver. 16. *I rejoice therefore, &c.*] The address of all this part of the epistle is striking and excellent: this verse in particular finely introduces what he had to say in the following chapter, and is strongly illustrated by ch. ix. 2-4.

Inferences drawn from ver. 6-11.—From the consideration of the different effects of *worldly* and of *religious sor-*

row here recorded, the Apostle with no less truth than holy art insinuates to the Corinthians, how really he had acted the part of a friend towards them, in bringing them through divine grace to a due sense of sorrow for the sins they had committed.—But it is the part of a friend to ease our minds of grief, to step in between us and sorrow, and to make us, as far as it is possible, forget our misfortunes. Why then, it may be asked by many, do the ministers of Christ perpetually suggest new fears to us, and still labour to awaken our souls to a sense of their misery, and to fill us with sorrow, by continually representing to us the greatness of our loss?—To this let the Apostle answer for himself, and for all, (as in ver. 9.) *I rejoiced, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance.*

If from *worldly sorrow* there can arise nothing but certain woe and misery; if the anguish of mind springing therefrom produces feebleness of body, and the lamenting our past misfortunes renders us incapable of the enjoyments which are present; happy is the man who can bear up against afflictions, and with an undisturbed mind submit to those evils which no sorrow can either alleviate or prevent. But, if in *godly sorrow* the effects are just the contrary; if penitential grief brings us to a knowledge of ourselves; if it brings us to Jesus Christ, the only refuge for the wounded spirit; and thereby we are at peace with God and ourselves; if now life is rendered comfortable, and death not terrible; if we are rid of fear for the present, and filled with hope of future glory; how happy are we, who through conviction of and sorrow for sin, are thus led to Christ, holiness, and happiness!

How these blessed fruits grow out of godly sorrow, will appear from the words in question; whence we may observe,

1. That *sorrow* is distinguished from *repentance*; for godly sorrow is said to *work repentance*,—and is therefore supposed to have the same relation to it, that the cause has to its effect. In common speech we are apt to speak of *sorrow for sin* under the name of *repentance*, and to ascribe to it that effect which belongs only to repentance. But the Apostle here has plainly another notion of repentance, since the common notion would create an absurdity: for if by repentance we understand sorrow for sin, the Apostle must

CHAP. VIII.

He stirrcth them up to a liberal contribution for the poor saints at Jerusalem, by the example of the Macedonians, by commendation of their former forwardness, by the example of Christ, and by the spiritual profit that shall redound to themselves thereby; commending to them the integrity and willingness of Titus, and those other brethren, who, upon his request, exhortation, and commendation, were purposely come to them for this business.

[Anno Domini 58.]

MOREOVER, brethren, * we do you to wit of ^a the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

2 How that ^b in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3 ^c For to *their* power, I bear record, yea, and beyond *their* power, *they were* willing of themselves;

4 Praying us with much entreaty ^d that we would receive the gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

5 ^e And *this they did*, not as we hoped, ^f but first gave their ownelves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

* Gr. we must inform you. ^a Rom. 15. 25. Gal. 2. 10. Ver. 2—7. 10. 19, 20. Ch. 9. 1. 5. 9. 12—14. ^b 1 Thes. 1. 6. & 2. 14. Mark. 12. 44. Rom. 5. 3. & 12. 8. 12. Ch. 7. 5. & 9. 11. Jam. 2. 5. ^c Acts, 11. 29. 1 Pet. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 16. 2. Ch. 9. 6, 7. ^d Acts, 11. 29. Rom. 15. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 16. 1. Ch. 9. 1. Heb. 6. 10. ^e Ver. 3. with Acts, 11. 29. 1 Cor. 16. 2. ^f 1f. 44. 4, 5. Jer. 50. 5. Pl. 116. 16. Mat 25. 40. Phil. 4. 18. H. b. 13. 16.

must then be understood to say, “That godly sorrow produces sorrow for sin; that is, that godly sorrow produces itself,” since that only is *godly sorrow*, which is upon the account of sin. *Repentance* therefore is distinct from sorrow, as it is wrought by it; and properly denotes such a change of mind, as leads us ardently to pant after Christ, forgiveness, and spiritual things, instead of the world and the things which are in the world.”

Sorrow then is not repentance, though it be the cause of repentance in very many cases. The alliance between them will be best explained by considering the nature of sorrow in general, and the impressions it makes upon every man's mind. Whatever is the cause of sorrow, must needs be the cause of aversion too; since to take pleasure in the thing that grieves us, and causes us pain, is a contradiction in nature. Sin especially cannot be the cause of our sorrow, but it must be likewise of our aversion; the natural consequence of which is repentance. Thus we see how consequentially repentance arises from godly sorrow, or sorrow for sin.

2. This *godly sorrow*, secondly, is not said to work salvation immediately, and of itself, but through divine grace by means of that repentance which it produces, and that conversion which follows. So many are the sad effects of sin, with respect to this world, that the sinner who has no fear of God before his eyes, has reason enough, even in respect to his state here below, to be sorry for his sins. But sorrow arising from these motives is mere worldly sorrow: one man laments the decay of his health; another the loss of his reputation; and a third the ruin of his fortune; and very often one laments the loss of *all*; and equally would they have lamented these losses, had they come from any other cause besides sin. He that is sorry for his sin, merely because it has destroyed his health, would have been as sorry had a fever destroyed it; and he that grieves for the loss of his fortune, would have grieved in the same manner, if fire, or the raging sea, had been his undoing. Whence it is plain, that in such sorrow as this, no regard is had to God; whom yet we are principally to

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respect in our repentance, as being the person against whom we have offended, and whose mercy and pardon through Jesus Christ we must obtain, or be undone for ever.

In true sorrow, which produces repentance, the sense of our guilt is a great ingredient, as well as the sense of our misery. The very hopes we have of obtaining pardon at the hand of God through the infinite merits of the Redeemer, will fill our minds with indignation at ourselves, for having offended so gracious a Master; for if we can think him so good as to be willing to forgive us through the Son of his love, we must needs think ourselves exceedingly wicked, and lost to all sense of gratitude and goodness, that we could offend so kind and compassionate a Lord. In short, fear, zeal, indignation, every passion will be roused to act its part in making us hate ourselves and our iniquities, and will never let us be at peace with our own hearts, till we have found pardon in Jesus Christ, and through his Spirit have purged ourselves of every evil lust, and consecrated ourselves entirely to the service of our Master:—and this is that true *repentance unto salvation never to be repented of*.

Fear may sometimes prevail against the power of lust; and the wretch who hates to think of God, may yet not be able to exclude the servile dread of him. When the flames of hell play before the sinner's eyes, and guilt, conscious of its own deserts, fills the imagination with all the horrors of damnation; in this case there will never be a want of some kind of *sorrow*, though perhaps there be no signs of genuine *repentance*. Thus Judas grieved; in his grief he died; and in his death he found the pains of hell.

In the Gospel there are no promises made to grief and sorrow; the mercies of God are offered to the genuine penitent, on the condition of faith in the Redeemer's blood. Sorrow which produces not real repentance and living faith, is of no account in the sight of God. Such sorrow forms a trifling part of the sinner's due; if he suffer under it, he has but a part of his reward: it is the punishment of his iniquity, but can never be a preparation for pardon.

U. u.

One

6 ^a Infomuch that we desired Titus, that you the same ^b grace also.
as he had begun, so he would also finish in 7 Therefore, as ye ^c abound in every thing,

^a Ch. 12. 18. 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.
11. Phil. 1. 9—11.

^b Ver. 1, 4, 7, 14, 19, 20. Ch. 9. 1, 5, 9, 12—14. Phil. 4. 15, 18.

^c 1 Cor. 1. 5. & xii. xiv. Ch. 7. 7.

One would think this were too plain a case to be mistaken; and yet, so commonly is it mistaken, that repentance is grown, in the Christian world at large, almost into a form and method; and instead of reforming from their sins through divine grace, these people only set themselves so many days to be sorry for them. Alas! it is a fruitless grief; and they may assure themselves their hopes of pardon will be as empty and delusive as their sorrow. Were men once truly sensible of their guilt, there would need no art to produce sorrow, no rules whereby to limit their grief; they would fly to the only refuge, and to the only fountain, for sin and for uncleanness, with unfought tears and groans. Were we sincere, we should of course through grace fly the viper that had stung us, and not cherish and caress the venomous animal, while with false tears we bathe the wound that we have received.

3. The nature of this godly repentance will be better understood, by comparing it with worldly sorrow, and shewing the difference between them. Now, worldly sorrow is said immediately to *work death*: it brings forth nothing analogous to repentance, but does rather confirm the evil dispositions from which it grows.

There is such a connection between the passions, that *one* cannot be powerfully set on work, but it must move and engage *the others* in their several spheres. Thus ver. 11. the Apostle tells us, that the godly sorrow of the Corinthians produced *fear, indignation, zeal, and vehement desire and revenge*. And thus it must be: whatever afflicts us, is in some sense the object of our aversion; whatever we lament the loss of, that we must needs vehemently desire and long after; and our grief for the loss will rouse us to recover, if possible, the thing we lament for: and thus it always is in respect to religion through the grace of God.

This being agreed, we need only consider the causes from which worldly sorrow and godly sorrow arise, to see the workings of both, and the different effects which they must produce. In all *godly sorrow* we grieve for having enjoyed too much of the world, to the hazard of losing the infinitely more valuable pleasures of immortality: in *worldly sorrow* we lament our having had too little of the world. It is evident then that sorrow in one case will, through grace, make us fly from the world and its allurements; in the other it will render us but the more eager to pursue and overtake them. In the one case, sorrow, by the divine blessing, gives us new desires, and rouses us to seek new joys and comforts, to which before we were strangers. In the other case, grief confirms the old habits, quickens the old desires, and makes a man ten times more worldly-minded than he was before: so that his last state is even worse than his first. Which will further appear by considering,

4. That the *death* which is wrought by worldly sorrow is opposed by the *salvation* which follows repentance, and may therefore signify eternal death, as well as temporal;

the truth of the proposition admitting either or both of these explications: only that repentance must be followed by persevering faith and holiness, if we be eternally saved.

The natural effect of grief, considered as such, is, to waste and impair the strength, to deaden the faculties of the mind, and to make a man useless to himself and his friends. But then here lies the difference between *godly* sorrow and *worldly* sorrow. The first, in every step, tends to peace and joy; and its most obvious effect, through divine grace, is, to destroy itself, and leave the mind, by faith in Jesus, in perfect ease and tranquillity. The sinner's tears, though they spring from grief, do, like showers in summer, portend a cooler and more refreshing air. But *worldly sorrow* knows no rest, has no period; it still urges men to new pursuits after the world; and the world has new disappointments in reserve to baffle all their eager care. Every disappointment is a new occasion of grief; and the whole gain of this passion for the world, being fairly computed, amounts to this,—*Vanity and vexation of spirit*.

Thus the case stands, if we regard only the comforts of *this life*. Godly sorrow for sin produces, through faith in the Redeemer, the pleasure of righteousness, which is a perpetual spring of joy and spiritual consolation; while the worldly man, pursuing false enjoyments, is ever reaping real torments. But if we change the scene,—if we look into the *other world*, the difference grows wider still. The time is coming, when all tears shall be for ever wiped away from the eyes of the faithful. Whereas *worldly sorrow* will then have a heavy account to pass: those tears, those guilty tears, which were shed for the transitory pleasures of mortality, will rise up in judgment against the sinner's soul, and fearfully exclude him from the joys of that divine life, which endureth for evermore.—*The sorrow of the world worketh DEATH*.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, Having mentioned the amazingly rich and gracious promises of God, the Apostle,

1. Draws an inference from them. *Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, avoiding every kind of intemperance or uncleanness which would pollute our bodies; and mortify the inward abominations of pride, malice, falsehood, &c. which defile the soul; perfecting holiness in the fear of God, growing in grace unto perfect love, increasing with all the increase of God, till ultimately our course be completed in endless glory.*

2. He returns from the digression that he had made, to vindicate himself and his fellow-labourers from the slanders of the false teachers. *Receive us with cordial regard: we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man; our principles have been according to God's word, and our practice upright and unblamable. I speak not this to condemn you, reflecting on you as a body,*

in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in ye abound in this grace also.

all diligence, and in your love to us, see that

8 * I speak not by commandment, but by

1 Cor. 7. 6, 12, 25, 40. Phil. 4. 11, 14—18. Ver. 24.

as having traduced us: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you; such confidence have we in you, and such warm affection towards you. Great is my boldness of speech toward you, in censuring the disorders among you; great is my glorying of you, as, in general, obedient children, and ornaments to your profession. I am filled with comfort in you; I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation, to hear the late gracious accounts from you. For when we were come into Macedonia, in search of Titus, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side, not only with the opposition of our enemies, but with the anxiety of our minds on your account; without, were fightings from our foes; within, were fears for you, lest you should be removed from the simplicity which is in Christ. Nevertheless, God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus, whose arrival revived our drooping hearts; and not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, by the affectionate and respectful reception he met with at Corinth; when he told us your earnest desire to obey our injunctions, your mourning for the offences which had been committed, your fervent mind toward me, vindicating with zeal my character against the false teachers, and longing for my coming; so that I rejoiced the more, and his report exceedingly heightened the pleasure of his arrival. For though I made you sorry with a letter, wherein I was constrained to use sharp rebukes, I do not repent, though I did repent, and grieved exceedingly, even at the time, that I should be necessitated to use such severity: for I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though it were but for a season, and engaged you immediately to correct what was amiss. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry: in that I could have no satisfaction, and sympathized tenderly with you; but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, mourning over your unfaithfulness, and returning in deep humility to God, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing, but contrariwise be abundantly profited. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of; and what has such a gracious effect, cannot but in the issue prove matter of the most solid satisfaction: but the sorrow of the world, which men of earthly minds feel, on account of the losses and crosses here below, worketh death, driving them to despair, impairing their health, and sometimes even causing them to lay violent hands on themselves. For behold, this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what a blessed influence it had upon you! What carefulness it wrought in you to remove the cause of offence, yea, what clearing of yourselves from any connivance at iniquity; yea, what indignation against what was evil in yourselves, or in the notorious delinquent; yea, what fear of God, and jealousy for yourselves; yea, what vehement desire to make a thorough reformation of all disorders; yea, what zeal for God's glory, and the honour of your holy profession; yea, what revenge, punishing with due severity the criminal. In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this

matter, by your ready amendment. Note; (1.) Godly sorrow is the most profitable physic for the soul. (2.) Whatever bitterness we may have tasted, we shall never at last repent of that which worketh repentance unto salvation.

2dly, Since his admonition had so good an effect, the Apostle cannot but rejoice. Wherefore, though I wrote unto you with some sharpness, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, not merely that the incestuous person should be punished, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, out of any partial favour to his injured father, but that our care for you in the fight of God might appear unto you, and the church be preserved from scandal. Therefore we were comforted in your comfort, the peace and purity of your society being restored: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all, by the kind, obedient, respectful, and affectionate behaviour which you shewed towards him. For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed of the character I gave you; but as we spake all things to you in truth, in simplicity and godly sincerity, even so our boasting which I made before Titus, is found a truth, and the commendation that I gave you has been proved to be but just. And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all to my apostolic injunctions, how with fear and trembling you received him, with deepest reverence and holy jealousy, lest you should not duly profit by his advice. I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things, that you will continue to obey my admonitions, and to refresh my spirit by your dutiful and becoming conduct on every occasion. Note; It is a singular comfort to a minister, that he has confidence in the fidelity of his people.

CHAP. VIII.

THE directions which the Apostle in his former letter gave to the Corinthians, concerning the collection for the saints in Judea, had not, it seems, been fully complied with. At the persuasion of Titus, indeed, they had begun that collection; but they had not finished it when he left Corinth; owing, perhaps, to the opposition made by the faction, or to the disturbances which the faction had raised in that church. Wherefore, to stir up the sincere among the Corinthians, to finish what they had so well begun, the Apostle, in this chapter, set before them the example of the Macedonian churches; I suppose the churches of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, who, notwithstanding their great poverty, occasioned by the persecution mentioned 1 Thes. ii. 14. had contributed beyond their ability, being much inclined to that good work by their benevolent disposition, ver. 1, 2, 3.—and had entreated the Apostle to receive their gift, and carry it to Jerusalem, ver. 4, 5—His exhortation to the Corinthians on this occasion, no doubt, would be the more regarded by them, because it immediately followed the commendations given them for their love and obedience. Wherefore, in the persuasion that they would now be hearty in the affair, the Apostle told them, he had entreated Titus, that as he

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had

occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.

9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your

¹ John, 10. 10. Pf. 24. 1. & 50. 12. Heb. 1. 2. Phil. 2. 6—8. Mat. 20. 28. & 8. 20. Gal. 4. 4—6. & 3. 13, 14. Ch. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Rev. 5. 9. Eph. 5. 2. Gal. 2. 20. 1 John, 4. 9, 10. & 3. 5. 8.

had begun, so he would finish that good work among them, ver. 6.—adding, that as they abounded in every other grace, and entertained great love to him their spiritual father, he hoped they would abound in that grace also, ver. 7.—This, however, he did not speak as an injunction, because works of charity must be voluntarily performed; but that they might emulate the forwardness of the Macedonians, and shew the sincerity of their love and gratitude to Christ, ver. 8.—And the more effectually to persuade them to part with some of their riches for relieving the faints, he told them, they were well acquainted with the greatness of the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich, ver. 9.—He then gave it as his opinion, that they ought to finish these collections speedily, seeing that they had begun them the last year, ver. 10.—none of them postponing the matter any longer, on pretence of inability, ver. 11.—because God regards the willingness of the giver, more than the greatness of his gift, ver. 12.

But lest the Corinthians might fancy, that by thus earnestly recommending liberality in making the collection, he meant at their expence to enrich the brethren in Judea, he assured them, he meant only the relief of their present pressing wants, that in their turn they might be able and disposed, in case of need, to assist the Corinthians, ver. 13, 14, 15.—And to shew that he was much interested in this matter, he thanked God for having put the same care concerning it in the heart of Titus, ver. 16.—who, at his desire, had willingly agreed to go with him to Corinth, for the purpose of persuading them to finish their begun collection; but who, being more diligent in the matter than the Apostle expected, had offered to go before him, to exhort them; and was come to them with this letter, ver. 17.—But that Titus might not be burdened with the whole weight of the work, he had sent with him a brother of great reputation, who had been chosen by the Macedonian churches to accompany the Apostle to Jerusalem, to witness his delivering their gift faithfully, ver. 18, 19.—a measure which he highly approved; because, in this affair, he wished to avoid all suspicion of unfaithfulness, ver. 20, 21.—And that with them he had sent another brother likewise, whom he had found faithful in many things, ver. 22.—Now that these messengers might meet with due respect from the Corinthians, the Apostle informed them, that if any of the faction inquired concerning Titus, they might reply, he was his fellow-labourer in preaching the Gospel to the Corinthians. Or if they inquired concerning the brethren who accompanied Titus, they were the messengers employed by the churches, to carry their collections to Jerusalem; by which service, as well as by their other ministrations, they brought great glory to Christ, ver. 23.—Being therefore persons so respectable, he hoped the Corinthians would give them and the churches, whose messengers they were, full proof of their

good disposition, and justify his boasting concerning them, by treating them with every mark of affection and esteem, ver. 24.

Ver. 1. The Apostle having employed the seven foregoing chapters, in a considerable measure, in his own justification, and having in the close expressed the great satisfaction that he had in the Corinthians being all united again in their affection and obedience to him, exhorts them in this and the following chapter, by the example of the churches of Macedonia particularly, to unite in a liberal contribution for the poor Christians in Judea.

Instead of *we do you to wit*, &c. Mr. Locke and others read, *we make known unto you the godly charity given by the churches of Macedonia*. The word *Χαρις*, which is translated *grace* in our version, is here used by St. Paul for *gift*, or *liberality*, and is so used, ver. 4. 6, 7. 9. 19. and 1 Cor. xvi. 3. It is called *the gift of God*, because God is the author and procurer of it, moving men's hearts thereto by his grace.

Ver. 2. *In a great trial of affliction*] How ill-disposed the Macedonians in general were to the Christians, may be seen, Acts, xvi. and xvii. Instead of *abounded*, some read *both abounded*.

Ver. 3. *For to—yea, and beyond their power*] This is a noble hyperbole; like that of Demosthenes, “I have performed all, even with an industry beyond my power.” The present and following verses are thus connected and read by Bengelius: *For to their power, (I bear record,) yea, beyond their power, of their own accord, beseeching us with much intreaty, they gave to us the liberality, and the communication of the ministry to the saints; and this, not in the manner in which we presumed to hope, but first giving themselves to God, and then to us by the will of God.*

Ver. 6. *As he had begun, &c.*] “As he had begun the collection among you, so he would also finish it,” Heylin; who, instead of *grace* in the next verse, reads *work of charity*: See ver. 1 and 9.

Ver. 8. *And to prove the sincerity of your love.*] *The genuine temper, &c.* Locke. Taking as we may, without violence to the words, the original, *δουμαζω* for *drawing out a proof*, and the word *γνῶσιον* for *genuine*, the passage may be well rendered *showing the world a proof of the genuine temper of your love*; and thus properly expresses St. Paul's obliging way of stirring up the Corinthians to a liberal contribution: for his discourse briefly stands thus: “The great liberality of the poor Macedonians made me send Titus to you, to finish the collection of your charity, which he had begun; that you, who excel in all other virtues, might be eminent in this also. But I urge not this as a commandment from God; but, upon occasion of the liberality of others, present you with an opportunity of giving the world a proof of the genuine temper of your charity, which, like that of your other virtues, will not bear to be out-done.”

Ver. 9. *Ye know the grace of our Lord, &c.*] Rather, *the*

fakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

10 ^a And herein I give *my* advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be * forward a year ago.

11 Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as *there was* a readiness to will, so *there may be* a performance also out of that which ye have.

12 For ^a if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

13 ^a For *I mean* not that other men be eased, and ye burdened:

14 But by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality:

15 As it is written, ^a He that *had gathered* much had nothing over; and he that *had ga-*

thered little had no lack.

16 ^a But thanks *be* to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.

17 ^a For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.

18 And we have sent with him ^a the brother, whose praise *is* in the gospel throughout all the churches;

19 And not *that* only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this ^a grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and *declaration of* your ready mind:

20 ^a Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us:

21 ^a Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

^a See ver. 8. Prov. 19. 17. Mat. 10. 42. Heb. 13. 16. Ch. 9. 2. Ver. 11. 1 Cor. 16. 2. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Gr. *willing*. Ch. 9. 7. Ex. d. 35. 6. Prov. 19. 22. & 3. 28. Mark, 12. 43. Luke, 21. 3. 1 Pet. 4. 10. Heb. 11. 17. & 13. 16. Acts, 4. 34. Mat. 7. 12. Exod. 16. 18. Luke, xii. Phil. 4. 6. Col. 3. 17. Eph. 5. 20. Ch. 12. 18. Ver. 6. 16. 1 Chr. 29. 2, 3, 6. Ch. 12. 18. Ver. 21, 23, Act, 15. 22, 25. Or gift. See ver. 1. 4. 6. Ch. 7. 14, 20, & 9. 1, 5, 9, 12, 13. Phil. 4. 15-18. 1 Cor. 16. 3, 4. Mat. 10. 16. Eph. 5. 15. Prov. 3. 4. Act, 24. 16. Rom. 12. 17. Phil. 4. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 12.

the munificence, or liberality;—the signification wherein St. Paul uses the word *χαρις* frequently in this chapter. Heylin renders it, *the bounty*.

Ver. 10. *But also to be forward*] Or, *But also to exert yourselves*. Dr. Heylin reads the latter part of this verse, *who have not only begun already to make a collection, but also were the first that proposed it a year ago*. He goes on to the next verse, *Now therefore complete it; that as you readily undertook it, so you may as readily perform it, each man according to his ability*.

Ver. 14. *But by an equality, &c.*] *I would only recommend an equality*. Heylin. The Apostle does not mean that Christians are obliged to be all upon a level, but that there ought to be such mutual assistance and relief among them, as that the wants and necessities of all might be supplied; and in that sense the most indigent might be brought nearer to an equality with the rich. The Corinthians at Jerusalem, for a good while, were in want of nothing; they who had lands or possessions sold them, and they had all things in common: but now, at the distance of five-and-twenty years from that æra, the frequent losses they endured by confiscations, &c. the increase of the number of Christians, and the gradual consumption of the money arising from sales, reduced them to great extremities of poverty. But though the Christian Jews were poor and oppressed, the Corinthians were rich and prosperous; and therefore, it may be said, there was no reason to expect that what the Apostle here mentions, would ever happen

to the latter,—that their [the Jews] abundance should be a supply for the want of the *Corinthians*. To this it may be sufficient to reply, that all human affairs are unstable and uncertain; Corinth itself, from great prosperity, had been desolated in the Roman war by Memmius some time before; or, supposing that no such event should happen to them again, yet particular persons might be distressed, or the whole body of Christians there reduced by persecutions, though their city continued to flourish.

Ver. 15. *He that had gathered much, &c.*] See the note on Exod. xvi. 18.

Ver. 18. *The brother, whose praise is in the Gospel*] This is generally supposed to have been St. Luke, who now was, and had been a long while, St. Paul's companion in his travels. Many ancient Christians understood the expression, *whose praise is in the Gospel is in all the churches*, as referring to the universal approbation with which St. Luke's gospel was every where received. This may be included; but the Apostle's meaning seems more extensive: "Whose praise is in the Gospel, on account of the various and eminent services which he has done for the interests of Christianity, wherever his influence has extended, both by his writings and exhortations."

Ver. 19. *And not that only, &c.*] This verse is to be included in a parenthesis, and the continued sense of ver. 18. and 20. will be, *We have sent that brother,—to avoid blame, &c.* Dr. Heylin translates and connects the verses from 18. to 21. thus: *A brother, who is not only famous for his success*

22 And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which * *I have in you.*

23 Whether *any do inquire* of Titus, *he is*

* Or he hath. † Ch. 7. 6. & 12. 18. Phil. 2. 25. John, 15. 8. Ch. 1. 20. ‡ Ver. 8. Ch. 7. 14. & 9. 2.

success in preaching the Gospel, ver. 19. but also is particularly appointed by the churches to accompany me with this collection, which we shall dispose of to the glory of God, and agreeably to your good intention, ver. 20. (I have used this precaution [in having one joined with me] to prevent any suspicion that might be raised, upon my having the management of so large a sum; ver. 21. For I am careful to conduct myself unblamably, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.)

Ver. 22, 23. And we have sent, &c.] We likewise send with them [Luke and Titus,] another brother [Apollos,] whose zeal we have experienced upon many occasions; and he is now more than ordinarily intent upon this, through the great confidence he has in you, ver. 23. For as to Titus, he is my companion and assistant in your affairs, and the other brethren are deputies of the churches, and [have been instruments of] the glory of Christ. Heylin. Some critics propose a comma only at the end of the 22d verse, and would connect the two thus; We have sent with them our brother—in the great confidence which we have in you, both on account of Titus, my partner and fellow-labourer for you; and in regard to our brethren, the Apostles or messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ. It is a great character which the Apostle gives of these brethren,—“the appointed and distinguished messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ;—men by whom the name of Christ is glorified.”

Inferences.—What an excellent grace is Christian benevolence, in relieving the poor, and especially such as are of the household of faith! It is wrought in us by the power of divine grace; it proves the sincerity of our love to Christ, and to his members for his sake; it is strongly recommended by the matchless grace of our Lord Jesus, who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich; and it turns to the spiritual account of the pious benefactors themselves, who may likewise hope that, if ever they should be reduced, God will incline the hearts of others to be assistant to them, in a return of equal kindness. How pleasant is it to see a forwardness in this, and every other good work, while some of their own accord, and yet under divine influence, set an example of it to other Christians, according to the utmost of their ability; and others are equally ready to encourage it, and assist in finishing it, according to the pressing occasions that call for it! A little that is given in love, and with a willing mind, by those that are in strait circumstances, is a high commendation of their liberality; and yet, as the proportion of alms-deeds is accepted according to what a man has; so some ought not to be unreasonably burdened, to the easing, much less to the enriching of others; nor ought any to give what is not their own: but all charity, as well as every thing else,

my partner and fellow-helper concerning you: or our brethren *be inquired of, they are* the messengers of the churches, *and* the glory of Christ.

24 Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, ² the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

ought to be managed with such prudence and faithfulness, and in such a disinterested and honourable way, as may approve itself to God, as done in his sight, and even to the consciences of the whole world; and as may cut off all occasions of blame, or even of suspicions of fraud, partiality, or selfish designs. How happy is it when ministers and private Christians behave in such a way, as is to the glory of Christ, and as spreads their praises among the faints, and begets a mutual affection to, and confidence in one another! What a beauty is there in the order of the churches, that first gave their ownelves to the Lord with joint consent, and then to the conduct of his servants, according to the will of God! And how sweet is their harmony and communion, when the messengers of some churches are well recommended to, and are received with respect and honour, by others!

REFLECTIONS.—1st, As the brethren in Judea had undergone peculiar sufferings, and were reduced to great poverty, the Gentile churches, at the instigation of the Apostles, had made a collection for their relief. The churches of Macedonia had set the example, and the churches of Achaia ought not to be backward in so good a work.

1. The Apostle acquaints them with the generous conduct of the Macedonian brethren. *Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia, inclining them to exercise their generous benevolence: how that in a great trial of affliction, amid sore persecutions, the abundance of their joy in the Holy Ghost, and their deep poverty, abounded unto the riches of their liberality, and set off, with greater lustre, their distinguished charity. For to their power, (I bear record) yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves, needing no instigation, but praying us, with much intreaty, that we would receive the gift of their kind alms, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints, distributing their bounty to the Christians in Judea. And this they did, not merely as we hoped; but with a noble generosity, far exceeding our most sanguine expectations, they first gave their ownelves to the Lord, solemnly surrendering themselves, and all their possessions, to his glory, and unto us by the will of God, resolving to be directed by us as his ministering servants, according to his revealed word. Note; (1.) The grace of God opens the heart with love, and the hand with liberality. A lively Christian will rather go beyond his power, than be backward in acts of piety and charity. (2.) They who have truly given themselves to the Lord, will hold back nothing from him, which may serve to promote his glory and the interests of his kingdom.*

2. He recommended it to Titus, who had been so acceptable

CHAP. IX.

He giveth the reason why, though he knew the forwardness of the Corinthians, yet he sent Titus and his brethren beforehand: and proceedeth in stirring them up to a bountiful alms, as being but a kind of sowing of seed, which shall return a great increase to them, and occasion a great sacrifice of thanksgivings unto God.

[Anno Domini 58.]

FOR as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

¹ 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2. Rom. 15. 25, 26. Acts, 11. 29. Ch. 8. 4, 19. 7. 14 & 8. 17, 24. ² Ch. 11. 17. & 8. 2, 4. Ver. 2, 3.

2 For I know ^b the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

3 ^c Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready:

4 ^d Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

^b Ch. 8. 10, 19, 24. 1 Thes. 1. 7, 8. Heb. 10. 24. ^c 1 Cor. 16. 1. Ch.

ceptable to the Corinthians before, to go and finish what he had begun, exciting them to the exercise of the same grace of liberality, which had so eminently appeared in the Macedonian churches. *Note*; The success of our designs, in a great measure, depends upon the choice of proper instruments.

2dly, The Apostle proceeds, by the most persuasive arguments, to excite the Corinthians to give liberally to the necessities of their brethren.

1. Their eminence in other gifts and graces should make them ambitious to excel in this. *Therefore as, or but as, ye abound in every thing, great and gracious, in faith, and utterance, and eloquence, in clear knowledge of the mysteries of the Gospel, and in all diligence to advance the Redeemer's cause and interest; and in your love to us; see that ye abound in this grace also, of Christian liberality.* And this I speak not by commandment, as particularly ordered of God, or by my apostolic authority; but rather recommend it to you, by occasion of the forwardness of others, that you may not come behind them in any spiritual attainments; and to prove the sincerity of your love to Jesus and to his poor members for his sake. *Note*; (1.) We should be ashamed to be outdone in liberality by those who have less ability than ourselves. (2.) Where our love to Jesus is sincere, it will appear by a readiness to every good word and work.

2. He urges the example of the great Redeemer. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the greatness of his love to poor and perishing souls; that though he was rich in uncreated glory, the Maker and Governor of all things; yet for your sakes he became poor; so poor, as to want a house of his own to cover him when alive, and, when dead, was indebted to the charity of a friend for a grave.* And to this he submitted, *that ye through his poverty might be rich*; filled with all the treasures of his grace here, as preparatory to the enjoyment of his glory hereafter, if faithful: therefore standing so indebted to him, how could they withhold a pittance of their perishing goods from his necessitous saints and their brethren?

3. Their promising beginnings called for a suitable conclusion. *And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, and becoming the high rank in which you stand, who have begun before, not only to do something by way of such a collection, but also to be forward a year ago, testifying*

the greatest readiness to concur in this generous service. *New therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also; out of that which ye have, that your practice may correspond with your professions, and your contributions be according to your abilities: for if there be first a willing mind, and real charity in the heart, it, the gift, is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not; for it is not the sum contributed, so much as the spirit whence it proceeds, that God regards.*

4. Since the divine Providence had favoured them with abundance of worldly goods, they were peculiarly obliged to liberal distribution to the poor. *For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened; either that you should impoverish yourselves, to enrich the poor in Judea; or that other churches should be excused, and you alone be called upon to bear the whole charge of their necessary relief: no; but by an equality, proportioning your gifts to your abilities, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want; that, if by the strange vicissitudes of divine Providence you should be hereafter reduced, and they prosperous, their abundance also may be a supply for your want, that there may be equality, in the mutual beneficence exercised towards each other: as it is written, concerning the manna, he that had gathered much had nothing over, and he that had gathered little had no lack; each had his order; what remained to those who had gathered more, being given to supply the wants of the aged and infirm, who had gathered less.* In like manner should we, who abound, reckon our superfluities as the debt that we owe to the indigent.

3dly, The Apostle,

1. Thanks God, who put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus, to engage him in this blessed work, so that he needed no entreaty to undertake the journey; but, full of zeal, as the Apostle himself, for the honour of the Corinthian brethren, and for the relief of the poor, he was a volunteer in the service, and under a divine direction readily undertook to go. *Note*; Readiness to a good work shews the temper right.

2. He commends to them a brother, who accompanied Titus. *We have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the churches, for his fidelity and zeal in the ministry; (see the Annotations) and not that*

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that

* Ch. 8. 6. 1 Cor. 16. 2. much spoken of before. Ver. 12.

† Gr. blessing. Gen. 33. 11. Lev. 25. 21. 2 Kings, 5. 15. Job, 29. 13. & 31. 19.

‡ Or which hath been so

only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, or free gift, which is administered by us, and to be distributed to the necessitous in Judea to the glory of the same Lord, who is hereby honoured as our common Master, and to the declaration of your ready and liberal mind, which is hereby manifested.

3. He intimates the care that he took to remove all suspicion of dishonesty or partiality, by thus having others joined with him in this charge: *avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance, which is administered by us, as if we misapplied or embezzled the least mite; providing things honest, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men, whom we would convince of our unblemished integrity.* Note, In this censorious world we cannot be too careful to avoid every occasion of scandal; and ministers, for the gospel's sake, should be peculiarly cautious, especially in money matters.

4. He commends to them another brother, who also accompanied Titus. (See the Annotations.) He speaks of him with distinguished respect, as one whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you, that ye will receive him with respect, and attend to his exhortations.

5. In answer to any cavils of the false teachers, he adds, *Whether any do inquire of Titus, he is my partner, and fellow-helper concerning you in the work of the ministry: or our brethren be inquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, deputed by them to this service, and the glory of Christ, ornaments to the gospel which they preached. Wherefore show ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love to Christ, to me, and your afflicted brethren; and of our boasting on your behalf; that you may be found to answer the high opinion we have entertained of you, and the encomiums we have bestowed upon you.*

CHAP. IX.

THE Apostle, in this chapter, continued his discourse concerning the collection, not to persuade the Corinthians to undertake the work: that, as he observed, was not needful, ver. 1.—He knew their willingness, and had boasted to the Macedonians that Achaia was prepared since the end of the last year; for so the Apostle believed at the time he boasted of them, ver. 2.—But now, being informed by Titus that a good deal still remained to be done, he had sent the brethren mentioned in the preceding chapter to encourage them to go on, that his boasting concerning their being prepared might not be rendered false; but that at length they might be prepared, ver. 3.—For if the Macedonian brethren, who were coming with him to Corinth, should find their collection not finished, he, not to say the Corinthians, would be ashamed of his confident boasting concerning them, ver. 4.—He had judged it necessary, therefore, to intreat the brethren to go before him to Corinth, to persuade them to complete their collection, that whatever they should give, might appear as freely given,

and not as forced from them by his presence, ver. 5.—In the mean time, to encourage them to give liberally, he put them in mind of the future reward: *He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, &c.* ver. 6.—Then desired every one of them to consult his own heart, and to give what he thought proper, without grudging, ver. 7.—Because God loves a cheerful giver, and can supply men abundantly with this world's goods, both for their own maintenance and to enable them to do works of charity, ver. 8, 9.—Farther, he observed, that such a gift, from so many Gentile churches, not only would supply the wants of the brethren in Judea, but, being a demonstration of the affection which the Gentiles bare to them, would occasion many thanksgivings, ver. 12.—the Jews glorifying God for the professed subjection of the Gentiles to the gospel, of which they would have so clear a proof, ver. 13.—and also praying for the Gentiles, whom they would love as their brethren on account of the grace of God bestowed on them, ver. 14.—Now the union of the Jews and Gentiles into one body, or church, being in all respects a most happy event, the Apostle returned thanks to God for his unspeakable gift, Jesus Christ, through whom it had been accomplished, ver. 15.

I cannot finish this introduction without observing, in praise of the Apostle Paul, that there never was penned, by any writer, a stronger and more affecting exhortation to works of charity than that which he addressed to the Corinthians in this and the preceding chapter.—The example of the Christians in Macedonia, who, notwithstanding they were themselves in very straitened circumstances, had contributed liberally towards the relief of the saints in Judea.—The great love of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, though he was rich, yet for their sake became poor, that they, through his poverty, might be rich:—God's acceptance of works of charity, not according to the greatness of what is bestowed, so much as according to the willingness with which it is bestowed:—the reward which God will confer, in the life to come, on beneficent men, acting from the principle of divine love:—his supplying them with a sufficiency of this world's goods for their own maintenance, and for enabling them to continue their good offices to the indigent:—his blessing their ordinary labour for that end:—the joy which is occasioned to the poor, whose wants are relieved by the alms of the charitable:—the thanksgivings which other good men will offer to God when they see works of this sort done; but especially thanksgivings to God from the poor, who are relieved in their straits by the charitable:—their gratitude towards their benefactors, expressed in earnest prayers to God for their happiness:—and the cordial union which is produced between the rich and the poor by this intercourse of good offices:—all these considerations are displayed in this excellent exhortation, with a tenderness and feeling which nothing but a heart filled with goodness was capable of expressing.

With

the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.

6^b But this I say, ¹ He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7^k Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8 And ¹ God is able to make all grace abound towards you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

9 (As it is written, ^m He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his

righteousness remaineth for ever.

10ⁿ Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your ^o righteousness):

11^p Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

12 For the administration of this service not only ^q supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

13 Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they ^r glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for

^a 1 Cor. 1. 12. & 7. 29. & 15. 50. Gal. 3. 17. & 5. 16. Eph. 4. 27. Col. 2. 4. ¹ Eccl. 11. 1. Mat. 7. 2. Pf. 13. 25. Prov. 11. 24, 25. & 19. 17. & 22. 9. Gal. 6. 8. Luke, 19. 16, 19. ⁵ 1 Sam. 25. 16. Deut. 15. 7. Luke, 12. 20. Exod. 25. 2. & 35. 5. Lev. 1. 3. Rom. 12. 8. Prov. 11. 25. & 22. 9. Ch. 8. 12. ¹ Prov. 10. 22. & 11. 24, 25. & 15. 16. & 19. 17. & 28. 27. Pf. 37. 16. & 84. 11. Ch. 6. 10. & 8. 1, 5, 19. Phil. 4. 11, 13, 19. 1 Tim. 6. 6. Mat. 25. 34. Luke, 16. 9. ^m Pf. 112. 9. Ver. 10. 11. ⁿ Pf. 104. 13. If. 55. 10. Hof. 10. 12. ^o Ver. 9. Mat. 6. 1. ^p Ch. 8. 2, 3, 16. 19. & 1. 11. & 4. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Luke, 16. 9. ^q Ch. 8. 14. 15. Phil. 2. 25. & 4. 18. ^r Mat. 5. 16. Rom. 15. 26. Ch. 2. 9. & 6. 15. & 8, 4. Heb. 13. 16. Phil. 4. 10, 17—19.

With the above-mentioned affecting motives, which are suited to every ingenuous mind, the Apostle intermixed a variety of other incitements to works of charity, adapted to the particular circumstances of the Corinthian brethren, which, therefore, must have made a strong impression on them:—such as their former readiness to do good works:—their being enriched with every spiritual gift, a kind of riches vastly superior to the riches which the Apostle wished them to impart to their needy brethren:—their love to him, their spiritual father, with whose reasonable desires it was their duty to comply:—his having boasted of their good dispositions to the churches of Macedonia:—his anxiety that the messengers from these churches, who were coming to Corinth, might find them such as he had represented them:—and the shame with which the Apostle himself, as well as the Corinthians, would be overwhelmed, if, when the Macedonian brethren arrived, they were found to have been negligent in making the collection for the poor in Judea. He therefore intricated them to prove the truth of their love to him, and of his boasting concerning them, before these worthy strangers, and before the churches whose messengers they were, by finishing the collection with cheerfulness, that what they gave might appear to be a gift willingly bestowed, and not a thing extorted from them by his importunity.

Upon the whole, if any minister of the gospel, who is himself animated by a benevolent disposition towards mankind, has occasion to excite his people to works of charity, let him study with due attention the viiith and ixth chapters of St. Paul's second Epistle to the Corinthians; for no where else will he meet with so fine a model to form his exhortation on, as that which is exhibited in these excellent chapters.

Ver. 1. For as touching the ministering to the saints,] Now concerning the ministration to the saints, it is superfluous that I

should write further to you. Doddridge. It is superfluous for me to write more to you about the assistance which is preparing for the saints, ver. 2. For I am convinced of your generous inclination, and have boasted of it to them, &c.—so that your zeal hath excited many others. Heylin. By Achaia, in this verse, is meant the church of Corinth, which was made up of the inhabitants of that town, and of the circumjacent parts of Achaia. See ch. i. 1.

Ver. 5. Whereof ye had notice before] Which had been spoken of before, namely, to the Macedonian Christians, ver. 2. The word *πλεονεξία*, rendered covetousness, signifies a kind of force, by which money is, as it were, wrung by importunity from persons of a covetous disposition, and by such perseverance as covetous people themselves make use of, where their own gain is concerned. And thus it is opposed to *εὐλογία*, what is readily given, and comes as it were with a blessing.

Ver. 8. All grace] Rather charitable gifts, or liberality; as the word *χρημ* signifies in the former chapter, and as the context determines the sense here.

Ver. 9. His righteousness] His beneficence. Vorst. Phil. S. part i. p. 45. and so ver. 10.

Ver. 10. Now he that ministereth, &c.] Now may he that ministereth seed to the sower, and bread for food, both minister and multiply your seed, and increase the fruits of your beneficence. See Hail. lv. 10. and Matth. vi. 1.

Ver. 11. Being enriched, &c.] This should be connected with ver. 8. the 9th and 10th being in a parenthesis.

Ver. 12. The administration of this service] This use of the word *διακονία* intimates, that it was to be considered not merely as an act of humanity, but of religion, pleasing to God, and suitable to the nature of the gospel dispensation. Comp. Heb. xiii. 16. and see the note on Rom. xv. 25.

Ver. 13. Whiles by the experiment, &c.] Having this

your liberal distribution unto them, and unto
all men ;

14 And ¹ by their prayer for you, which long

after you for the ¹ exceeding grace of God in you.

15 ² Thanks be unto God for his ³ unspeak-
ble gift.

¹ Prov. 11. 26. 2 Tim. 1. 18. Phil. 4. 19. Luke, 16. 9. ² Ch. 8. 1, 6, 7. 1 Cor. 1. 4, 5. Ch. xii. xiv. ³ Ch. 3. 5. Pl. 115. 1. Rom. 11. 36. 1 Sam. 1. 17. ⁴ If. 9. 6. & 42. 6, 7. & 43. 6. & 55. 4. John, 3. 16. & 4. 10. Rom. 8. 32. & 6. 23.

proof of your charity, they will glorify God on account of that subjection to the gospel of Christ which you profess, and for your liberal distribution to them, as well as others, ver. 14. And they will pray for you, and bear a tender affection to you, upon account of the eminent grace which God hath bestowed upon you. Heylin, and Doddridge.

Ver. 15. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.]
“ When I think of these things, I desire sincerely to bless
“ God, on your account, for all the grace he hath given
“ you, and for all the usefulness with which he is pleased
“ to honour you. But I would trace up all to what is,
“ indeed, the fountain of all his other mercies to us, his
“ having bestowed upon us his dear and only-begotten
“ Son. Thanks daily, and everlasting thanks, be ascribed
“ to our Father and our God for that his unutterable gift,
“ of the excellence, importance, and grace of which
“ neither men nor angels can worthily speak or conceive.”
Or, by the *unspeakable gift*, the Apostle may mean *that exceeding grace* of God—his precious gift to the world through Christ, which he speaks of in the preceding verse, as bringing forth such excellent fruits in the Corinthians.

Inferences.—How peculiarly amiable does the Christian liberality of the Macedonians appear, (ch. viii. 1, 2.) when considered as *abounding in a great trial of affliction, and in the depth of their poverty!*—yet a poverty mingled with an abundance of joy, on account of that rich and happy state into which the gospel had brought them. They were *willing of themselves* to contribute *even beyond their power*, as persons of common generosity would have estimated it. Nor did they, on their *dying beds*, repent such an use of their property, or wish that it had been spent in gratifying their appetites, or hoarded for those whom they were to leave behind them: nor do they *now* regret their liberalities, or complain that their expected *harvest* is perished.

May we remember their example for imitation! nor let any who have a *mite* to spare be wholly deficient, how lowsoever their circumstances may be; remembering that gracious complacency with which, where there is a *willing mind*, the smallest tribute to the treasury of God is accepted;—*according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.* To elevate us to the most generous efforts of overflowing benevolence, may we ever bear in mind that *grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, of which we all know something, but which it is impossible we should ever fully know, because it passeth knowledge;—that *grace*, which engaged him, *when rich, for our sakes to become poor*, that we might be *enriched by his poverty*. What have we that deserves to be called a possession, which we do not hold by an act of divine bounty and grace?

Let us then consider ourselves as under indispensable engagements, in consequence of it, to consecrate our all to him, conscious that our all is but a low return for the infinite obligations under which he has laid us. He has

contrived and determined that the *poor*, in some form or other, we should *always have with us*, that we may *do them good* as a token of our gratitude to him. Let us faithfully aim to supply their need; and he who hath most will have no superfluity to throw away upon the lusts or vanities of life; and he who has least will have no unsupplied lack. Thus the poor will rejoice in the relief of their necessities; and the rich, in the happiest and most delightful use of their abundance.

The tenderness of *ministers*, in all points where the comfort and edification of the church is concerned, is, indeed, matter of the highest moment; and where it is remarkable in its degree, it affords just cause of *thanksgivings* to God; for it is *he who puts into their hearts that earnest care*, who excites and maintains every sentiment of benevolence, when they offer themselves willingly to any generous and charitable service. It is *grace* which has communicated whatever good is done; and it ought to be ascribed to the glory of the same Lord from whom it comes; for it loses all its value if it be not directed to this ultimate, this supreme end.

When the Corinthians desired to deposit their alms in the hands of St. Paul, they certainly acted a very wise part, as no man living could have rendered them more secure, as to the fidelity or the discretion of the distribution: and yet we see that, high as the Apostle's character stood, and though he had so often given, and was daily renewing, such striking demonstrations both of his wisdom and integrity,—he nevertheless would not undertake the trust *alone*; but used all proper methods to prove his exactness in the management thereof, even to strangers, *providing things honest and laudable, not only in the sight of God, but also of men.*

May ministers be often thus employed as the *almshouses* of persons richer than themselves;—(as their readiness to help the poor in their *temporal* affairs may, and has often been found greatly to promote their usefulness in *spirituals*;) and may they appear to have managed their trust with the like conscious and delicate honour. May they shew a disposition, like that of St. Paul, to assist in establishing and advancing the characters of their *younger brethren*, and introducing them into esteem and confidence. Thus will they indeed most effectually strengthen their own hands, and edify and comfort the churches: thus will they prove the *glory of Christ* themselves in the present age, and be the means of raising up others, who may eminently deserve that illustrious title in succeeding generations. Let us observe with pleasure the happy address of the Apostle, ch. ix. 2. a felicity, not the result of craft, but of that amiable temper which was so eminent in him. He pleads the *high opinion* he had entertained of his Corinthian friends, and the honourable things that he had *said* of them; expressing his persuasion of their readiness to give, as a matter of bounty, not of constraint. He leads them to the inexhaustible stores of the divine *liberality*, from which they had

CHAP. X.

Against the false Apostles, who had reviled the weakness of his person and bodily presence, the Apostle setteth out the spiritual might and authority with which he is armed against all adverse powers; assuring them, that at his coming he will be found as mighty in word as he is now in writing, being absent: and without taxing them for reaching out themselves beyond their compass, and pressing themselves into other men's labours.

[Anno Domini 58.]

NOW I Paul myself beseech you * by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who

*^b in presence *am* base among you, but being absent *am* bold toward you :

2 But I beseech *you*, that ° I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which † think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

3 For ° though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh :

4 ° (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds ;)

^a Rom. 12. 1. If. 42. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 23. * Or: outward appearance. ^b 1 Cor. 2. 3. & 4. 10, 21. Gal. 4. 13. Ch. 11. 21, 30. & 12. 5, 9. & 13. 4, 9, 10. Ver. 10. † Or: reckon. ^c 1 Cor. 4. 19, 21. Ch. 1. 17. & 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 11. 3, 10, 21. & 12. 20. & 13. 2, 10. Phil. 2. 3. ^d Gal. 2. 20. & 4. 17. Ch. 2. 17. 1 Tim. 1. 18. 2 Tim. 2. 3, 4. Ch. 1. 12. & 7. 1. ^e Jer. 1. 10. If. 41. 11—16. Zech. 4. 6, 7. 1 Cor. 1. 13, 24. & 2. 5. Rom. 1. 16, 17. Pf. 110. 2, 3. Ch. 6. 7. Eph. 6. 10—20. 1 Thes. 5. 8. Ch. 3. 5. & 4. 7. with Josh. 6. 4—20.

had received their present all; from which he wishes they may receive more and more: and this not that these supplies might be ignobly consumed in self-gratifications, but employed in acts of the noblest beneficence. He represents to them the *thanksgivings* which it had already occasioned to God, the refreshment it had administered to the saints, the *honour* it did to their character and profession, and the *esteem* and friendship for them which it excited in the minds of those, who, though unacquainted with them, were well affected towards their happiness, in consequence of this honourable specimen of their character. Who could withstand the force of such oratory? No doubt it was effectual to cultivate the temper which it applauded, and to add a rich abundance to the fruits of their righteousness.

Let us then apply the thoughts here suggested for our own instruction, to excite us to abound in acts of *liberality*, and to present them to God with that *cheerfulness* which he loves. To him let us continually look, to make all grace abound in us, and seek a *sufficiency* in all things relating to this present life, chiefly that we may be ready to every good work; that so our liberality may still endure, and *that the multiplication of our seed sown may increase the fruits of our righteousness*. To God be the praise of all ascribed. He ministers *seed to the sower*; he supplies *bread for food*; he calls up the blessings of harvest; he insures the advantages of commerce. May we praise him *ourselves*, and, by the ready communication of the good things which he hath given us to those that want, not only supply their necessities, but give them cause to *abound in thanksgiving to God*, as well as in *prayer* for us; while they see and acknowledge that exceeding grace which is the spring of every generous motion in the human heart, and to which therefore be the *glory* of all!

To conclude, happy shall we be if we learn that pious and evangelical turn of thought suggested by St. Paul, ver. 15. if by all the other *gifts of God* we are thus led up to the first and greatest *unspeakable* gift of his love and mercy to sinful men. And surely we may thence encourage our hopes of whatever else is necessary and desirable; for, as this great Apostle elsewhere argues,—*he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all*, how is it possible

that he should not be ready *with him also freely to give us all things* that are truly good for us! Rom. viii. 32.

REFLECTIONS.—1st. The Apostle, with admirable address, while he seems to waive many arguments which he might have urged, yet by his confidence expressed in the readiness of the Corinthians to comply with his request, lays the strongest obligations on them to shew their generosity. He *knew their forwardness*; he boasted of *their zeal*; and it had excited a holy ambition in the Macedonians to follow them. For their own sakes, therefore, as well as his, he wished them to be ready, and had sent Titus and the brethren for this purpose, lest if any of the Macedonians came to them with him, he, not to say they themselves, might be put to shame in the confident boasting that he had made of them, should they be found unprepared, and their collections not completed. He sent therefore, that, having timely notice, all might be ready in the way most honourable for them, and most agreeable to the commendations he had given of them; not as an extorted alms, but as a noble, generous, willing contribution, the grateful acknowledgment due to God for all the singular mercies they had received. *Note*, Alms given with reluctance, or squeezed out by mere importunity, only prove the covetousness, not the charity of the giver.

2dly, The Apostle proceeds,

1. To direct them concerning the right manner of giving. It must be done, (1.) *Bountifully*, according to our abilities. (2.) *With deliberation*, not inconsiderately, but after weighing well what we can afford, consistent with the provisions that we owe to our own house. (3.) *Not grudgingly, or of necessity*, as if it was extorted by importunity, or as if we were ashamed not to do as others; or as if our heart grieved to part with what our hand bestowed: such a spirit would mar the deed.

2. He suggests the strongest reasons to excite their liberality. (1.) It would be highly for their own advantage. *He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly: and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully.* (2.) *God loveth a cheerful giver*, and his love is the greatest of blessings. (3.) He is able abundantly to recompense you,

X & 2

both

5 ' Casting down imaginations, and every ledge of God, and bringing into captivity high thing that exalteth itself against the know- every thought to the ' obedience of Christ ;

† Zech. 4. 6, 7. Pf. 110. 2, 3. Acts, 19. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 19. & 3. 19. Pf. 45. 4. 5. * Pf. 18. 44. & 22. 27—31. & 68. 30, 31. & 110. 2, 3. & 45. 4, 5, 10, 11. 17. Rom. 1. 5. & 16. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 2. & 4. 11.

both in spiritual graces, and worldly goods ; so that you shall still have an abundant sufficiency through his good providence, and be enabled to abound in every good work, never finding yourselves the poorer for what is spent in his blessed service. (4.) They would hereby secure lasting honour, since the scripture testifies of him who liberally dispenses to the poor, that his *righteousness*, or alms, *remaineth for ever*, and shall, if he be faithful unto death, bring forth the most blessed fruits in everlasting life, when the great Judge, in the day of his appearing, shall remember and reward him. (5.) Much glory will hereby accrue to God, as well as much good be done to the poor saints, who, experiencing the riches of your bounty, will be excited to offer their thanksgivings to God for this proof of your fraternal love, and of your real *subjection to the gospel of Christ*, manifested in such liberality shewn to them, and unto all men as occasion requireth. *Note*, Where true Christianity is enthroned in the heart, it will ever appear in god-like charity. (6.) This will also engage the prayers of those who partake of your bounty ; and an interest in the supplications of the saints at a throne of grace will abundantly repay us for every kindness done to them. *Note*, When we can make no other acknowledgment, we must pray for our kind benefactors, that God, the poor man's friend, may reward them.

3. The Apostle offers up his own earnest prayers for them. *Now he that ministereth seed to the sower*, so that there is corn enough for the year's provision, and a sufficiency again to sow the ground, *both minister bread for your food*, and give you always a supply ; *and multiply your seed sown*, restoring it a hundred fold into your bosoms ; and *increase the fruits of your righteousness*, enabling you to abound in liberality more and more, as I have humble confidence he will ; *being enriched in every thing*, with all the blessings of grace and providence, which can enable and dispose you to *exercise all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God*, who bless his name both for the abundance he has bestowed upon you, and for the heart that he has given you to employ it to his glory.

4. He concludes, therefore, with this doxology ; *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift*, for all that he has done for you, in you, and by you ; above all, for Jesus Christ, that most transcendently invaluable gift, which comprehends all others, and for which all language is insufficient to express our gratitude.

CHAP. X.

HITHERTO St. Paul's discourse was chiefly directed to those at Corinth who acknowledged his apostleship, and who had obeyed his orders, signified to them in his former letter. But in this and the remaining chapters he principally addressed the false teacher himself, and such of the faction as still adhered to him, speaking to them with great authority, and threatening to punish them by his miraculous power, if they did not immediately repent. The dif-

ferent characters, therefore, of the two sorts of persons who composed the Corinthian church, must be carefully attended to ; otherwise this part of the epistle will appear a direct contradiction to what goes before.

The false teacher, it seems, and the faction, ridiculing the Apostle's threatenings in his former letter, had said, that he was all meekness and humility when present among them, but exceeding bold by letters when absent. This they represented as wise carnal policy. For, said they, being conscious of his own weakness, he does not choose, when present, to provoke us to make too narrow a search into his character, lest it should lead to disagreeable discoveries. The Apostle, therefore, in answer to that sarcasm, began his address to the faction with telling them, in irony, that the very same Paul himself, who in presence was humble among them, but bold when absent, did not now when absent speak boldly, but humbly *befought* them ; not, however, by his own meekness, which they ridiculed, but by the meekness and gentleness of Christ. And what he befought of them was, that he might not be obliged to be bold, in the manner he had resolved to be bold against some, who, on account of his meekness when present with them, had calumniated him as a person who walked after the flesh, ver. 1. 2.—But though he was in the flesh, he assured them he did not war against idolaters and unbelievers with fleshly weapons, but with weapons far more powerful, bestowed on him by God, for the purpose of casting down all the bulwarks raised up by worldly policy, for the defence of idolatry and infidelity. These mighty weapons were, the miraculous powers and spiritual gifts which Christ had conferred on him as his Apostle, ver. 4, 5.—He farther told them, that, although he seldom used his miraculous power in punishing unbelievers, he had that power in readiness for punishing all disobedience in them who professed to be the disciples of Christ, and particularly for punishing such of the Corinthians as called his apostleship in question, ver. 6.—He cautioned them, therefore, against estimating things according to their outward appearance ; and told them, if the false teacher believed himself to be Christ's minister, he ought, from the proofs which St. Paul had given of his apostleship, to have concluded that even he was Christ's Apostle, notwithstanding the meanness of his outward appearance, ver. 7.—For which reason, said he, if I should now boast somewhat more than I have hitherto done, of the power which Christ hath given me as an apostle, I am sure when that power is tried, I shall not be put to shame by its failing me, ver. 8.—Then, in holy contempt of the false teacher, who had said that he was bold towards them by letters when absent, he added, in the highest strain of irony, but I must forbear boasting of my power, that I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters, ver. 9, 10.—And because the false teacher was a great pretender to reasoning, the Apostle desired him, by reasoning from the effects of his power, already shewn in the punishment of the incestuous

6^b And having in a readiness to revenge
all disobedience, whenⁱ your obedience is fulfilled.

7^k Do ye look on things after the outward

^a Num. 16. 26. Acts, 5. 5. & 8. 20. & 13. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 4. 21. & 5. 3, 4. 1 Tim. 1. 20.

^b Ch. 2. 9. & 7. 15. & 9. 13.

^c 1 Sam. 16. 7.

ceftuous person, to conclude that such as he was in speech by letters when absent, the same also he would be in deed when present, ver. 11.

Having thus threatened to punish the false teacher and his adherents, the Apostle told them, ironically, that to be sure he durst not rank and compare himself with their learned teacher, who was so full of his own praise. It seems that impostor had boasted among the Corinthians of his great natural talents, and acquired accomplishments. But the Apostle told them, that his high opinion of himself proceeded from his measuring himself only with himself, and from his comparing himself with himself; by which method of measuring himself, notwithstanding his great wisdom, he did not understand himself, ver. 12.—Next, because the false teacher boasted of the great things he had done at Corinth, the Apostle told them that, for his part, he would not boast of things done out of the bounds prescribed to him by God; but would only say, that according to these bounds he had come to Corinth, in an orderly course of preaching the gospel to persons who had never heard it before, ver. 13, 14.—So that when he boasted of things which he had done among the Corinthians, he did not boast of other men's labours, like the false teacher, who had intruded himself into a church planted by another; and therefore, agreeably to the rule prescribed by God, the Apostle hoped, when their faith was increased, to be by them enlarged with respect to his bounds, ver. 15.—so as to preach the gospel in the regions beyond them, where no other person had ever preached, ver. 16.—Lastly, to shew the folly of the false teacher more fully, the Apostle concluded this part of his discourse with observing, that the preacher of the gospel who boasts, should boast only in this, that he preaches in the manner the Lord allows, ver. 17.—Because not he who commendeth himself is the approved teacher, but he whom the Lord commendeth, ver. 18.

From this passage we learn two things; first, that the Apostles were specially appointed to preach the gospel in countries where it had not been preached before. This work was particularly assigned to them, not only because they enjoyed the highest degree of inspiration, and possessed the greatest miraculous powers for confirming the gospel, but because they had especially the power of conferring the spiritual gifts, whereby their converts were enabled, in their absence, to edify themselves and others, and by the means thereof, through the grace of God accompanying them, to convert great multitudes of unbelievers.—*Secondly*, That in preaching the gospel the Apostles were not to pass by or neglect any nation that lay in their way, where the gospel had not been preached before; but were to proceed in an orderly course, from one country to another, preaching in each successively, that the light of the gospel might be imparted to all. According to this rule, the false teacher who had come from Judea to Corinth, not in the orderly course of preaching in countries where

the gospel had not been preached before, but by a direct and speedy journey, perhaps in the expectation of becoming rich by preaching in such a populous and wealthy city as Corinth, shewed himself to be no minister of Christ: and having intruded himself into a church which had been planted by St. Paul, he had not the least reason to boast of his labours among the Corinthians.

Ver. 1. Now I Paul, &c.] St. Paul having finished his exhortation to liberality in the collection for the Christians at Jerusalem, he resumes his former argument, and prosecutes the main purpose of this epistle; which was, totally to reduce and put a final end to the adverse faction,—which seems not yet to have been entirely extinct,—by bringing the Corinthians wholly off from the false apostle, to whom they had adhered; and to re-establish himself and his authority in the minds of all the members of that church. Thinking it fit to forbear all severity till he had, by fair means, reduced as many of the contrary party as he could, (see ver. 6.) he begins his discourse here by conjuring them by *the meekness and gentleness of Christ*, as an example which might excuse his delay of inflicting punishment upon the ringleaders and chief offenders, without giving them reason to think it was for want of power. It seems very probable that they had upbraided and reflected upon him in some such language as that in the close of the verse: but there was a sense in which he was indeed *lovely* among them, his presence having nothing majestic. See ver. 10. Instead of *base*, Dr. Heylin reads *mean*.

Ver. 2. As if we walked according to the flesh] “As if in my conduct and ministry I regulated myself by carnal considerations, by low and mercenary views.”

Ver. 3. For though we walk, &c.] “For though we inhabit mortal bodies, and are obliged, in some respects, to stoop to the care of them; yet we do not manage that important war in which we are engaged according to the *flesh*, by carnal methods, or with worldly or interested views.” Mr. Cradock explains this somewhat differently: “Though we are not free from a mixture of human infirmities, yet I do not exercise my apostolical power in a weak manner, as either fearing or flattering men; but use such spiritual weapons as Christian fortitude, zeal, freedom in speaking the truths of God, and courage in administering the censures of the church; which, through the divine concurrence, are very effectual.” An ingenious critic would render the verse thus: *For walking in the flesh, not according to the flesh, we carry on our warfare.*

Ver. 4. For the weapons of our warfare, &c.] What are the *carnal weapons*, and those opposed to them, which he calls *mighty through God*, may be seen, if we read and compare 1 Cor. i. 23, 24. with the 2d. chap. i—13. and 2 Cor. iv. 2—6.

Ver. 5. And bringing into captivity every thought,] The believing soul, when its carnal fortifications are demolished, submits to the conqueror; and then every thought, every reasoning

appearance? ¹ If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he *is* Christ's, even so *are* we Christ's.

8 For ^m though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:

9 That I may not seem ⁿ as if I would terrify you by letters.

10 For *his* letters, say they, *are* weighty and powerful; but ^o *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible.

11 Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters ^p when we are absent, such *will we be* also in deed when we are present.

12 For ^q we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that

commend themselves: but they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, ^{*} are not wise.

13 But ^r we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the [†] rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

14 ^s For we stretch not ourselves beyond *our* measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in *preaching* the [†] gospel of Christ:

15 ^t Not boasting of things without *our* measure, *that is*, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be [†] enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

16 ^x To preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in another man's ^{||} line of things made ready to our hand.

¹ 1 John, 4. 6. 1 Cor. 14. 37. Acts, 9. 6, 15. & 22. 10, 14. & 26. 16—18. 1 Cor. 9. 1, 2. Ch. 5. 12. & 12. 11. & 11. 23. & 13. 3. Gal. 1. 1, 11. 16. & 2. 2—9. ^m Ch. 12. 6. & 13. 2, 8, 10. 1 Cor. 4. 21. & 5. 3—5. Ch. 2. 6, 7. & 12. 19—21. ⁿ 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5, 9, 11, 13. ^o Ver. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 17, 2. 1, 3—5, 13. Ch. 11. 6, 21, 30. & 12. 5, 9. 1 Thes. 2. 4. ^p 1 Cor. 4. 19, 21. Ch. 12. 20. & 13. 2, 10. ^q Ch. 3. 1. & 5. 12. Prov. 27. 2. Job, 12. 2. Luke 18. 11. If. 65. 5. ^r Or *understand it not.* ^s Ver. 15. Rom. 15. 20. Prov. 25. 14. 1 Cor. 12. 17. Ch. 11. 18. & 12. 5, 6. Eph. 4. 7. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. See Ver. 14. ^t Or *line.* [†] Rom. 15. 19. 1 Cor. 3. 5, 10. & 4. 15. & 9. 1, 2. Ch. 3. 1—3. ^{||} Mark. 1. 1. Acts, 20. 24. Rom. 1. 1, 16. & 2. 16. & 16. 25. & 15. 16, 19. 1 Cor. 9. 12, 17, 18. Ch. 4. 4. Gal. 1. 7. Eph. 1. 13. & 6. 15. 1 Thes. 2. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 11. ^x Ver. 13. Rom. 15. 20. Prov. 25. 14. [†] Or *magnified in you.* ^{*} Rom. 15. 20, 24, 28. ^{||} Or *rule.*

reasoning takes law from him. Nothing is admitted which contradicts the gospel, Christ being acknowledged as absolute master. The former clause shews how ready men are to fortify themselves against him, and to raise as it were one barrier behind another to obstruct his entrance into the soul. See Rom. xv. 18, 19.

Ver. 6. And having in a readiness, &c.] Those whom the Apostle here addresses are the Corinthian converts, who had been too much influenced by the false apostle. Of *him* the Apostle seems to have no hopes, ch. xi. 13—15. and therefore he every where threatens, and here particularly in the present and 11th verse, to make an example of him and his adherents, (if any were so obstinate as still to remain with him,) when he had brought back all the Corinthians whom he could hope to prevail upon. It should be remembered, that before this time the Apostle had smitten Elymas with blindness; and it is highly probable from this whole passage before us, that some other miracles of this awful kind had been wrought by him, though they are not recorded in scripture.

Ver. 8. Somewhat more] See ch. xi. 23. The next clause contains another reason insinuated by the Apostle for his forbearing any severity for the present towards them. *I should not be ashamed,* infers, "Because the truth [†] would justify me in it."

Ver. 10. His bodily presence is weak, &c.] Chrysostome, Nicephorus, and Lucian, relate of St. Paul, that his stature was low, his body crooked, and his head bald; which seem to be the infirmities here referred to. See on ch. xii. 7.

Ver. 12. But they, measuring themselves by themselves,]

Dr. Whitby would render it *measuring themselves by one another*; as if they compared themselves with their false apostles, and grew proud in the degree in which they resembled them in accurateness and eloquence, or other things on which those deceitful teachers valued themselves. But it is more natural to think the meaning is, "They looked continually on themselves, surveying their own great imaginary furniture, but not considering the vastly superior abilities of many others; and so formed a disproportionate opinion of themselves:" and this is every where one of the greatest sources of pride. Mr. Locke observes, that this is spoken ironically: and instead of *are not wise*, he reads *do not understand*; namely, that they ought not to intrude themselves into a church planted by another man, and there vaunt and set themselves above him who planted it,—which is the meaning of the following verses.

Ver. 13. Without our measure,] The original word [†] *ἄμετρον*, here and in ver. 15. does not signify *immense*, or *immoderate*, but something which had not been measured out and allotted to him; something which is not committed to him, nor within his province.

Ver. 14. For we are come as far, &c.] This seems to charge the false Apostle, the grand leader of the faction, who had caused all this disturbance in the church of Corinth, that without being appointed to it, without preaching the gospel in his way thither, as became an apostle, he had unlawfully crept into that church.

Ver. 15, 16. Not boasting, &c.] That is, "Not intermeddling, or assuming to myself an authority to meddle,

17 ^v But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

18 ^z For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

^v If. 65. 16. 23, 24. Jer. 9. 24. 1 Cor. 1. 31. ^z Prov. 27. 2. Rom. 2. 29. 1 Cor. 4. 5. Luke, 18. 10—14. & 14. 11.

“or any honour for doing so.” St. Paul here visibly taxes the false Apostle for coming into a church converted and gathered by another, and there pretending to be somebody, and to rule all. This, among several other passages, shews, that the opposition made to St. Paul was owing chiefly to one man, who had placed himself at the head of the faction; for it is plain that it was a stranger, who came thither after St. Paul had planted this church; who pretending to be more an Apostle than St. Paul, with greater illumination and more power, set up against him, to govern that church, and withdraw the Corinthians from following the rules and doctrines of St. Paul and the Gospel. Now it can never be supposed to be a combination of men, who came to Corinth with that design; nor that they were different men, who came thither separately, each setting up for himself; for then they would have fallen out one with another, as well as with St. Paul; and in both cases he must have spoken of them in a different way from what he does now. In 1 Cor. iii. 10. he plainly speaks of *one man*. Instead of—*measure*, that is, of *other men's labours*, ver. 15. some read, *measure in other men's labours*; and instead of *another man's line*, ver. 16. *another man's rule or province*. It is certain, the Apostle did go to places already converted, to confirm and establish his brethren in the faith; but this was chiefly where he had himself planted churches: though he might take some others in his way, which it would have been affectation and disrespect, rather than modesty, to have avoided. But he did not speak of churches thus visited, as if he were the founder of them, as his opposers probably did; pouring contempt on St. Paul's labours, as if they were hardly to be called Christian churches, which he had left, as they pretended, in so unformed and unfinished a state.

Ver. 18. *But whom the Lord commendeth.*] Particularly by the gifts of the Holy Ghost. It is of these weapons of his warfare that St. Paul speaks in this chapter; and it is by them that he intends to try which is the true Apostle, when he comes to them.

Inferences.—With what meekness and condescension, in imitation of our blessed Lord, should his servants labour to win over such, as are unreasonably prejudiced against them and their ministrations; and yet with what authority should they vindicate the honour of Christ, in rebuking those who, after all, continue obstinate in their disobedience to him, as speaking by them! Though faithful ministers are men of like passions and infirmities with others, and make but a mean figure in the world, while they dwell in mortal flesh; yet they are not to be judged of by outward appearance; nor are they governed by carnal principles and views in their work and warfare, as many false pretenders are. And, O how victorious and triumphant is the gospel which they preach, when attended with the mighty power of God, to beat down the strong-holds of sin and Satan; to overcome the perverse reasonings of carnal minds, and all their pride and prejudices; and to subdue them to

the obedience of Christ! When his ministering servants have a witness in themselves that they are Christ's, it is sometimes necessary for them to assert it, in confutation of those who would unrighteously reproach them, as though they assumed too much to themselves, or acted an inconsistent part in different situations: and yet how careful should they be, to avoid all appearances of vain-boasting, or of going out of their province, to the hindrance and disturbance of other churches! And, as ever they would be approved of God in all that they do, they should take heed of priding themselves in any thing, that they are, have, or perform; and glory only in the Lord, as ascribing the praise of all entirely to him.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, Nowhere had the Apostle met with more malignant insinuations, than from the false teachers at Corinth; he is obliged therefore, in justice to himself, to refute their slanders. See the Annotations.

1. Though he had it in his power to punish, he rather chose mildly to entreat, imitating the meekness and gentleness of his blessed Master. The false teachers reviled him as a poor despicable animal, and mean in his abilities; as diminutive in his stature, who fawned and cringed when present, but when absent wrote in a magisterial stile; terrifying them into compliance with his will, by vain boasts of his apostolic rod. But he wished not to be compelled to exercise the power wherewith he was invested, and to their faces boldly to rebuke, and severely chastise, those who dared insinuate as if he *walked after the flesh*, with views of secular advantage, and influenced by carnal policy. *Note*; (1.) However great provocations we may meet with, the example of the meek and gentle Lamb of God should ever be in our eye. (2.) If men will not be reformed, they will be ruined. (3.) The best of men and ministers may expect malignant traducers.

2. He asserts the integrity of his preaching and conduct. *For though we walk in the flesh*, surrounded with the common infirmities of humanity, *we do not war after the flesh*, under the maxims of fleshly wisdom, or for any selfish ends. *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal*; we war not against the powers of evil with an arm of flesh, or pretend to convince by mere human persuasion; but that Gospel we preach, becomes effectual through divine operation, and is *mighty through God*, the Spirit's energy, *to the pulling down of the strong-holds of sin and Satan in the world, and in the hearts of men; casting down imaginations, confuting the corrupt reasonings of self-righteous rabbis and proud philosophers; and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God*, confounding the pride and self-sufficiency of the unhumiliated heart; *and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*; engaging the sinner to bow to his gentle yoke; submitting his reason to revelation, his will to the commands of Jesus, and in every sentiment of his soul yielding a willing submission to the authority of the great Redeemer. *Note*; (1.) Men are not to be persuaded by the sword, but by the gospel.

CHAP. XI.

Out of his jealousy over the Corinthians, who seemed to make more account of the false apostles than of him, the Apostle entereth into a forced commendation of himself, of his equality with the chief Apostles, of his preaching the Gospel to them freely, and without putting them to any charge: shewing that he was not inferior to those deceitful workers in any legal prerogative; and in the service of Christ, and in all kinds of sufferings for his ministry, far superior.

[Anno Domini 58.]

WOULD to God ye could ^a bear with me a little in *my* folly: and indeed ^{*} bear with me.

^a Ver. 16, 21—29. Ch. 5. 13. & 12. 11. ^{*} Or you do bear with me. ^b Gal. 4. 11, 17, 18. Phil. 3. 18, 19. ^c 1 Cor. 4. 15. & 3. 5, 10, 11. & 9. 1, 2. Ch. 3. 2, 3. 11. 62. 4, 5. & 5. 5. Hof. 2. 19, 20. ^d Gal. 4. 11. & 1. 6. & 3. 1. Ver. 29. Phil. 3. 18, 19. 2 Tim. 1. 15. ^e Gen. 3. 4, 13. John, 8. 44. 1 Tim. 2. 14. Rev. 20. 2. & 12. 9. ^f Rom. 16. 18. Ch. 2. 17. & 4. 2. Gal. 1. 6. & 2. 4. & 3. 1. & 4. 9. & 5. 10. Eph. 4. 14. Phil. 1. 15. & 3. 2, 18. Col. 2. 4, 8, 18. 1 Thes. 2. 3, 5. 2 Thes. 3. 2, 6. 1 Tim. 1. 3. & 4. 1—4. & 6. 3—5. 2 Tim. 2. 16. & 3. 2—5. Tit. 1. 10. Heb. 13. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 14. & 3. 3, 17. 1 John, 2. 18. & 4. 1. Juac. 4. Mat. 24. 11, 24. ^g Gal. 1. 7, 8. & 3. 2. with Acts, 4. 12. 1 Tim. 2. 5. Eph. 4. 4, 5. 1 Cor. 12. 4—11.

gospel. (2.) Satan's power is strong in the human heart; nothing but the power of Jesus can dethrone him. (3.) Nothing is more opposite to the knowledge of God, than a high conceit of our own wisdom.

3. He threatens the offenders, *having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, and inflict condign punishment on these false teachers, and maligners of the true apostles; when your obedience is fulfilled, and milder methods have recovered the penitent members from those who continue refractory.*

2dly, The Apostle reasons the case with the Corinthians. *Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? and form your judgment merely on external show? If any man trust to himself, that he is Christ's, that he belongs to him as a member of his body mystical, or is commissioned by him as a minister; let him of himself think this again, that as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's; whatever evidence he may produce of the one or the other, I can at least equal him. For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, than I have done, or than the vainest of my traducers dare to do concerning the powers with which they are invested, (which authority the Lord hath given us for edification of his church, and not for your destruction, to drive offenders to despair by severity,) I should not be ashamed, but dare speak with truth and confidence. But I forbear, that I may not seem, as these men suggest, as if I would terrify you by letters. For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; wrote in an authoritative strain, and big with menaces: but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible; he appears with no dignity of presence and aspect, and his parts and elocution are as despicable as his stature. In answer to such a contemptuous insult, I reply,*

1. *Let such an one think this, and be assured that such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present, and execute every threatening that we denounce against the obstinately impudent.*

2 For I am ^b jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have ^c espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

3 But I ^d fear, lest by any means, ^e as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, ^f so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

4 For if he that cometh preacheth ^g another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*.

2. We never act with falsehood and ostentation, like these seducers; *for we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves, puffed up with vain conceit, and blinded with self-admiration: but while they fondly value themselves on their imaginary greatness, measuring themselves by themselves, and supposing themselves the standard of excellence, and comparing themselves among themselves, by the poor and insignificant endowments of others equally vain, they are not wise, foolishly fancying they are something, when in fact they are nothing. Note; All self-applause is hateful. We should look to the superior excellencies of others to be humble, and not proudly vaunt ourselves over those beneath us.*

3. The Apostle lays down the proper rule of conduct. *But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you: like those who run in the Isthmian games, we have kept the line marked out for our race, and in a regular course have preached the Gospel as far as Corinth. For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as these false Apostles do, as though we reached not unto you, and had in coming to Corinth entered into another man's province; for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the Gospel of Christ, through countries where his name had not been heard before; not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours, and taking to myself the credit of their success; but having hope when your faith is increased, your church affairs regulated, and your divisions healed, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you, where darkness still reigns uncontrouled; and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand, assuming to myself the honour of their labours. But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord, ascribing to the grace of God alone the whole of whatever gifts he enjoys, or success he may be blessed with, and taking no praise to himself: for not he that commendeth himself, is approved,*

5 For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.

6 But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly

¹ 1 Cor. 15. 10. Ch. 10. 10. & 12. 11, 12. Gal. 2. 6, 9.

¹ 1 Cor. 1. 17. & 2. 1, 13. Ch. 10. 10. Eph. 3. 4. Ch. 4. 2. & 5. 11. & 12. 11, 12 & 1. 11. & 2. 14. & 7. 2.

proved, but whom the Lord commendeth; and his approbation is the only true and substantial honour.

CHAP. XI.

FROM the things written in this chapter, it appears that although the false teacher, on all occasions, took care to found his own praise, he had represented St. Paul as guilty of folly in praising, or rather justifying himself; pretending that he had nothing to boast of. The Apostle, therefore, began with ironically requesting the Corinthians to bear with a little of his foolishness in praising himself, ver. 1.—and for so doing he gave them this reason: he suspected that the affections of many of them were estranged from him, through the calumnies of his enemies. Such an estrangement he could not bear. Having by faith and holiness betrothed them to Christ, he was anxious to present them to him at the judgment, as a chaste virgin to her future husband, ver. 2.—This he should not be able to do, if, believing the calumnies of his enemies, they no longer considered him as an Apostle. Also he was afraid, that as the serpent deceived Eve, so the false teacher, deceiving them, might corrupt them from the simplicity of the Gospel, ver. 3.—But their attachment to that teacher, he told them, was unreasonable, as he did not pretend to preach another Jesus; neither had they received from him a different spirit, nor a different gospel, ver. 4.

Having made this apology for what he was going to say in his own praise, he affirmed that he was in nothing inferior to the greatest Apostles, ver. 5.—For although his enemies objected to him that he was unlearned in speech, he was not unlearned in the knowledge proper to a minister of the Gospel; but in the whole of his preaching and behaviour at Corinth had shewn himself an able and faithful Apostle of Christ, ver. 6.—His enemies, indeed, upbraided him with not having supported the dignity of the apostolical character, as he ought to have done, by demanding maintenance from his disciples in Corinth. But he told them, he had committed no offence in that respect, when he humbled himself to work for his own support among them; since he did it, that they might be exalted, by having the Gospel preached to them, with the greater success, as a free gift, ver. 7.—He took wages from other churches, the church at Philippi especially; but it was to do the Corinthians a service, by preaching the Gospel to them free of expence, ver. 8.—For, on a particular occasion, when he was so much employed at Corinth, that he had not time to work for his own maintenance, the Philippians fully supplied what he wanted; so that he had kept himself, and would keep himself, from being burdensome to them, ver. 9.—solemnly protesting, that no man should deprive him of that ground of boasting, in the regions of Achaia, ver. 10.—This resolution he had formed, not from want of love to the Corinthians, ver. 11.—but that he might cut off all opportunity from the false teacher and others, who desired an

occasion to speak evil of him, as one who preached the Gospel for gain; also, that the false teacher, who in public pretended to imitate him in taking nothing for his preaching, (though in private he received gifts from individuals,) might be obliged to lay aside his hypocrisy, and after the Apostle's example take nothing in private from any one, ver. 12.—There was a peculiar propriety in the Apostle's taking nothing from his disciples in Corinth, on account of his preaching; because, being an opulent city, it might have been said, that his motive for preaching so long there, was to enrich himself. This indeed was the view of the false teacher, who, by receiving gifts in private, shewed himself to be a deceitful workman, although he assumed the appearance of a true Apostle, by pretending to preach without taking any reward from the Corinthians. But his assuming that appearance, was not to be wondered at, seeing that Satan himself, on some occasions, put on the appearance of an angel of light, ver. 13—15.

The Apostle having such good reasons for commending or rather vindicating himself, he desired the faction a second time not to think him a fool for speaking in his own praise; or at least, as a fool to bear with him, that like the false teacher he might boast a little, ver. 16.—For, said he ironically, to be sure that which I am going to speak, in this confident boasting concerning myself, I speak not according to the Lord, but as in foolishness, ver. 17.—In his former letter, the Apostle had used this expression, ch. vii. 12. *to the rest, I speak, not the Lord.* This the false teacher, misinterpreting, had maliciously turned into ridicule, by telling the Corinthians, that the praises which Paul bestowed on himself, were, he supposed, of the number of the things which the Lord did not speak. This sarcasm the Apostle repeated in an ironical manner, to insinuate to the Corinthians, that the things which he spoke in vindication of himself as an Apostle, he spoke by the commandment of Christ. Then added, seeing many, who are no Apostles, praise themselves for their supposed qualities, I, who am a real Apostle of Christ, will likewise praise myself for the good qualities which the grace of God has bestowed upon me, ver. 18.—especially as the false teacher and his followers, being such wise men, gladly bear with fools, that they may have the pleasure of laughing at them, ver. 19.—Now, said he, ye are of such a bearing disposition, that if one enslave you, if one eat you up, if one take your goods, if one raiseth himself against you in wrath, if one even beat you on the face, ye bear it, ver. 20.—This, it seems, was the insolent manner, in which the false teacher treated his adherents at Corinth, who bare it all with great patience. In his account, therefore, of the bearing disposition of the faction, the Apostle gave the sincere part of the church an ironical picture very highly drawn, of the wisdom of their wise brethren, in bearing. Farther, he told them, that he was obliged to speak in his own praise, because he had been represented as a weak ill-qualified teacher. But he affirmed, that on whatever ac-

made manifest among you in all things.

7 Have I committed an offence ^k in abusing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?

8 ^l I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service.

9 And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.

^k 1 Cor. 9. 6, 12, 15, 18. Ch. 10. 1. & 12. 12, 13, 15, 18. Acts, 18. 3. & 20. 34. 1 Thes. 2. 9. 2 Thes. 3. 8. 1 Cor. 9. 18—23. & 4. 10, 12. Ch. 6. 10. ^l Acts, 20. 33, 34. Ch. 6. 5. & 12, 13. 1 Thes. 2. 9. 2 Thes. 3. 8. Phil. 4. 10, 15.

count any one among them was bold in his own praise, he also had just reason to be bold on the same account, ver. 21.—Are these boasters Hebrews? so am I. Are they, &c. ver. 22.—Is the false teacher a minister of Christ? (I speak as a fool,) I am more so than he—and in proof of what I say, I appeal to my labours and sufferings for the Gospel. Here the Apostle enumerates the labours and sufferings which he had endured while executing his office: from which it appears, that no man ever did or suffered as much, in pursuing grandeur or fame, as he did in preaching Christ, ver. 23—29. And with respect to the weakness or cowardice with which he was reproached, he told them, that since he was obliged to boast, he would boast even of his weakness, in flying from danger on a particular occasion; namely, when the Jews laid wait for him in Damascus. Because his escaping from that danger, was an illustrious example of the care, which both God and man took of him as a faithful minister of Christ.

Ver. 1. *Would to God ye could bear*] *Would you could bear.* St. Paul modestly calls his speaking in his own defence *folly*. From this verse to the 6th he shews, that the pretended Apostle, bringing to them no other Saviour or gospel, was not to be preferred before him. See ch. v. 12, 13.

Ver. 2. *That I may present you as a chaste virgin*] This is greatly illustrated by recollecting, that there was an officer among the Greeks, whose business it was to educate and form young women, especially those of rank and figure, designed for marriage; and then to present them to those who were to be their husbands: and if this officer permitted them, through negligence, to be corrupted before the marriage was completed, great blame would naturally fall upon him.

Ver. 3. *Left by any means, &c.*] Or, *Left by some means or other, &c.* As the success of the serpent against Eve lay in false pretences and insinuations, so the success of the false apostles was owing to deceitful pretensions and insinuations likewise. The *simplicity that is in*, or rather *towards Christ*, answers to *one husband* in the preceding verse; for *in, one*, is not used there without meaning, but plainly implies thus much: “I have formed and fitted you for one person alone, one husband, who is Christ: I am greatly concerned that you may not be drawn aside from that submission, that obedience, that temper of mind, which is due to him; for I hope to put you into his hands, possessed with pure virgin thoughts, wholly fixed on him, not divided, nor roving after any other, that he may take you to wife, and marry you to himself for ever.” It is plain that their perverter, who opposed St. Paul, was

a Jew, as we have seen. Of all who professed Christianity, the Jews were they who gave St. Paul most trouble and opposition; for they, having set their hearts upon their own religion, endeavoured to blend Judaism and Christianity together. We may suppose the case here to be much the same with that which he more fully expresses in the Epistle to the Galatians, particularly ch. i. 6—12. ch. iv. 9—21. and v. 1—13. The meaning of the place before us seems to be this: “I have taught you the Gospel alone, in its pure and unmixed simplicity, by which only you can be united to Christ; but I fear lest this your new apostle should draw you from it, and that your minds should not adhere singly and simply to what I have taught, but should be corrupted by a mixture of Judaism.”

Ver. 4. *Ye might well bear, &c.*] *You would kindly, &c.*

Ver. 6. *Rude in speech*] The word *ιδιωτης*, rendered *rude*, frequently signifies a *private man*; one who can speak no better than the generality of his neighbours, being unformed by the rules of eloquence. But whether this sense be applicable to St. Paul, let those judge, who are able to compare his style with the best Classic writers among the Greeks: let them likewise judge, who are warmed with the pathos and sublimity of his sentiments. To say that this could be his meaning, would, on such a comparison, appear highly absurd; but to apply it to a natural impediment in his speech, is consistent both with the pathos, the sublimity, and correctness of his style; and is the only sense, I believe, in which it can be understood with the least degree of propriety.

Ver. 7. *Have I committed an offence*] The adverse party made it an argument against St. Paul that he was no apostle, since he took nothing among the Corinthians for his maintenance, 1 Cor. ix. 1—3. Another objection raised against him on this account was, that he *loved them not*, ver. 11. This he answers here by giving another reason for so doing. A third allegation was, that it was only a *crafty* trick in him to *catch* them, ch. xiii. 16. which he answers there.

Ver. 8. *I robbed other churches*] “I may almost, in this sense, be said to have *robbed other churches*; so freely have I received from them, at least *taking wages* as it were of them, for waiting upon you; for indeed I received a kind of stipend from them while I abode at Corinth.” The word *εὐλκασα*, rendered *robbed*, properly signifies, *I took the spoils*: it is a military term, as is the next also *ὀψώνιον*, *wages*, or rather *pay*.

Ver. 9. *I was chargeable to no man*] Beza would render it, *I was not idle at another man's expence*. The word *νέμω*, (whence

10^a As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

11 Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.

12 But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.

13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of

righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

16 I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.

17 That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.

18 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

19 For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.

20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

^a Rom. 9. 1. & 1. 9. Ch. 7. 23. & 12. 19. Ver. 31. Gal. 1. 20. Eph. 4. 17. Phil. 1. 8. 1 Thel. 2. 5, 10. 1 Tim. 2. 7. & 5. 21. ^b Gr. this boasting shall not be stopped in me. See ver. 7—9, 12. 1 Cor. 9. 5. ^c Ch. 6. 11. & 7. 3. & 12. 15. 1 Cor. 4. 15. ^d Ch. 12. 2, 3. John, 21. 17. 1 Thel. 2. 5, 10. ^e 1 Cor. 9. 12. ^f Acts, 15. 1, 24. & 20. 29, 30. Rom. 16. 18. Ch. 2. 17. & 4. 2. Gal. 1. 7. & 2. 4. & 4. 17. & 6. 12. Phil. 1. 16. & 2. 21. & 3. 2, 18. Col. 2. 4, 8. 1 Tim. 1. 3, 4, 6, 7. & 4. 1—3. & 6. 3—5. 2 Tim. 2. 17. & 3. 2—5. Tit. 1. 10. 2 Pet. 3. 1, 2. 1 John, 4. 1. & 2. 18. Jude, 4. Rev. 2. 2, 9. Mat. 24. 11, 24. ^g Ch. 2. 12. Rev. 12. 9. ^h Phil. 3. 19. Gal. 1. 9, 9. 2 Thel. 2. 3, 8, 12. Rev. 9. 11. & 13. 10. & 20. 10. & 19, 20. ⁱ Ch. 12. 6, 11. Ver. 1, 21, 23. ^j Or suffer. ^k 1 Cor. 7. 6, 12, 25. ^l Ch. 9. 4. Ver. 18—27. Phil. 3. 4—6. ^m Ch. 10. 13. & 12. 5, 6. Phil. 3. 3—6. Ver. 22, 27. ⁿ 1 Cor. 4. 10. & 8. 1. & 10. 15. ^o Gal. 2. 4. & 4. 9. & 5. 1. 10. & 6. 3, 12. Tit. 1. 11. 2 Pet. 2, 3, 14. 1 Thel. 2. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 5. 2 Tim. 3. 6. Luke, 20. 47. Rom. 16, 17, 18. Phil. 3. 19. Ch. 1. 24. 1 Pet. 5. 3. Ver. 21.

(whence the original κατενάρησα,) implies a benumbed inactive state, to which no man seems to have been less obnoxious than St. Paul.

Ver. 12. That I will do,] Rather, and will do; so the words stand in the Greek, and do not refer to ver. 10. as a profession of St. Paul's resolution to take nothing from them; but to ver. 11. to which they are joined, shewing that his refusing any reward from them was not out of unkindness, but for another reason;—"What I do, and will do, is, that I may cut off all occasion, &c." The Jews had a maxim among them: "That it was better for their wise men to skin dead beasts for a living, than to ask a maintenance from the generosity of those whom they taught:" But it plainly appears, that whatever the false apostles might boast on this head, there was no foundation for it. Comp. ver. 20. 1 Cor. ix. 12.

Ver. 13. For such are false apostles,] They had questioned St. Paul's apostleship, 1 Cor. ix. because of his not taking a maintenance from the Corinthians. He here directly, and without reserve, declares them to be no true apostles.

Ver. 16. I say again, let no man think, &c.] St. Paul goes on in his justification, reflecting upon the carriage of the false apostle towards the Corinthians, ver. 16—21. He compares himself with the false apostle in what he boasts of, as being a Hebrew, ver. 21, 22. or, minister of Christ, ver. 23. and then enlarges upon his labours and sufferings.

Ver. 17. That which I speak, &c.] "I do not speak according to any express command, which Christ delivered in his personal ministry (see 1 Cor. vii. 10.): no; I own that he condemned seeking honour one of ano-

ther, John, v. 44. which is certainly very criminal, when self-applause is aimed at: but the huge boastings of my enemies, with a design of imposing upon, and perverting you; and their mean insinuations to disparage my apostleship and the pure Gospel of Christ, and so to prevent my usefulness in preaching it, force me to speak with an air of weakness and folly, in this ostentatious appearance of setting forth things which relate to my office."

Ver. 20. If a man bring you into bondage, &c.] This is spoken ironically, to express their bearing with the insolence and covetousness of their false apostle. The bondage here meant was subjection to the will of the false apostle, as appears from the following particulars of this verse,—and not subjection to the Jewish rites; for, had that been the case, St. Paul was so zealous against it, that he would have spoken more plainly and warmly, as we see in his Epistle to the Galatians; and not have touched it thus only by the bye, in a doubtful expression. Besides, it is plain that no such thing was yet attempted openly, only St. Paul was afraid of it. See ver. 3. The meaning of the whole verse is, "You bear with it, if a man bring you into bondage; that is, domineer over you, and use you like his bondmen and slaves: If he make a prey of you, and almost devour you by exorbitant demands; if he make a gain of you, that is, extort presents from you, or entice you to make them; if he exalt himself in the spirit of pride and ambition; if he smite you on the face, that is, if he treat you in the most contumelious, disgraceful, and debasing manner." Some would render this and the preceding verse (and I think with more force) as follows; ver. 19. *Wife as you are, ye bear with fools gladly,* ver. 20. *But,*

21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly) I am bold also.

22 Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.

23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

28 Beside those things that are without,

^c Ch. 10. 1, 2, 10. ^d Ver. 22—27. Phil. 3. 3—6. ^e Phil. 3. 5. Acts, 21. 39. & 22. 2. & 26. 4, 5. Gal. 1. 14. Rom. 11. 1. with Gen. 17. 7, 9. & 32. 28. Mal. 1. 2. 2 Chr. 20. 7. ^f Ver. 5. Ch. 12. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 15. 10. Acts, 9. 16, 23. & xiii—xxviii. & 13. 23, 50. & 14. 19. & 16. 22. & 20. 20, 23. & 21. 11, 31. & 23. 10. & 26. 21, 22. & 28. 20. 1 Cor. 4. 9—12. & 15. 31. Ch. 1. 5, 8. 10. & 4. 8—11. & 6. 4—9. & 7. 5. & 12. 10, 15. Eph. 6. 20. Gal. 6. 14, 17. Phil. 1. 7, 13. & 2. 17. Col. 1. 24, 28, 12. 1 Thes. 3. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 8. & 2. 9, 10. & 3. 11. & 4. 6. ^g Deut. 25. 3. ^h Acts, 14. 5, 19. & 16. 22, 23. ⁱ Rom. 15. 19. 23—28. Acts, ix. xi. xiii—xxi. ^k Acts, 16. 25. & 20. 7, 11, 31. 1 Cor. 4. 11. Ch. 6. 5. Phil. 4. 12. ^l Acts, 20. 18—35. Col. 2. 1. Pf. 122. 6—9. & 51. 18. & 137. 5, 6. Jer. 31. 50.

But, do you bear it, if any man bring you into bondage? If, &c.?

Ver. 21. I speak as concerning reproach,] Do I speak this by way of dishonour, as if we ourselves were weak? Surely, in whatsoever any one else may be confident, (I speak it in folly) I also am confident. Doddridge. Heylin renders the verse thus: I speak of disgraces which touch me, as if I had suffered them myself; but in whatsoever any of them dare to boast, (I speak foolishly) I dare the same.

Ver. 22. Are they Hebrews?] Mr. Locke observes, that though the Apostle makes use of the plural number they, it is his opinion that he means but one person; as after, when he says we, he means only himself, using the plural number out of delicacy. "Are they Hebrews by language?" says the Apostle, capable of consulting the scriptures in "the original, with all the advantage which a familiar acquaintance with that tongue from their childhood can give them?—So am I: Are they Israelites by birth?—Not descended from Esau, or any other branch of the family, but that on which the blessing was entailed?—So am I. Are they of the seed of Abraham, both by the father's and mother's side, not proselytes, or of mingled descent?—So am I; and can trace up as fair and clear a genealogy through the tribe of Benjamin, to the father of the faithful." See Acts, vi. 1.

Ver. 23. I am more: Or, I am more so. In stripes above measure, should rather be read, in stripes far exceeding; for these words, as the other particulars of this verse, should be taken comparatively, with reference to the false apostle; with whom St. Paul is comparing himself in the ministry of the Gospel. Unless this be so understood, there will seem to be a disagreeable tautology in the following verses; which, taking these words in a comparative sense, are proofs of his saying, In stripes I am exceedingly beyond him; for, of the Jews five times, &c. See on Deut. xxv. 3.

Ver. 25. Thrice was I beaten with rods, &c.] See Matth. xxvii. 26. Mark, xv. 15. John, xix. 1. The wreck at

Malta happened long after this time; so that it must have been the fourth shipwreck that St. Paul suffered. Had the inhabitants of that island been informed of this circumstance, they would have been confirmed in their suspicions of his being a very bad man; but this remarkably shews us, that a series of what the world calls misfortunes from the hand of Providence, may befall the best and worthiest of mankind. The word *Νυκθήμερον*, rendered a day and a night, signifies "a natural day, including the hours of light and "darkness." St. Paul was, during such a natural day, in the deep; probably floating on the remainders of the wreck, and just on the point of being washed away and sunk every moment. As *Βυθός*, the word here used, and rendered the deep, was the name of a deep dungeon at Cyzicum, in the Propontis, Dr. Hammond conjectures that St. Paul was cast into it, as he passed from Troas to that city: but the interpretation above given seems to be more easy and natural.

Ver. 26. In perils of waters,] Or, of rivers: the word should certainly be so rendered, to contradictinguish these hazards, from those which he underwent by sea. In the city, means not only in Jerusalem, but in other cities, in opposition to perils in the wilderness. The Apostle possibly mentions false brethren last, as apprehending peculiar danger from their efforts among the Corinthians.

Ver. 27. In weariness and painfulness,] The latter of the words here used, *Μόχθος*, is more expressive than the former, *Κόπος*: it signifies not only strenuous labour, but such as proceeds to a degree of great fatigue. What an idea does this verse give us of the Apostle's fidelity and zeal! How hard was it for a man of a genteel and liberal education, as St. Paul was, to bear such rigours, and to wander about like a vagabond, hungry, and almost naked; yet coming into the presence of persons of high life; and speaking in large and various assemblies, on matters of the utmost importance! See the Inferences.

Ver. 28. Beside those things that are without,] Beside foreign affairs, the care of all the churches is rushing in upon me

that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

29 " Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

30 If I must needs glory, " I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

31 " The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which " is blessed for evermore, " know-

eth that I lie not.

32 " In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:

33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

" 1 Cor. 8. 11. & 9. 22. Rom. 12. 15. Gal. 6. 2. Heb. 13. 3. Pf. 35. 13, 14. " Ch. 12. 5, 9, 16. Gal. 6. 14. Col. 1. 24. Rom. 5. 3.
 Ch. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 7. John. 10. 30. " Rom. 1. 25. & 9. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 12, 17. & 6. 15, 16. Neh. 9. 5. If. 57. 15. " See ver.
 10. Rom. 1. 9. & 9. 1. Ch. 1. 23. Gal. 1. 20. Phil. 1. 8. 1 Thes. 2. 5. " Acts, 9. 24.

me every day. Doddridge. Others would read, *besides what is exclusive of these things, the care of all the churches, &c.* for what he had before mentioned were no other than external things. *That which cometh upon me daily*, Mr. Saurin would read, *what besetgeth me daily*. The original is very emphatical, *that daily insurrection upon me,—the care, &c.* The word ἑπιρροαίσις properly signifies a *tumult, or crowd of people rising up against a man at once, and ready to bear him down.*

Ver. 29. *Who is offended,*] " So as to be led into sin by the rashness or uncharitableness of others; and I am not fired—with grief and indignation, to see such dishonour brought upon religion, and with zeal to repress the grievance, if possible?" The word ἰσχυρομαι properly signifies *to be fired*; and it may, perhaps, in this connection, allude to the sudden *hurry of spirits* into which a man is put by the dangerous *fall* of a person whom he tenderly loves, especially when occasioned by the carelessness and folly of another.

Ver. 30. *If I must needs glory,*] See ch. xii. 11. By the word *καυχᾶσθαι*, which is translated sometimes *to glory*, and sometimes to *boast*, the Apostle throughout, when he applies it to himself, means nothing but the mentioning some commendable action of his, without vanity or ostentation, and barely from the necessity of the occasion.

Ver. 31. *The God and Father, &c.*] *God, even the Father, &c.* There should only be a colon at the end of the verse; this solemn asseveration being introduced to give credit, not to what precedes, but to what follows; which was then known only to few, and is therefore attested in like manner, Gal. i. 20. though afterwards particularly related by St. Luke, Acts, ix. 25.

Inferences drawn from ver. 19, &c.—This portion of scripture is the more remarkable, because it presents us with a great Apostle, engaged in an act very unusual, and, generally speaking, very unbecoming that character. It seems therefore highly necessary, in order to understand and be able to account for such a proceeding, that we consider carefully, *first*, the occasion, and, *secondly*, the manner of it; after which, such other reflections may be properly suggested, as naturally arise from the subject.

1. *The occasion*, as has been frequently hinted, was evidently the corruptions brought into the church of Corinth by some false teachers, who had insinuated themselves into the affections of the people by every art of subtilty and deceit. Very many of the people appear to have been caught with their guile, and to have entered into deep pre-

judices against St. Paul; and were grown so immoderately fond of their false teachers, that at the same time that they thought the just and gentle authority of an Apostle a yoke too heavy, the utmost vanity and insolence, the most insatiable pillaging and avarice, the most imperious tyranny and contumelious treatment, went down very contentedly, from the hands of those mercenary hypocrites.

Had this partiality been attended with no farther consequence than the lessening St. Paul's private reputation, he would not have thought it worth while so solicitously to vindicate his honour; but foreseeing that so undeserved a preference of the *men*, would certainly bring on a liking for their *errors*, and thus endanger the souls of as many as should adhere to them, charity for his brethren called for justice to himself. Accordingly, for the sake of those deluded Corinthians, and to justify the truth, he found it necessary to assert his due; to provoke his bold detractors to a comparison, and so at once to shew how much he, and how little they, were able to produce, in proof of their authority;—an authority, which he was invested with by Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, and exercised with lenity and temper; but which they, by dint of arrogance, assumed to themselves, and abused to the vile purposes of calumny and faction.

Such was the occasion, such the end of our Apostle's appearing here in a figure so unlike what he commonly makes in his writings; yet which, though they are so reasonable and so urgent, he manages in such a way, as to clear his humility of every suspicion that the most capacious adversary could cast upon it.

2. This may better appear from the second particular,—the *manner* of his proceeding on this delicate occasion: in which we should observe, 1. His many apologies, or seeming condemnations of himself, in giving way so far to the provocations of those who spoke or thought against him. See ver. 21, 23, 30. (and again ch. xii. 1, 11, &c.) with other expressions to the like purpose. So cautiously does the Apostle conduct himself in a point which he rightly understood to be so nice: for, as the expatiating upon ourselves without any necessity, is of all faults in conversation the most nauseous and offensive, so the being extremely tender and officious, even in our own vindication, is seldom free from vanity. This is the case of all mankind,—but especially of the ministers of Christ, who must expect a share in calumnies and contradictions, and ought to be armed with patience to endure them, above the

C H A P. XII.

Commending his apostleship, though he might glory of his wonderful revelations, yet the Apostle rather chooseth to glory of his infirmities, blaming the Corinthians for forcing him to this boasting: he promiseth to come to them again; but yet altogether in the affection of a father, although he feareth he shall, to his grief, find many offenders and public disorders there.

[Anno Domini 58.]

IT is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to ^bvisions and revelations of the Lord.

^a 1 Cor. 6. 12. & 10, 21. Ver. 6, 7. with 11.
^b 1 Cor. 15. 8. Ch. 5. 16, 17.

* Or possible.

^c Num. 12. 6. Joel, 2. 28. Gal. 1. 12. & 2. 2.

^d Ch. 11. 30. Ver. 9, 10.

^e Acts, 9. 3, 4. & 22. 6, 17. & 26. 16, 19.

the proportion of common men. When therefore these have influence upon their *personal advantages* only, it is generally better to leave the clearing of their innocence to time, and the evidence of a good conversation. Where they reflect upon their *character*, and by poisoning the people with ill impressions, tend to obstruct the efficacy of their labours,—the cause becomes public; their charge is concerned, and a becoming solicitude to set matters right in such circumstances, is no longer zeal for their own, but charity for other men's safety and good.

And yet even in these circumstances, St. Paul's example teaches us how careful we ought to be in warding off all the spiteful constructions which are apt to be made of the most necessary and the most modest publication of our own conduct and deservings: for, 2. The subjects upon which he chooses here to enlarge were, not the greatness of his *miracles*, not the power of his *eloquence* and arguments, not the *success* of his labours, or the number of *converts* he had won, or of the *churches* that he had planted, though no man could with greater right have alleged all these; but only the *toils* and *hardships*, the *persecutions* and *afflictions* in which the discharge of his ministry had engaged him. These were such privileges, as his adversaries neither had nor desired to have to boast of. They had other things in view; (ver. 20) the gain of private contributions,—the command of their hearers' purses, and an absolute dominion over their persons. The grounds upon which they exalted themselves were all taken from worldly advantages, (ver. 21, 22.) and in that respect St. Paul is content to declare himself their equal. The particulars in which he declares himself their superior, were of such a kind, that they were well enough satisfied to yield him a preference in them;—*stripes* and *imprisonments*, *shipwrecks*, and *deaths*, hard and perilous *journeys*, *cold*, and *hunger* and *thirst*. These it was so far from vanity to glory in, that the Apostle found it necessary (ch. xii.) to subjoin his being honoured with extraordinary visions and revelations, to prevent so great a degree and so constant a succession of sufferings from being turned into an argument of God's displeasure against one so incessantly exercised in them.

And yet, these afflictions were really the most proper matter of glorying to St. Paul; because it was perfectly

2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); such an one caught up to the third heaven.

3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth);

4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not * lawful for a man to utter.

5 Of such an one will I glory: yet of

free from all vanity and self-seeking; for *his* were not sufferings in pursuit of his own emolument or gratification; not industriously courted, nor ostentatiously magnified, in order to turn them into gain—And still more, because to all who duly considered them, they were proofs of that abundant grace which supported him under them; of that unparalleled sincerity and zeal which, through the blessing of God, disposed him so cheerfully to persevere in encountering with them; and of the truth of that doctrine, which, by the ministry of one so wondrously oppressed and ill treated, could yet gain so much ground, and triumph over all opposition.

The passage thus explained offers to us the following useful considerations:

1. The instance before us shews, how far we ought to be from reckoning what we endure for God's cause, (when it really is God's) as matter of sorrow or shame to us. St. Paul, in comparison of the rest of the Apostles, was a labourer called in at the eleventh hour; and as he taught the *Phillippians* to esteem it, so he thought it,—a peculiar grace, that it was given him *not only to believe in Jesus*, but also to *suffer for his name*. The fervency of his charity and zeal made up what was wanting in point of time.

2. When St. Paul, to all his other sufferings, adds the *care of all the churches*, and his zealous compassion over those who were afflicted or in danger of falling: this shews us the abundance of *his* charity, and instructs us what ought to be the measure of *ours*—not to neglect, or think ourselves excused from a tender concern for the afflictions or dangers of our brethren, upon the account of any sufferings of our own. Be our other circumstances what they will, yet still they are members of Christ's body; and while that relation continues, all the duties resulting from it must do so too. So indispensable and perpetual a duty indeed is charity, for the *souls* of others especially, that those hardships, which lie outward and open to the view of others, are far from being the most sensible part of what the genuine ministers of the Gospel endure.

Lastly, The methods used for exercising St. Paul's patience, holiness, and virtue, teach us plainly, that the way in which God would be served by Christians, but especially

myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

6 For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth:

* Ch. 10. 8. & 11. 16. 1 Cor. 3. 5, 9, 10.

especially by his *ministers*, is that of constancy, of indefatigable diligence, and of diffusive love: that ease and idleness, that luxury and an effeminate declining of trouble for the public good, are by no means agreeable to the character of a disciple of Christ Jesus. So strenuously does this great Apostle, by his own example, encourage and prepare us for the like discipline, if called to it, that no one who professes himself the servant of Christ can plead exemption from a similar perseverance and fortitude. One great and evident design of these sharp conflicts of St. Paul was, doubtless, to stimulate every future Christian to reduce the softness of a nature generally too indulgent of flesh and blood, and to enure him to *suffer hardships like a good soldier*, under the common *Captain of our salvation*. In which warfare the less we spare our own persons, the more we may depend upon his protection and support under the conflict; the brighter trophies shall we raise to his glory, to the honour of religion, and the unspeakable advantage both of body and soul, *in that day of triumph* and eternal joy! Amen.

REFLECTIONS.—1st. The Apostle begins,

1. With an apology for what he was about to say; *Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly; and indeed bear with me*, compelled reluctantly to speak in my own commendation.

2. He gives the reasons for what he was about to say. It was,

{1.} Out of jealousy for them. *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ*, true to your solemn engagements, and faithful in all your conduct to this heavenly Bridegroom of souls. *But I fear*, knowing the wiles of the false teachers, *lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*; perverted from the principles, or seduced from the practice, of the gospel.

{2.} Out of justice to himself. *For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another Spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him*: but since there is but one Jesus, one Spirit, one gospel, it was shrewdly to be suspected that the person who pretended to preach another Jesus, boasted of a better Spirit, and a more excellent gospel, than that by which they had at first been converted to the faith, was a deceiver, and, instead of being connived at, or caressed, should be rejected with abhorrence.

2dly, Constrained by the insinuations which had been cast out against him, the blessed Paul,

1. Asserts his equality with the very chief of the apostles. *Though rude in speech*, my elocution being not so graceful as that of some others, yet my knowledge of the gospel mysteries is inferior to none. *But we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things*; your consciences have borne witness to the efficacy of our preaching; and our

conversation among you, as you know, has been most unblameable.

2. He asserts his disinterested conduct, and vindicates himself from the cavils of his adversaries, who suggested that he had acted below the apostolic character, in not receiving his maintenance from the church at Corinth. *Have I committed an offence in abusing myself*, to work for my subsistence, *that ye might be exalted to the participation of the gospel privileges; because I preached to you the gospel of God freely*, that no prejudice might obstruct your receiving our word, which such disinterested zeal could not but recommend? *I robbed other churches, taking wages of them to do you service*; not really plundering them, but living upon their voluntary contributions; when the Corinthians, so much richer, could much easier have afforded him a maintenance. However, he neither had been, nor would be a burden to them; his former wants the Macedonians had supplied; and he was firmly resolved that none in all Achaia, in any future time, should have reason to reproach him on this behalf, to stop his glorying of having preached to them the gospel freely.

Wherefore do I this? out of pride or disgust, as the false teachers would insinuate, and because I love you not? No; God knoweth that these were not my motives. But I have thus acted, and will continue so to do, *that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion*, and would be ready to catch at any handle to fleece you, if I received any thing from you. Therefore I would wish *that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we*, and as free from every mercenary view: for in truth such are false apostles, assuming a character to which they have not the least title; *deceitful workers*, corrupting the word of God; *transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ*, appearing under the most specious professions. *And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light*, as he appeared when he came to seduce Eve from her integrity: therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works, and the issue be their everlasting destruction.

3dly, The Apostle, with reluctance, enters upon the subject of his own vindication. *I say again, let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little*, such boasts, in general, being indeed the indications of a vain mind. *That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly in this confidence of boasting*; but since I am compelled, by the unhappy circumstances in which I stand, and seeing that many glory after the flesh, in their external privileges, *I will glory also*. *For ye suffer fools gladly*, and carest the vain boasters among you, *seeing ye yourselves are wise*. Probably the words are spoken ironically: *Wife men indeed ye are, to be dupes to such ostentatious deceivers. For ye suffer if a man bring you into bondage*, tyrannizing over your consciences; *if a man devour you under the specious pretences of religion; if a man take of you, or seize from you your possessions; if a man exalt himself, and treat you with lordly contempt;*

but *now* I forbear, lest any man should think *that* he heareth of me.

of me above that which he seeth me *to be*, or

7 And lest I should be exalted above mea-

contempt; if a man smite you on the face, submissive to every insult. *I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak*, and had no right to assert such authority as they pretend to claim: *howbeit, whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly) I am bold also*, and can produce as long a catalogue of privileges as the chief of these arrogant men.

1. As to external Jewish privileges of descent. *Are they Hebrews? so am I*, by both my parents, (*Phil. iii. 5.*) *are they Israelites? the sons of Jacob, so am I: are they the seed of Abraham? so am I*, a true descendant of this eminent patriarch.

2. As to gospel privileges. *Are they the ministers of Christ?* commissioned by him? (*I speak as a fool,*) admitting their plea, though false, to be true, *I am more*, having a more extraordinary commission, more eminent endowments, and suffering for the cause more than any of them: *in labours more abundant; in stripes above measure, unmercifully beaten; in prisons more frequent; in deaths oft, exposed to the most imminent dangers, a short enumeration of which will prove what I assert. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes, save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, by the Roman licitors; once was I stoned, and left for dead; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep, tossed on the foaming waves, and every moment ready to be swallowed up by them: in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in fording rivers, or by land-floods; in perils of robbers; in perils by mine own countrymen, who lay in wait for me; in perils by the heathen; in perils in the city, from dangerous insurrections; in perils in the wilderness, during my travels; in perils in the sea; in perils among false brethren, the most dangerous of all enemies: in weariness and painfulness, under the most fatiguing labours; in watchings often, my rest being broken; in hunger and thirst, for want of needful refreshments; in fastings often, voluntary, or necessitated by mere want; in cold and nakedness, exposed to the inclemency of the weather, and without sufficient cloathing to keep me warm. Beside those things which affect my body, a heavier load of cares lies upon my mind, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches, to advance their purity and peace, rectify their disorders, and guard them against seducers. Who is weak, and I am not weak? sympathizing with him in his infirmity of body or mind? who is offended, and I burn not with jealousy for the offence, and zeal to restore him? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities, and rather mention my sufferings and hardships than my privileges. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not. In Damascus, the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his bands, snatched as it were from inevitable death. Such a glorious course marked, indeed, the great Apostle: such sufferings for righteousness' sake are the highest honour.*

C H A P. XII.

AFTER enumerating in the former chapter his almost

incredible labours and sufferings for the gospel, the Apostle in this, directing his discourse to the faction who had ridiculed him for praising himself, said to them ironically, Well, it does not become me to boast of any thing I have done or suffered as a minister of Christ: nevertheless, I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord, ver. 1.—But that he might not offend their affected delicacy, he did not say these visions and revelations were given to himself. He only told them that he knew a servant of Christ, who, fourteen years before the date of this letter, had been caught up as far as to the third heaven, ver. 2.—Though whether in the body or out of the body, the Apostle did not know, ver. 3.—This servant of Christ, in paradise, heard things which could not be expressed in human language, ver. 4.—Concerning such a person, the Apostle said he would boast; but, concerning himself, he told them, ironically, he would not boast, except in his weaknesses, for which they had ridiculed him, and of which he had boasted in the end of the preceding chapter, ver. 5.—And yet, being himself that servant of Christ who had been caught up, he told them that if he inclined to boast concerning himself, as the person who was so highly honoured, he should not be a fool, because he should speak nothing of himself but what was strictly true. Nevertheless he forbore, lest forsooth any of them should think more highly of him than his appearance or his manner of speaking warranted. This he said in high but sacred ridicule of their gibe that his bodily presence was weak, but his letters weighty and powerful, ver. 6.

Farther, because he had said he would not boast, except in his weaknesses, for which they had ridiculed him, he told them that his bodily infirmity, instead of rendering him contemptible, was an honour to him; because it was sent on him by God, to prevent him from being too much elated with the transcendency of the revelations which had been given to him, ver. 7.—That he had besought the Lord thrice to remove it, ver. 8.—But that he told him his grace was sufficient for making him successful as an Apostle, and his power in converting the world was most illustriously displayed in the weakness of the instruments employed for that end. The Apostle therefore boasted in his own weakness, that the power of Christ might be seen to dwell upon him, ver. 9.—Nay, he even took pleasure in weaknesses, insults, &c. for Christ's sake, ver. 10.—But added, that if he appeared a fool in thus praising himself, his friends among the Corinthians had constrained him to it; because when his enemies called his apostleship in question, they ought to have spoken in his vindication, as they well knew that he was in no respect inferior to the greatest of the apostles, ver. 11.—All the proofs of an apostle he had frequently shewed in their presence, by signs and wonders, and powers, ver. 12.—So that as a church they were inferior to others in nothing, except that he, their spiritual father, had not taken maintenance from them. But, in irony of their finding fault with him on that account, he begged them to forgive him that injury, ver. 13.—Yet to shew that he had done them no injury in that matter, he now told them he was coming to them

sure through the abundance of the revelations, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, should be exalted above measure.

¹ 2 Chr. 32. 25. Ezek. 28. 24. Job, 2. 6. Gal. 4. 14.

them the third time, and still would not be burdensome to them: because he did not seek their goods, but their salvation, and because the children ought not to provide for the parents, but the parents for the children, ver. 14.—and therefore with pleasure he would spend his time and waste his body for their souls' sake, so much did he love them; although the more he loved them, he found the less he was beloved by them, ver. 15.—Well then, said he, ye must acknowledge that I did not burden you, by taking maintenance from you. Nevertheless, the faction say, (because it is the practice of the false teacher to whom they are attached,) that by this shew of disinterestedness I craftily made you lay aside all suspicion of my loving money, that I might draw it the more effectually from you by my assistants, when absent, ver. 16.—But did I make the least gain of you by any of those whom I sent to you after my departure? ver. 17.—I besought Titus to visit you lately. Did Titus, or the brother that I sent with him, make any gain of you? Did they not walk in the same spirit, and in the same steps with me? ver. 18. Farther, by sending Titus to you this second time, do I apologize to you for not coming myself? In the sight of God I solemnly protest that I speak by the direction of Christ, when I tell you that my sending Titus is designed for your edification, by giving the faulty among you time to repent, ver. 19.—Yet I am afraid that when I come I shall not find you such reformed persons as I wish you to be, and that I shall be found by you such as ye do not wish. My meaning is, that I shall find strifes, emulations, &c. among you, ver. 20.—So that when I come, I shall be so far humbled among you by my God, as to be obliged with grief to punish those among you who have formerly sinned, and have not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness which they have habitually committed, ver. 21.

Ver. 1. *I will come to visions, &c.*] The Apostle's speaking of his *visions and revelations*, which, indeed, did him the highest honour, could not be a proof that he was deter- mined not to vindicate himself: it is evident, therefore, that the word *ᾠραὶ* in the original [*ἰσοουαὶ γὰρ*] cannot have its original signification, and be rendered *for*. Our translators take it for a mere expletive. Dr. Doddridge translates it *nevertheless*; and it is certain that it has vari- ous significations, and must have this signification here, if it express any thing. Some would read the verse, *Is it not expedient for me to glory?—I will come therefore to visions, &c.*

Ver. 2. *I knew a man in Christ*] St. Paul must un- doubtedly mean himself, or the whole article had been quite foreign to his purpose. It hence appears, that the Apostle had concealed this extraordinary event *fourteen years*; and if this Epistle was written about the year 58, as is supposed, this vision must have fallen out in the year 44, which was so long after his conversion as to prove it quite different from the trance mentioned, Acts, ix. 9. Some think that this glorious representation was made to him in the temple, on the journey mentioned, Acts, ix. 30. xxii. 17. and intended to encourage him against

the difficulties which he was to encounter in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. *Whether in the body or out of the body*, must mean, "I know not whether he was then in the body, " during that extraordinary extacy, or for a time taken " out of the body, so that only the principle of animal life " remained in him." As St. Paul must have known that his body was not actually dead during this trance, but that the animal motion of his lungs and heart continued, it tends to prove that he really considered the principle of animal life to be something distinct from the rational soul. See Bishop Brown's distinction of *Spirit, Soul, and Body*, in his "Procedure of the Understanding," b. ii. ch. 10. Castalio and Bengelius translate the beginning of this verse, *I know a Christian caught up fourteen years ago, &c.* In- stead of *I cannot tell*, here and ver. 3. some read, *I know not*.

Ver. 4. *Caught up into Paradise*] By the *third heaven*, ver. 2. some understand the seat of the divine glory, the place where Christ dwelleth at the Father's right-hand; and by *Paradise*, that garden of God, which is the seat of the happy in the intermediate state, and during their separa- tion from the body. Bishop Bull, discoursing on this subject, observes, "St. Paul,—who had been caught up " into the third heaven, and also into Paradise, (which the " scriptures tell us is the receptacle of the spirits of good " men, separated from their bodies) and therefore was best " able to give us an account of the state of souls dwelling " there,—assures us, that those souls live and operate, " and have a perception of excellent things; nay, in the " very same passage, where he speaks of that rapture of " his, he plainly enough confirms this hypothesis: for " first when he declares himself uncertain whether he re- " ceived those admirable visions in or out of the body, he " manifestly supposes it possible for the soul, when out of " the body, not only to subsist, but also to perceive and " know—and even things above the natural apprehension " of mortal men; and then when he tells us that he re- " ceived in Paradise visions and revelations, and heard " there *ῥήματα ἠνωτάτα*, *unspeakable words, not lawful, or " rather, not possible for a man to utter*, he directly teaches " that Paradise is so far from being a place of darkness " and obscurity, silence and oblivion, where the good " spirits, its proper inhabitants, are all in a profound sleep, " as some have vainly imagined,—that, on the contrary, " it is a most glorious place, full of light and ravishing " vision; a place where mysteries may be heard and " learned, far surpassing the reach of frail mortals. In " short, the glories of the *third heaven*, and of *Paradise*, " seem to have been, by an extraordinary revelation, open- " ed and discovered to St. Paul, not only for his own sup- " port under the heavy pressure of his afflictions, but also " that he might be able to speak of them with greater as- " surance to others. And the order is observable: first, " he had represented to him the most perfect joys of the " third or highest heaven, of which we hope to be par- " takers after the resurrection; and then, lest so long an " expectation

Z z

" expectation

8 For this thing ^s I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And he said unto me, ^a My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will ¹ I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 ^k Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for ¹ when I am weak, then am I strong.

11 ^m I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for ⁿ in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

12 ^o Truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

13 ^p For what is it wherein ye were in-

ferior to other churches, except *it be* that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong.

14 Behold, ¹ the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not your's, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

15 And ¹ I will very gladly spend and be spent for ^{*} you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

16 But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being ¹ crafty, I caught you with guile.

17 ¹ Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?

18 ^u I desired Titus, and with *him* I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? *walked we* not in the same steps?

19 Again, think ye that we ^x excuse our-

¹ Deut. 3. 23. Mat. 26. 44. ² 1 Cor. 10. 13. If. 40. 29, 30. & 41. 10, 14. ³ Ver. 10. Ch. 11. 30. 1 Pet. 4. 13, 14. ⁴ Rom. 5. 3. Ch. 1. 4. & 2. 14. & 4. 8. & 7. 4. Gal. 6. 14. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 2. 10. Jam. 1. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. & 4. 13, 14. Acts, 5. 41. Ch. 13. 9. ⁵ Ver. 9. 1 Sam. 15. 7. Mat. 5. 3. & 15. 27, 28. Eph. 3. 16. & 6. 10. ⁶ Ch. 11. 1, 16, 17, 21. ⁷ Ch. 11. 5. Gal. 2. 6, 9. 1 Cor. 15. 9, 10. & 3. 5, 7. & 4. 7. Eph. 3. 8. Ch. 3. 5. ⁸ Rom. 15. 19. 1 Cor. 9. 1, 2. Ch. 4. 2. & 6. 4. & 11. 6. Acts, 19. 11, 12. & 2. 12. ⁹ 1 Cor. 1. 4. 5. with 9. 12. Ch. 11. 8, 9. Ver. 14, 15. ¹⁰ Ch. 13. 1. & 1. 15. 1 Cor. 4. 19. & 11. 34. & 16. 5. & 4. 15. Acts, 20. 33. Phil. 4. 17. ¹¹ John, 10. 11. Phil. 2. 17. 1 Theff. 2. 8. Ch. 1. 6, 12, 13. & 6. 12. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 2. 10. ¹² Gr. *your souls*. ¹³ Prov. 11. 30. Ch. 11. 9. Ver. 13. ¹⁴ Ch. 7. 2. 2 Pet. 2. 3. Ch. 7. 2, 6. & 2. 12, 1 Cor. 16. 10. ¹⁵ Ch. 8. 6, 16, 18. 22. ¹⁶ Ch. 5. 12. & 3. 1.

“ expectation should discourage us, he saw also the intermediate joys of Paradise, wherewith the souls of the faithful are refreshed until the resurrection: and for our comfort he tells us that even these also are *inexpressible*.”

Ver. 5. *But in mine infirmities*] “In those things which carry the marks of weakness, though, in a certain connection, they will appear honourable too.”

Ver. 7. *Was given to me a thorn in the flesh*] The conjectures of commentators respecting St. Paul's *thorn in the flesh*, have been innumerable. We shall not dwell upon them, but insert the following, as it appears to be the most rational interpretation. Ezekiel has a parallel passage, ch. xxviii. 24. where the *pricking briar*, and *grieving thorn*, are used to express a great affliction. In allusion to which the Apostle might use this term, to signify some paralytic disorder, which affected his speech and aspect, owing to the insufferable glories of his vision, which might weaken and relax the nervous system. This *infirmity in his flesh* might give occasion to the *messenger of Satan*, or the false teacher and calumnious adversary who opposed the Apostle, to represent him in a despicable light. As this disorder might threaten both his acceptance among the Corinthians and others, and his usefulness, it is no wonder that he was so importunate for its removal; yet, being the effect of so great and singular a favour, he might, with the highest propriety, talk of *glorying* in it, ver. 9. However, as St. Paul thought fit to conceal what this *thorn in the flesh* was,

it is not easy for us to discover, nor is it very material to know what it was.

Ver. 9. *My strength is made perfect in weakness*.] “Is illustrated in proportion to the weakness of the instrument I make use of.” The word *ἑπισηκνωσας*, which we render, *may rest upon*, is emphatical, and signifies literally, *may pitch its tent upon*. See John, i. 14.

Ver. 10. *For when I am weak, &c.*] “For when, viewed in my outward state, I appear weak, then, by the power of Christ, which dwelleth in me, I am found to be strong.”

Ver. 12. *In all patience*,] This may well be understood to reflect on the haughtiness and plenty, wherein the false apostle lived among them.

Ver. 14. *The third time I am ready, &c.*] Having been disappointed twice before, 1 Cor. xvi. 5. 2 Cor. i. 15, 16.

Ver. 15. *I will very gladly spend and be spent*] “I will gladly exhaust my strength, and put myself to any expence too, for your salvation; though the consequence of all should be, that the more abundantly I love you, the less I should be loved by you.” See 2 Tim. ii. 10. 1 Theff. ii. 8.

Ver. 16. *But be it so, I did not burden you, &c.*] *But be it so that I did not burden you, yet* [perhaps it will be suggested] *that, being a crafty deceiver, I circumvented you with guile.*

Ver. 18. *I desired Titus*,] “To go to you.”

Ver. 19. *Again, think ye that we excuse, &c.*] He had before

selves unto you? we speak ⁷ before God in Christ: but *we* ² do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.

20 For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, ^a and *that* I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest *there be* debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, back-

bitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

21 *And* lest, when I come again, ^b my God will humble me among you, and *that* I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

⁷ See ch. 11. 10, 31. Rom. 7. 9. & 9. 7. ^a 1 Cor. 9. 12, 23. & 10. 33 & 14. 26. Ch. 5. 12, 13. & 10. 8. & 13. 10. ^b Ch. 1. 23, 24. & 2. 1. & 10. 2. & 13. 2, 10. 1 Cor. 4. 16, 18, 21. ^b Phil. 3. 18, 19. 1 Cor. 5. 11. Rom. 13. 13.

before given the reason, ch. i. 23. for his not coming to them, with the same asseveration as in the present verse. If we trace the thread of St. Paul's discourse, we may observe that, having concluded the justification of himself and his apostleship by his past actions, ver. 13. he had it in his thoughts to tell them how he would deal with the false apostle and his adherents when he came, as he was now ready to do; and therefore he solemnly begins, ver. 14. with *Behold*; and tells them, that now *the third time he was ready to come to them*: to which joining what was much upon his mind, that he would not be *burdensome to them* when he came, an objection was presented to his thoughts, namely, that this personal shyness in him was but cunning, for that he designed to draw gain from them by other hands; from which he clears himself by the instance of *Titus*, and *a brother*, whom he had sent together with him; who were as far from receiving any thing from them as he himself. Titus and his other messenger being thus mentioned, he thought it necessary to obviate another suspicion which might be raised in the minds of some of them, as if he mentioned the sending of those two as an apology for his not coming himself. This he utterly disclaims; and, to prevent any thoughts of that kind, solemnly protests to them, that, in all his conduct towards them, he had done nothing but for their edification; that he had no other aim in any of his actions; and that he forbore coming, merely out of respect and good-will to them. So that the whole, from ver. 14. to ch. xiii. 1. must be looked upon as a discourse which fell in occasionally, though tending to the same purpose with the rest:—a way of writing very usual with our Apostle. and with other writers, who abound in quickness and variety of thoughts, as he did. Such men, by new matter rising in their way, are often put by from what they were going, and had begun to say; which therefore they are obliged to take up again, and continue at a distance, as St. Paul does here, after the interposition of eight verses. But we must never forget that, however the Holy Spirit was pleased to operate on the Apostle's mind, the whole was written under his infallible direction.

Ver. 20. *Lest there be—envyings, &c.*] All these were the natural consequences of those *debates* which had arisen among them; and therefore St. Paul, in a very judicious manner, gives this solemn warning with relation to them.

Inferences.—What vicissitudes are there in the Christian's comforts and afflictions! He is sometimes lifted up, as it were, to the third heaven, which is like a paradise; for all

delights, and unutterable glories; and he presently falls under the buffetings of Satan, and the forest trials, which God orders and over-rules to prevent spiritual pride, lest it should rise, even upon the ground of the most distinguishing and endearing manifestations of divine favour. How earnestly does the believer betake himself to the Lord Jesus for deliverance from temptations and afflictions, which he finds to be more than his own match! And how certain is it that his prayers shall not be in vain, though they may not always be answered in the very thing that he asked! A promise of Christ's grace as sufficient for us, and of his strength, as to be made perfect in our weakness, is the noblest support under every difficulty or danger, and the best security for a due improvement of it, and for victory and triumph in the issue. We may well glory in those trials which give occasion for, and are attended with, the most evident demonstrations of the power of Christ, as resting upon us; though, in the midst of the highest privileges, manifestations, and attainments, we are, as of ourselves, and ought to be in our own account, as nothing. How happy is it, when the servants of Christ can appeal to him for the sincerity of their aims in all their holy ministrations; and can appeal to the consciences of their hearers that the signs of their divine mission are made known among them, by their patient, faithful, tender, and disinterested behaviour; by the good fruits of their labours; and by plain tokens of God's being with them! And how cheerfully will they spend, and be spent, for the good of souls, and do all things for their edification, while they seek not theirs, but them; and resolve, by the Grace of God, to persist therein, even though the more they love them, and, like parents, provide for their spiritual welfare, the less they were to be loved of them! How desirous should they all be to act under the influence of the same divine Spirit, and with the same Christian temper; and to tread in the same laudable steps, in pursuing the great ends of their ministry! And, as far as they do so, how ready should their people be to encourage and speak well of them, and to save them the irksome task of saying any thing that looks like self-applause, to vindicate their own characters! But, O how humbling and grievous is it, not only to be themselves vilified, but to see their hopes blasted, and their labour lost upon those, who, instead of answering just expectations of yielding obedience to the authority of Christ, in all holy conversation and godliness, are guilty of such scandalous enormities in temper and behaviour, and continue so impenitent in them, as to need the severest animadversions upon them!

CHAP. XIII.

He threateneth severity and the power of his apostleship against obstinate sinners; and advising them to a trial of their faith, and to a reformation of their conduct before his coming, he concludeth his epistle with a general exhortation and prayer.

[Anno Domini 58.]

THIS is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three

^a See ch. 12. 14. ^b Num. 35. 30. Deut. 9. 15. & 17. 6. Mat. 18. 16. Heb. 10. 29. John, 8. 17. ^c 1 Cor. 4. 19, 21. Ch. 10. 2, 8, 11, 6. & 1. 23. & 12. 20, 21. Ver. 10. ^d Mat. 10. 20. & 18. 18. 1 Cor. 5. 4. & 11. 30. Ch. 10. 10. Ver. 2. 4.

REFLECTIONS.—1st. Once more he will speak. Though (ordinarily the Apostle confesses) *it is not expedient for me, doubtless, to glory*; yet since others boast of extraordinary manifestations, *I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord*; one remarkable instance of which I will only mention.

I knew, or I know, a man in Christ, a faithful soul, above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, whether in his spirit only, or in his whole man, I cannot tell: God knoweth) such an one caught up to the third heaven, where angels dwell, and the most illustrious display of the divine glory is made. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth) how that he was caught up into Paradise, the region of the blessed, and heard unspeakable words, which contained such sublimity of ideas, and were delivered in such language as it is not lawful, or possible, for a man to utter, in his present mortal state of weakness. Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities, and in such things as carry evident marks of my own weakness. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth, I will speak with the utmost sincerity and simplicity: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me, supposing me to be more than human, who am a mere worm. And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. What this was, whether some bodily affliction, or outward reproach, whatever it was, it was very grievous, yet sent for the most blessed purpose, and served to keep him humble. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice importunately, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, by an audible voice, or some divine impression on my spirit, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness—simple faith in my power and love shall make thee in all things victorious, yea, more than conqueror. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me, and be the more transcendently exalted in rescuing me out of all my trials, and carrying me safe through every temptation. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; not only resigned, but happy, rejoicing in the sufferings that I endure: for when I am weak, then am I strong, and rise victorious

witnesses shall every word be established.

2 I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare:

3 Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.

over every foe, through the power of divine grace. *Note,* (1.) To be humble in the midst of high attainments is doubly excellent. (2.) Prayer is the great relief under every distress. (3.) Though God does not always answer us according to our petitions, yet, if he gives us strength to stand in our difficulties, we are bound to acknowledge that our prayers are answered. (4.) There is a sufficiency of grace in the Redeemer to carry the faithful soul safe through every trial. (5.) The more the believer sees and feels his own weakness, the more firm he stands in the power of God.

2dly, The Apostle returns again:

1. To apologize for what might in appearance favour of vanity. *I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you, who have received such peculiar benefit by my labours: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest Apostles in my sufferings and labours, though I be nothing, considered as of myself; our sufficiency and success is of God. Truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience, amidst innumerable provocations and sufferings, in signs, miracles, and wonders of various kinds, and mighty deeds, which speak the arm of omnipotence. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, in gifts and privileges, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong; than which never was a more beautiful turn, and a more poignant, though polite, rebuke, if it be considered as spoken ironically; or, seriously, it pleads in a most elegant manner his excuse for refusing that reward from them which might be construed as a mark of disdain. Note,* (1.) Where we have received spiritual benefit, it is a debt that we owe to our ministers to vindicate their injured characters. (2.) The greatest of men and ministers, when viewing themselves in their true colours, cannot but own "I am nothing."

2. He declares his purpose to shew the same disinterested conduct. *Behold the third time I am ready to come to you, having the second time been disappointed; and I will not be burdensome to you, but will preach the gospel to you freely: for I seek not your's, but you, your spiritual benefit, not your worldly substance. For I consider myself as your father in Christ, and shall treat you with paternal care, not desiring nor accepting aught at your hands; for, in general, the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. And all I have shall be willingly laid out for you; for I will very gladly spend and*

4 For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

* Phil. 2. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Rom. 6. 4, 9, 10. Jhn, 10. 18. If. liii. 10, 11. Johu, 14. 19.

* Or with him.

f Ch. 10. 3, 4. Rom. 6. 4—6, 8, 11. Phil. 3.

be spent for you, to promote the good of your souls, ready, if need be, to lay down my own life, though I should meet with the most ungrateful returns, and the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved, and even those who seduce you be preferred before me. Note, (1.) A true minister of Christ never serves for hire, but for love, delighting to feed, not to fleece the flock. (2.) True zeal for Christ and his cause will make his servants nobly prodigal of life, unto their power, and sometimes above their power, exerting themselves in his service. (3.) The most ungrateful returns must not stay us from doing good even to the evil and unthankful.

3. He obviates an insinuation which the seducers suggested, that though he took no wages for himself, those whom he sent were well paid. Be it so, they will argue, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile; so invidiously would they misrepresent my conduct. But in answer, I appeal to yourselves, Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you? I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother: did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps? shewing the same disinterested generosity, and following my example in preaching the gospel freely, without any expence to you? Again,

4. Think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? and want, by specious pretences, for sinister ends, to insinuate others into your regard, or to get off from visiting you as I promised? We speak before God in Christ, appealing to him for our sincerity; but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying, having this great end ever in view.

5. He declares his jealous fears for them. For I fear, lest when I come I shall not find you such as I would, obedient and orderly; and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not; obliged, though with reluctance, to exert my apostolic authority; lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults. and all other evil fruits of a proud, contentious, uncharitable spirit: And lest when I come again my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness, which they have committed. Note (1.) The falls of professors are a real grief to their faithful ministers; and every gracious soul cannot but mourn over them. (2.) They who persist in their iniquities must be faithfully rebuked; and if they do not amend, their obstinate impenitence will inevitably issue in final perdition.

CHAP. XIII.

THE taunting speech of the faction, "that the Apostle was bold by letters when absent, but humble and meek when present," he had answered by a delicate but pointed irony, ch. x. 1, 2. But as that speech contained an insinuation that his threatenings to punish them by a supernatural power were mere bugbears, without any foundation, he in this chapter tells them plainly, that he was now coming to Corinth a third time, and would punish all who

opposed him, as well as those who had sinned habitually: and whatever of that kind was proved by the testimony of two or three witnesses, he would consider as fully established, ver. 1.—In my former letter, said he, I foretold that the delivering the incestuous person to Satan would be followed with the destruction of his flesh; and I now foretel, as present with you in spirit the second time, that the same thing will follow the censures which I shall inflict on the guilty; and being absent in body, I write to all those who sinned before ye received my former letter, and to all the rest who have sinned since, that if they oppose me when I come, I will not spare them, ver. 2.—And this I will do, the rather because some of you, in derision, seek a proof of Christ speaking by me. For though ye think me not able to punish you, yet, by the spiritual gifts which Christ hath bestowed on you, ye must be sensible that he is sufficiently strong to punish every guilty person among you, ver. 3.—He was crucified, indeed, through the weakness of his human nature; but, though he gave himself to be put to death, he now liveth by the power of God. In like manner, though I also am weak in body, and subject to death as he was, I will, nevertheless, shew myself alive with him, by exercising the power that he has given me in punishing you, if you repent not, however strong you may think yourselves, ver. 4.—And since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking by me, I desire you to try yourselves whether ye be a church of Christ, and to prove your ownelves, whether as a church ye possess any spiritual gifts? Know ye not yourselves to be a church of Christ, by the spiritual gifts which ye received from me? and that Jesus Christ is among you in an extraordinary manner, by his miraculous powers and spiritual gifts; unless, perhaps, ye are without that proof of his presence? ver. 5. (See the Annotations.)—In this passage the Apostle, by a very fine irony, shewed the faction the absurdity of their seeking a proof of Christ's speaking by one who had been the instrument of their conversion, and who had conferred on them, in such plenty, those spiritual gifts whereby Christ manifested his extraordinary presence in any church. The Apostle added, that although they should be without that proof of Christ's presence, having entirely banished the Spirit, at least in his supernatural gifts, from among themselves, by their heinous sins, he trusted they should not find him without the proof of Christ's speaking by him, if it were needful for him to punish any of them when he came, ver. 6.—Yet he prayed to God that they might do nothing evil; his wish being not to appear approved as an apostle by punishing them, but that they might repent, although the consequence should be, that he should appear as one without proof of his apostleship, having no occasion to exert his power in punishing them, ver. 7.—For the Apostles could, at no time, use their miraculous power against the truth, but for the truth, ver. 8.—He therefore rejoiced when he appeared weak, through his having no occasion to punish offenders; and wished the Corinthians to become perfect in

5 ^a Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownelves. Know ye not your ownelves, how that ^b Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

^a 1 Cor. 11. 28. Zeph. 2. 1. Lam. 3. 40. ^b Eph. 3. 17. Col. 1. 27. John, 17. 23, 26. Gal. 2. 20. & 4. 19.

in love, and most closely knit together, so as to form a glorious spiritual temple, ver. 9. And to promote their perfection, being absent, he had written these things to them, that when present he might not need to act sharply against them, according to the miraculous power which the Lord Jesus had given him, for edifying, and not for destroying his church, ver. 10.

Ver. 1. In the mouth of two or three witnesses] These words seem to be quoted from the law of our Saviour, Matth. xviii. 16. and not from the law of Moses in Deuteronomy; not only because the words are the same with those in St. Matthew, but from the likeness of the case. In Deuteronomy the rule given concerns only judicial trials; in St. Matthew it is a rule given for the management of persuasion, and for the reclaiming of an offender by gentle means, before coming to the utmost extremity; which is the case of St. Paul here. In Deuteronomy the judge was to hear the witnesses, Deut. xvii. 6. xix. 15. In St. Matthew the party was to hear the witnesses, Matth. xviii. 17. which was also the case of St. Paul here; the *witnesses* which he made use of to persuade them being his two epistles. That by witnesses he means his two epistles, is plain, from his way of expressing himself here, where he carefully mentions his telling them twice, viz. before in his former epistle, ch. iv. 19. and now a *second time* in his second epistle; and also by the words, *as if I were present with you a second time*. By our Saviour's rule the offended person was to go twice to the offender; and therefore St. Paul says, *as if I were with you a second time*, counting his letters as two personal applications to them, as our Saviour directed should be done, before coming to rougher means. Some take the *witnesses* to be the three messengers by whom his first Epistle is supposed to be sent: but this would not be according to the method prescribed by our Saviour, in the place from which St. Paul takes the words that he uses; for there were no witnesses to be made use of in the first application; neither, if those had been the witnesses meant, would there have been any need for St. Paul so expressly and carefully to have set down—*as if present a second time*; words which, in that case, would be superfluous. Besides, those three men are no where mentioned to have been sent by him to persuade them, nor the Corinthians required to hear them, or reprov'd for not having done it. And, lastly, they could not be better witnesses of St. Paul's endeavours twice to gain the Corinthians by fair means before he proceeded to severity, than the Epistles themselves were.

Ver. 2. I will not spare:] It is certainly a great confirmation of the veracity of the Apostles, that, when factions were raised against them, they used none of the arts of flattery, however necessary they might seem, but depended on the force of a miraculous power to reduce offenders; the pretence to which would have been most absurd, if they had not really been conscious to them-

selves that it was engaged in their favour. See on 1 Cor. iv. 21.

Ver. 4. Crucified through weakness,] *With appearance of weakness, yet he liveth with the manifestation of the power of God.* The meaning of the place is this: "Though Christ in his crucifixion appeared weak and despicable, yet he now lives to shew the power of God, in the miracles and mighty works which he does: so I, though by my sufferings and infirmities I may appear weak and contemptible, yet shall I live to shew the power of God, by punishing miraculously the offenders among you."

Ver. 5. Examine yourselves, &c.] "Instead therefore of your sitting in judgment, and passing unrighteous censures upon us, as though there were no proof of Christ's speaking in me, (ver. 3.) or in my dear associates, look into your own hearts and ways, and bring them to the touchstone of the word of God; and, in carefully comparing them with that infallible standard, make close inquiry whether ye yourselves have believed to the saving of your souls, and have a real and evident interest in Christ, through faith in him: pursue the diligent search, by divine assistance, till you have brought this important point to an issue, and have the clearest proof in yourselves, whether you be sincere believers, and whether faith be the governing principle in your own hearts, or not: What! are ye strangers to the trans-actions that have passed between God and your own souls, and to your own state and condition, way and walk before him, as some of you seem to be, by your contentions and disorders, and various provocations, and by your unworthy treatment of me, and of the gospel of Christ, as delivered in my ministry? It is a sin and a shame for you to be ignorant how things are with you: and, as you are professors of Christianity, do not you know that Jesus Christ, the only Saviour, dwells in your hearts by faith, with powerful influence and dominion there? You surely, in the light of the Spirit, may arrive at some satisfaction about this; unless, after all your high pretences, and flourishing gifts, there be something very disallowable (*εἰ μὴ τι ἀδοκιμοῖ ἐσε*) and much amiss in you; or you be really disapproved of God, as hypocrites." *Prove your own selves*, (*ἐαυτοὺς δοκιμαζέτε*) is a metaphor taken from the trying of metals by the touchstone, or some other way, to prove whether they be good and pure, or not; and so signifies such a trial of persons and things as may shew, or prove, whether they be genuine or spurious, in order to their being allowed of or rejected: and, with a beautiful correspondence hereunto, the Apostle speaks in this, and the two next verses, of persons being (*δοκιμοί* or *ἀδοκιμοί*) *approved*, or *not approved*, (which is harshly rendered *reprobate*) as found to be so upon examination or trial. See the introduction to this chapter, where another view of the passage is given, consonant to the sentiment of some of the best critics.

Ver.

6 But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

7 Now ^a I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be ^b as reprobates.

8 ^m For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

9 ⁿ For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, *even* your ^o perfection.

10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present ^p I should use sharp-

ness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

11 Finally, brethren, farewell. ^q Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the ^r God of love and peace shall be with you.

12 ^s Greet one another with an holy kiss.

13 All the saints salute you.

14 ^t The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, *be* with you all. Amen.

¹ 1 Cor. 4. 15. & 3. 5. & 9. 2. Ch. 3. 2, 3. ^k Phil. 4. 6. Eph. 6. 18, 19. & 1. 16—19. ^l Phil. 1. 10, 11. Col. 1. 9—11. ^m 1 Thes. 5. 23. ⁿ 1 Cor. 4. 9—13. Ch. 6. 9. & 10. 10. ^o 1 Tim. 1. 19. Deut. 5. 32. & 12. 32. ^p Lev. 23. 23. ^q Jude, 3. ^r Rev. 3. 10. ^s John, 8. 31, 32. ^t Ch. 11. 50. & 12. 5. 9, 10. ^u 1 Cor. 3. 10. ^v 1 Thes. 3. 10. ^w Mat. 5. 48. ^x Ver. 11. ^y Ch. 2. 3, 7. & 10. 2, 8. & 12. 20, 21. ^z 1 Cor. 4. 21. & 5. 5. ^{aa} Rom. 12. 16, 18. & 15. 5, 6. ^{ab} 1 Cor. 1. 10. ^{ac} Phil. 2. 2. & 3. 15, 16. & 4. 8. ^{ad} Col. 3. 12—17. ^{ae} Heb. 12. 14. ^{af} 1 Pet. 3. 8. & 4. 8. ^{ag} 2 Pet. 1. 4—8. & 3. 18. ^{ah} 1 John, 4. 8, 16. ^{ai} Rom. 15. 5, 13. 33. & 16. 20. ^{aj} Phil. 1. 9. ^{ak} 1 Thes. 5. 23. ^{al} Heb. 13. 20, 21. ^{am} Col. 2. 19. ^{an} Rom. 16. 3, 16. ^{ao} 1 Cor. 1. 20. ^{ap} 1 Thes. 5. 26. ^{aq} 1 Pet. 5. 14. ^{ar} Numb. 6. 23—27. ^{as} Rev. 1. 4. 5. ^{at} Rom. 1. 7. ^{au} 1 Cor. 1. 3. ^{av} Gal. 1. 3. ^{aw} Eph. 1. 2, 3. ^{ax} Phil. 1. 2. ^{ay} Col. 1. 2. ^{az} 1 Thes. 1. 1. ^{ba} 2 Thes. 1. 2. ^{bb} 1 Tim. 1. 2. ^{bc} 2 Tim. 1. 2. ^{bd} Tit. 1. 4. ^{be} 1 Pet. 1. 2. ^{bf} 1 John, 1. 3. ^{bg} John, 1. 16, 17. ^{bh} Col. 1. 19. ^{bi} Eph. 1. 22, 23. ^{bj} 2 Thes. 2. 16. ^{bk} John, 14. 16—23, 26. & 15. 26. & 16. 13—15.

Ver. 7. *Approved,]* *Discerning.*

Ver. 9. *When we are weak, &c.]* “When we seem weak, by not exerting any miraculous power to the punishment of offenders; and ye are strong in gifts and graces, in faith and good works.” The word *καταρτιον*, rendered *perfection*, alludes to a building, wherein all the parts are so compacted together, as to form one compleat edifice. The Apostle’s meaning in this last clause of the verse is, “Yea, I heartily wish that all things were brought into good order among you; that ye were entirely knit together in faith and love, like a compleat and well-compacted building; and that every grace were perfected in you all, and there were no remainder of sin in any of you.”

Ver. 10. *Therefore I write, &c.]* Dr. Heylin translates this passage very well from ver. 5. *Try yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; bring yourselves to the proof. Are you so little acquainted with yourselves, as not to know whether Jesus Christ be in you? Unless indeed you have no proofs of it,* ver. 6. *But I trust that you shall be convinced that we are not without such proofs,* ver. 7. *Now I pray God that I may not inflict any evil [punishment] upon you, and so my proofs may not be produced, [and this we ask of God for your sakes,] that ye may do what is right, although we thereby shall appear as not having the proofs [we threaten you with],* ver. 8. *For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth,* ver. 9. *And therefore it is matter of joy to us, when we are thus disarmed by the strength of your integrity. And this is what I pray for, even your perfection,* ver. 10. *These things therefore I write to you, being absent, that when I come, I may not use severity, according to the power which the Lord hath given me, for edification, and not for destruction.*

Ver. 11. *Be perfect,]* See on ver. 9. the original word being derived from the same root as the word translated

perfection in the former instance. See also the Reflections. *Τὸ αὐτὸ ἐπορεύε, be of one mind, should rather be rendered, attend to the same thing: “Pursue with the greatest unanimity of heart, and intenseness of affection, that which ought to be the great end of all our schemes and designs,—the glorifying of God, and adorning the Gospel.”* See 1 Cor. Ver. 14. *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,]* The word *i. 10.*

χάρις should rather be rendered here by *favour*: for if *grace* be taken for *sanctifying influences* communicated from Christ,—which doubtless makes a great part of the idea,—it may be less easy to distinguish it from the *communion of the Spirit*. This text has always been produced with great force in proof of the doctrine of the Trinity. It is with great reason that this comprehensive and instructive benediction is pronounced just before our assemblies for public worship are dismissed; and it is certainly very indecent (to use the mildest term) to see many quitting those assemblies, or getting themselves into postures of removal, before this short sentence can be ended. See Numb. vi. 26, 27. *

Inferences drawn from ver. 14.—In this passage we find, first, *grace*, as coming from God the Son, *love* as from God the Father, and *communion* as being of the Holy Ghost. What these three things mean, will be shewn when I speak of their distinct offices; for I design, first, to consider the nature, distinction, union, and offices of the three divine Persons; and secondly, to intimate the use and importance of these great articles of our Christian faith.

I. 1. In the first place, it is proper to say something of the *nature* of each Person, that we may the better conceive what kind of Persons they are. The first and most general distinction of all things is into two kinds, created and uncreated. The nature of a *creature* is, that it comes into

* See Locke, Doddridge, Beza, Whitby, Grotius, Homberg, Cradock, Heylin, Wetstein, Tillotson, Mill, Wall, Mintert, Bos, Hallet, Piscator, Bengelius, Elter, Pearson, Scot, Hammond, Calmet, Clarke, Boyle, Hare, Raphelius, Taylor, Peters, Wolfius, Gordon, Estius, Junius, Osterman, Wulfius, Rymet, Fezoulin, Stockius, Lowth, Lyttelton, and Bull.

into being by the order and will of another, and may cease to be whenever the Creator pleases. Of this kind are the sun, moon, stars, men, and angels; they are all of a frail and changeable nature; they might cease to be, and sink into nothing, as from nothing they came, were they not supported by a superior hand. Only the three *divine* Persons,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, from absolute necessity never can fail or cease. They always were, and always will be: their property is, always to exist, from everlasting to everlasting, without the help or support of any thing else whatsoever, being indeed the stay and support of the whole creation.

Our thoughts are quite lost, as often as we think of any person's existing before all beginning; yet we are very certain that so it must be, or else nothing would ever begin to be at all. Whether one only, or more Persons, might or do exist in this most perfect and incomprehensible manner, we could never know by our own reason alone, unassisted by divine revelation. But sacred writ sufficiently assures us, that three such Persons there are; who have been from all eternity; who cannot but be to all eternity; and who are the *Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*. And this is, and has been all along, the faith of Christ's church, founded upon scripture.

To conceive then rightly of these three divine Persons, we should consider them as being just the reverse of what creatures are; not frail, mutable, or depending upon any one's pleasure; not as beginning to be, or capable of ever ceasing to be; but as being perfect, unchangeable, and all-sufficient; without beginning, and without possibility of ever coming to an end: and for that reason they are all properly divine.

2. With respect to their *distinction*, they are constantly represented in scripture as distinct from each other. The Father is not the Son, nor is the Holy Ghost either of the other two. They are described, as any other distinct persons are, by different characters and offices; and that so very frequently in the New Testament, that it were needless to instance in particulars. The Father is said to *send*, the Son to *be sent*, and the Holy Ghost to *proceed*, or *go forth*. The Father is represented as one witness, the Son as another witness;—the Son as *one comforter*, the Holy Ghost as *another comforter*, not both as one. The Father is introduced as speaking to the Son; the Son as speaking to the Father; and the Holy Ghost as delivering commands from both. These, and a multitude of other particulars, plainly prove their distinction one from another; which being analogous to, and nearly resembling the distinction of persons among rational creatures, we therefore presume to call it a *personal distinction*, and to call the sacred Three, *Three Persons*.

3. There is also an *union*, a very close and inexpressible union, among the divine Three; and though Scripture every where represents these three Persons as *divine*, and every one, singly, *God and Lord*; yet the same Scriptures do as constantly teach that there is but *one God and one Lord*: whence it evidently follows, that these Three are but *one God and one Lord*.—And if such an imperfect union as that of *man and wife* be reason sufficient to make *them twain to be one flesh*; and if the union of a holy man to Christ shall suffice to make them, in a certain sense, *one Spirit*, (1 Cor. vi. 17.) how much more shall the incomparably closer, and infinitely higher union of the three di-

vine Persons with each other, be sufficient to denominate them *one God, and one Lord*? There is no other union like it, or second to it;—an union of will, presence, power, glory, and all perfections;—an union so inseparable and unalterable, that no one of the Persons ever was, or ever could be, without the other two; it being as necessary for the three to *be*, and to *act together*, as to *be at all*; which is the perfection of unity, and the strongest conjunction possible.

This important doctrine is rendered certain, not only from John, x. 30. Rev. xxi. 22. Rev. xxii. 1. 1 Cor. ii. 11. and 1 John, v. 7. but from many other places of Scripture. So that the *unity of three Persons in one Godhead* is sufficiently revealed, as well as their distinction: neither is there any difficulty in admitting that three things may be *three and one* in different respects; distinct enough to be *three*, and yet united enough to be *one*; distinct without division, united without confusion. These, therefore, together, are the *one Lord God* of the Christians, whom we worship, and into whom we have been baptized.

4. Having thus considered what the divine Persons are in themselves, let us next observe, what are their *offices* relative to us. The peculiar *offices* of the three divine Persons are to *create, redeem, and sanctify*: the Father is God the *Creator*; the Son is God the *Redeemer*; the Holy Ghost is God the *Sanctifier*. Which is not to be so understood, as if neither the Son nor Holy Ghost was concerned in *creating*; nor as if neither Father nor Holy Ghost was concerned in *redeeming*; nor as if neither Father nor Son was concerned in *sanctifying*. All the three Persons concur in every work; all the three together create, redeem, and sanctify: but each Person is represented in scripture as having his more peculiar province; on account of which peculiarity, over and above what is common to all, one is more emphatically *Creator*, another *Redeemer*, and a third *Sanctifier*. So much as is *common* to all, serves to intimate their *union* one with the other; and so much as is *peculiar* to any one, in like manner serves to keep up the notion of their *distinction*.

We may observe something of this nature in the words immediately under consideration: *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*: grace is the common gift of the whole Trinity; but yet, here it is peculiarly attributed to Christ, as his gift and blessing, and denoting the special grace of *redemption*. The next words are,—*the love of God*; that is to say, of God the Father. Now we read of the *love of Christ*, and of the *love of the Spirit*; and love is common to the whole Trinity; for *God is Love*: but here one particular kind of love is intended;—the love of the Father, in sending his Son to redeem us, and the Holy Ghost to sanctify our souls.

The last words are,—*And the communion of the Holy Ghost*: now, there is a *communion* both of the Father and the Son with every holy man, John, xiv. 23. Every holy man is the temple of the whole Trinity, which has *communion* with him, and abides in him; as is plain from innumerable texts of scripture; but in this text before us, one peculiar kind of *communion*, appertaining especially to the Holy Ghost, is signified. And upon the whole we may observe, that though St. Paul might have indifferently applied *grace*, or *love*, or *communion* to either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Ghost, or to all together; yet he rather chose to make the characters *several and distinct*, to

keep up a more lively sense of the distinction of persons and offices.

II. 1. The *importance and use* of these weighty truths may be judged of, first, from the nature of the thing itself: for, if there be really such *three* divine Persons, as above described, (and none can doubt of it, that read the scriptures without prejudice,) it must be highly expedient and useful to let mankind into some knowledge of them *all*; for there is no having a right apprehension of any one, without knowing what relation he stands under to the other two: and without this knowledge we cannot honour God perfectly, or in full measure and proportion. Add to this, that if man is to be trained up to a knowledge of God here, in order to be admitted to *see him as he is* in the life hereafter, it seems highly expedient that he should know at least *how many*, and *what* Persons stand in that character; that by his acquaintance with them now, in such a measure as is proper to his present state, he may attract such love and esteem for them here, as may prepare him for the fuller vision and fruition of the same hereafter.

2. This reasoning is abundantly confirmed from the concern which God has shewn to imprint and inculcate upon us this so important a belief, and so saving when received with divine power. There is no need to cite here the various texts of scripture bearing testimony to the divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and engaging us to place our hope, trust, and confidence in, and to pay our worship to them all: it will be sufficient for this purpose to single out two or three considerations, which appear of great force in the argument.

It is observable, that as soon as ever our Lord had given his disciples commission to form a church, he instructs them to *baptize in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, Matth. xxviii. 19. Whence we may justly infer, that faith in these three Persons as *divine*, in opposition to all the gods of the Gentiles, was to be a fundamental article of Christianity, and its distinguishing character.

There is another thing remarkable, not so obvious perhaps as the former, but no less worthy of notice; namely, how purposely the whole scheme of the divine dispensations seems calculated, to introduce men gradually into the knowledge of these three Persons. This appears all the way down, from the fall of Adam, to the completion of all by the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. One might justly wonder why man, created after God's image, should be so soon suffered to fall; and why, after his fall, such a vast preparation, and so long a train, should be laid for his recovery; that there should be no way for it, but by means of a Redeemer to mediate and to intercede, to do and to suffer for him, to raise and restore him, and at length to judge him. Why might not the thing have been done in a much shorter and easier way? Why might not God the Father,—so graciously disposed towards all his creatures, have *singlely* had the honour of pardoning, restoring, raising, and judging mankind? Or, supposing both the Father and the Son joined in the work, why should it be left as it were unfinished, and incomplete, though in the hands of *both*, without the concurrence of the *Holy Ghost*?—Can any doubt be made, whether God the Father *singlely* was able or willing to do all that the Holy Ghost has done for us; to work miracles, to shed gifts, to

sanctify man's nature, and to qualify him for the enjoyment of Deity?—These things must appear, at first sight, strange and unaccountable; full of darkness and impenetrable mystery.

But our wonder ceases, as soon as we consider that mankind were to be gradually let into the knowledge of *three divine Persons*, and not one only: that we were to be equally obliged to every one of them, that so we might be trained up to place our love, our fear, our trust in all, and pay acknowledgments suitable to their high quality and perfections. This is the grand reason of that long train, and vast preparation in man's redemption: and with this view there appears so many characters of consummate wisdom all the way, that nothing can furnish us with a more charming and august idea of the divine dispensations, from first to last. Let us consider but a little our Lord's conduct, when he was going to take leave of his disciples, and what he said to them upon the occasion, respecting the sending to them a *Comforter*; (John, xvi. 7. and xiv. 16.) and then ask what is the meaning of all this?—Could the disciples want any *other Comforter*, when he had told them in the same chapter, that he himself and the Father should *come and make their abode with them*, John, xiv. 23. and when he had determined himself to *be with them alway even to the end of the world*, Matth. xxviii. 20.? What occasion could they have for any *other Comforter*?—Or what *Comforter* could do more or greater things than the Father or Son could do, by their constant presence with them?—But the reason of the whole procedure is very plain and manifest. The *Holy Ghost*, the third Person of the ever-blessed Trinity, was to be introduced with advantage, to do as great and signal things for mankind as either Father or Son had done; that so *He* likewise might partake of the same divine honours, and share with them in glory; and thus Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be acknowledged as *one God blessed for ever*.

In this faith was the church of Christ originally founded: in this faith have the renowned martyrs and confessors of old lived and died; and in the same faith are all the churches of the Christian world instructed and edified at this day. Be it therefore our especial care and concern to continue in this faith firm and steadfast; never to be moved from it by the *disputers of this world*, who are permitted for a while to gainsay and oppose it for a trial and exercise to others, and *that they who are approved may be made manifest*. May we persevere in paying all honour, worship, and praise, to the three blessed Persons of the Godhead; knowing how great and how divine they are, and how securely they may be confided in! And let the intimate *union* which they have one with another, put us in mind of that brotherly love and union which ought to prevail among Christians; that so we may become as it were *one heart*, and *one soul*, knit in the striving together for the faith of the Gospel, in the unity of the Spirit, and the bond of peace. So may the *grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and the *love of God the Father*, and the *communion of the Holy Ghost*, be with us all now and for evermore. Amen.

REFLECTIONS.—1st, Having once and again warned the Corinthians, by his epistles, to amend their disorders, seconded by Sosthenes and Timothy who joined in his admonitions, the Apostle is now, the third time, ready to appear in person. Therefore,

1. He assures them, that if any continued yet refractory and disorderly, notwithstanding these repeated rebukes, he would not spare, but inflict condign punishment on such obstinate offenders. *Note*; There is an approaching end, when wrath to the uttermost will overtake the ungodly.

2. Since they demanded a proof of his apostleship, they should receive it; since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, as if I threatened what I had no power or authority to execute; when you have had such demonstration before of that gospel which I preach, and of that authority with which I am invested, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you, who have experienced the efficacy of my preaching, and begun to smart under the chastening rod, (1 Cor. xi. 30.) For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God, and hath all power committed into his hands: for we also are weak in him, and because of our present sufferings treated by many of you as despicable, and possessed of no authority from him: but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you; and as surely as he lives, shall we prove ourselves clothed with his power to punish offenders: and this would soon be experienced by them, if they did not instantly amend their ways.

3. He urges them to judge themselves, that they might not be judged of the Lord, or his ministers. *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith*; bring your hearts to the touchstone of God's revealed will: prove your own selves, by this divine rule: know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, formed in your hearts by his Spirit, except ye be reprobates, and when brought to the test, like false metal, rejected as refuse, and found hypocrites. But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates, but approved and allowed of our divine Master, and acknowledged by him as faithful in all things*.

2dly, The Apostle adds his fervent prayer for them. Now I pray to God that ye do no evil, nor incur censure from us, or wrath from God: not that we should appear approved, and by the punishment we inflict give a demonstration of our apostolic power; but that ye should do that which is honest, and praise-worthy; though we be as reprobates, and having no need to exert our power, should be thought of as insignificant persons, who really had it not. For we can do nothing against the truth, nor dare lift up the rod against such as walk according to the Gospel; but our

* In these reflections we have, as usual, considered this passage in its commonly received sense: but for its primary meaning see the introduction to this chapter, and the annotations.

power is to be exercised for the truth, to defend it against heretical teachers, and to recover backsliders by needful correction. For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong; and when your exemplary practice renders censure unnecessary, and we appear as if we had no authority to inflict it. And this also we wish, even your perfection; that every offence were removed, the church knit together in perfect harmony and union, and every member of it perfect in love, yea, grown up to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Therefore I write these things being absent, lest, being present, I should use sharpness according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction; desirous rather that all evils among you should be amended, and our reproofs effectual for your reformation, than that we should be constrained to give a proof of our power in executing deserved punishment on the impenitent.

3dly, The Apostle,

1. Takes his leave of them with affectionate exhortations. Finally, my brethren, farewell: be perfect, giving up your hearts entirely to God without the least reserve, reforming every disorder, and united to each other in pure and disinterested love: be of good comfort, rejoice always in the Lord: be of one mind, let every dispute be silenced, and the spirit of party subside: live in peace and love, and the God of love and peace shall be with you, and dwell in the midst of you with his especial presence and blessing. Greet one another with an holy kiss. All the saints salute you, wishing you all prosperity in your souls and bodies, in time and in eternity. *Note*; (1.) Union in affection and sentiment is the sure mark of the prosperity of the church. (2.) The God of love and peace commands us to be like himself, and that is to be happy.

2. He concludes with his apostolical benediction. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all; may the grace of a dying Redeemer, which includes all spiritual and eternal blessings, be your portion! May a sense of the Father's love, the spring and source of your redemption, be warm upon your hearts! And may the richest communications from the Holy Ghost revive, quicken, strengthen, comfort, and stablish you ever more and more; till by the mighty operation of this tri-une God your salvation be completed in glory everlasting, and your happy service be his never-ending praise. Such is my prayer for you: cease not to join my supplications for these inestimable benefits; and let every soul among you with faith and fervency say, Amen!