AN EXPOSITION OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE,

AS TAUGHT IN THE

PROTESTANT CHURCH

OF THE

UNITED BRETHREN,

OR,

UNITAS FRATRUM.

WRITTEN IN GERMAN,

By AUGUST GOTTLIEB SPANGENBERG,

WITH A PREFACE,

By BENJAMIN LA TROBE.

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MDCCLXXXIV.

PREFACE

OF THE

EDITOR.

THE wish of many candid enquirers about the Church of the UNITAS FRATRUM, or UNITED BRETHREN has been in part obtained by the publication of Crantz's History of the UNITAS FRATRUM, which appeared in English in the year 1780; but as it has been still wished that the Public might be more fully informed with respect to the doctrine taught in this Church, we are glad of this opportunity to satisfy such enquirers, and to lay before them the tenor of the Brethren's doctrine.

As many false opinions of the doctrine and practice of the Church of the Brethren have been received, by means of several writings published in Germany and England some years ago, it may not be untimely to give the Public a true account of their doctrine, from whence may be easily inferred what is the practice of those who are truly Brethren, in their sense of that appellation.

It may not be improper to observe, on this occasion, that although the brethren have been very falsely traduced by their adversaries, and by misinformed people, who meant well, and that particularly the writings of the late Count Zinzendorf

have been uſed to prove that the Church, of which he was an eminent and the moſt diſtinguiſhed miniſter, held the errors of the moſt fanatic, yea wicked heretics, and his writings have been, for this purpoſe, mutilated, falſely quoted and tranſlated; and although the extravagant words and actions of individuals have been unjuſtly charged upon the whole body, yet it were to be wiſhed that there had been no occaſion given, at a certain period, to accuſe the Brethren of improprieties and extravagance in word or practice.

Count Zinzendorf, whom the Brethren and candid obſervers look upon as the inſtrument in the hand of God to reſtore the antient, and to build up the renewed Church of the Brethren, and by them to propagate the Goſpel among Chriſtians and Heathen, was not an ordinary character. He was a nobleman of high rank and education, had an enlarged mind, and a generous heart. He did not bind himſelf to the trammels of ſcholaſtic divinity; but the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament were his ſtandard of truth, and from thence he ſought for knowledge; and indeed he was ſo converſant with them, that the Bible was written in his memory, and on the table of his heart. But he was a man, and of courſe liable to miſtakes. Having an open and generous mind, and being converſant with various ſincere perſons and ſects in Chriſtendom, he ſought for the truth, though more or leſs covered with rubbiſh, in each, and was frequently led, either in ſentiment or expreſſion, to adopt, for a ſeaſon, the manner of utter-

ance used by the party with whom he was at that time engaged: in him this arose from a love to truth and to his fellow-creatures. Good as his views were, it exposed him, and the congregations he served, to much censure and severe reproaches. He commonly delivered two or three discourses in a day, either publicly or to his family, which was generally large, and what he then uttered, was attended with a striking effect upon those who heard him. He spoke in the strictest sense extempore; and according to the state of the times in which, and the persons to whom he spoke. These discourses were commonly taken down as he uttered them, and the love and admiration of his Brethren were so great, that they urged the publication of these discourses. His avocations were such, that he did not spend time sufficient in the revision: some were not at all revised by him, and some very incorrectly and falsely printed. Hence doctrines, of which he never thought, were deduced from his writings, and some of his transient private opinions laid to the charge of the whole Brethren's Church. I do not, and cannot, attempt, to defend such publications, but relate the real state of the case.

The Count was so convinced of the impropriety of the above proceedings, that he requested the reverend Author of this Exposition to extract all the accusations of his antagonists, and the adversaries of the Brethren, and lay them before him. It was done; he answered all; and the charges, and his answers, were published in Germany, in the years 1751 and 1752. He finding positions in the writ-

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ings under his name which he could not avow, declared in the public papers, that he could not acknowledge any books which had been publiſhed in his name, unleſs they were reviſed and corrected in a new edition by himſelf. He begun this work in German; but the Lord took him to himſelf before he could go through many books.

True it is, that at a certain time, particularly between 1747 and 1753, many of the Brethren, in their public diſcourſes, and in the hymns which were publiſhed about that period, uſed expreſſions which were indefenſable: the Count himſelf laboured to correct both the theory and language; and he was ſucceſsful, and they are no more in uſe among the Brethren. The Brethren's congregations do not take the writings of the Count, or of any man, as their ſtandard of doctrine; the Bible alone is their ſtandard of truth, and they agree with the Auguſtan, or Augſburg confeſſion, as being conformable to it.

Whether what is ſaid above may appear neceſſary, on preſenting this book to the Public, or no, we apprehend it may be uſeful, as thoſe into whoſe hands ſome of the above-mentioned diſcourſes, or of the hymns, which were in a peculiar ſtyle, and badly tranſlated, or of the falſe and mutilated quotations often found in the writings of the adverſaries, have fallen, might allege them, as ſpeaking otherwiſe than the doctrine contained in this book, by making it known that the Brethren do not, and will not receive the ſaid diſcourſes and hymns as an expoſition of the doctrines and phraſeology of

the UNITAS FRATRUM; but that they heartily agree with those contained in this Exposition, and here their sense of the Christian doctrines may be found. The Brethren do not look upon any publication as a symbolic book of their church, yet they cannot but esteem plain and scriptural truth wherever they find it.

Though this book may with truth be looked upon as a compendium of divinity, containing all the essential truths of the Gospel necessary to salvation, and consequently may be of use to Christians of every denomination, yet the reader will find some peculiarities of the congregations of the Brethren, on account of which they will, however, not disagree with any who hold the essential truths of the Gospel.

The reverend Author speaks for himself in the Preface, and mentions the cause and purpose of this publication, so that nothing more need to be said upon these heads.

The first edition of this book was printed in the printing-office of the Brethren, at Barby in Saxony, in the year 1779, under the title, *Idea Fidei Fratrum*, &c. It met with the approbation not only of the members of the congregations of the Brethren, but also of many eminent and worthy divines, and others, in the foreign Protestant churches; and a second edition has been since published. It has been also translated and published in the Danish, Swedish, Dutch, and French languages.

The Author has written in a plain and familiar style, intelligible to men of all classes and capacities,

ties, being perſuaded that divine truth, concerning our ſalvation, ſtands in no need of the artificial ornaments of rhetoric. The language of the original is, however, nervous, though plain. It has been tranſlated, reviſed, and corrected with care. The aged and venerable Author underſtands Engliſh, and has reviſed the tranſlation, and made ſome emendations. Yet we own it is not equal in ſtyle to the original, but hope it will convey the Author's ideas, and that the plainneſs of its dreſs will be no diſhonour to it.

The Author has obſerved in his Preface, that "the paſſages of Scripture have been quoted out "of Luther's German verſion, and that nothing "has been altered, except where it was neceſſary "for the ſake of the true meaning." In this tranſlation the Engliſh verſion has been made uſe of throughout the whole.

That this book may be uſeful, and give ſome ſatisfaction to many, and be a means of edification to the members of the Church of the Brethren, is the ſincere wiſh of the Editor,

B. LA TROBE.

GRACE AND PEACE
FROM GOD OUR FATHER,
AND FROM THE LORD JESUS CHRIST,
BE WITH ALL
THAT, IN EVERY PLACE,
CALL UPON
THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD,
BOTH THEIRS AND OURS.

WITH
THIS WISH,
THIS BOOK, WRITTEN OUT OF LOVE TO THE
TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL,
IS PRESENTED
TO THE ELDERS AND TEACHERS
OF THE
CONGREGATIONS OF THE BRETHREN,
TO BE USED BY THEM AS THEY FIND PROPER,
BY
THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE

OF THE

AUTHOR.

THIS EXPOSITION is not at all to be looked upon as a new Confeſſion of Faith of the Congregations of the Brethren; but the *Auguſtana Confeſſio*, or *Augſburg Confeſſion*, which was preſented to the Emperor by ſome of the ſtates, at the diet of the Roman empire, in the year 1530, is and remains their confeſſion of faith. The fundamental truths of the Chriſtian doctrine, taken out of the Sacred Scriptures, are delivered in that Confeſſion (with a retroſpect to the Articles of Torgau, which were drawn up by Dr. Luther to the ſame end), in ſuch a brief and full manner, compiled with ſuch perſpicuity, and delivered publicly at the riſk of life and fortune, that we know nothing more excellent of the kind.

But ſome judicious men, for whom we have great reſpect, intimated to us, that it might be uſeful if the Brethren would lay before the Public, in a free, clear, and unaffected connection, their inſight into the goſpel, which Paul calls the myſtery of Chriſt: others went ſtill farther, and told us, that they believed it to be the duty of the Brethren, in this dangerous time—when many did

not ſcruple ſhameſully to pervert the Bible—to ſhew to all the world, that they are not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt. The Brethren themſelves have been convinced, that it is the more neceſſary for them to make their mind publicly known, as the perverted tenets, which are charged upon them, are almoſt innumerable.

This then induced them to weigh the affair before the Lord; and after they were agreed, that it might be, at this period, uſeful, if ſuch a compendium was drawn up, they committed the compilation of it to me, the leaſt among my Brethren.

I was very ſenſible of the importance of this commiſſion, and did not look upon myſelf as equal to it: however, I accepted it with joy, out of love to my Lord Jeſus Chriſt, out of bounden faithfulneſs to the Congregations of the Brethren, whom I have had the grace to ſerve many years, and with humble confidence that God would not withhold the aſſiſtance of his grace from me in this work.

I have, throughout the whole, made truth my great object; I mean the truth in which the way to eternal life is revealed, and which is to be found alone in Chriſt, John, xiv. 6.; which makes us free from the ſervice of ſin, John, viii. 32.; and through which we are ſanctified by God, John, xvii. 17. This truth no man can diſcover by his own ſtrength, if he even had an angelic underſtanding. Yea, if all the ſages and wiſe men that have been in the world, are now on earth, or ſhall be until the laſt day, combined all their underſtandings, and would by

by that means find out the way to deliver the human race from their diſtreſs and miſery, and to lead them to eternal happineſs; yet, with all this, they would not be able to effect it. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſaid to his Father in heaven, "Thy word "is truth," John, xvii. 17.; and to the Jews, "I "have told you the truth, which I have heard of "God," John, viii. 40.; and to Pilate, "To this "end was I born, and for this end came I into "the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs unto the "truth," John, xviii. 37. The Goſpel, that is, the doctrine of Chriſt and his apoſtles, concerning our ſalvation, is accordingly the truth, which is here ſpoken of. The Goſpel of our ſalvation is called expreſsly, "The word of truth," Eph. i. 13. and we find this, God be praiſed, in the Holy Scriptures. I have, for this reaſon, made it my chief concern, to examine what the Scripture ſays upon every ſubject of which I have treated. I know aſſuredly, that this is agreeable to the mind of my Brethren; for we have often bound ourſelves ſolemnly to each other, to adhere, with all our hearts, to the doctrine of Chriſt and his apoſtles, as we find it in the Bible.

That the different paſſages of the Scripture, which treat of one ſubject, are collected together, and arranged in a certain order, which is not oppoſite to ſimplicity; this has not only the advantage, that every one may ſee how one text is illuſtrated excellently by the other, and how all together harmonize moſt beautifully, but it alſo ſerves

to make the mind of the Brethren better known: and that is the aim of this book.

The ſame is the caſe with the ſubjects which are treated of in this writing. They have, it is true, all of them a relation to each other; yet when one contains the ſource from whence the other ſprings, theſe are thereby more cloſely connected together. They thus follow each other in an unconſtrained order; by which, however, it could not be well avoided, that one and the ſame thing occurs occaſionally more than once.

The paſſages of Scripture are quoted out of Luther's German verſion; and nothing has been altered, except where it was neceſſary for the ſake of the true meaning. Sometimes, by way of illuſtration, a parentheſis is introduced, to avoid, as much as poſſible, extenſive explanations.

Upon the whole, my wiſh is, that God may give his bleſſing to this work, and may accompany his own truth to every reader with divine power.

Written at Barby, on the 19th of May, 1778.

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AN

AN EXPOSITION OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE,

AS TAUGHT IN THE CHURCH OF

The Unitas Fratrum, or United Brethren.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1.

IN the first chapters of the books of Moses we read, that God created the first man, Adam, after his own image; but that, not long after, he, with Eve his wife, who was given him for a help-mate, proved disobedient to his Creator, and brought sin into the world. The consequences of this lamentable fall were, that, even on the same day, they both began to be afraid of God, to hide themselves from his face; and, instead of confessing their sin, to lay the blame one upon the other: thus they lost the image of God. As God could not, according to his word, which he had spoken to them beforehand, let them remain unpunished; so the curse and death came, by their sin, upon them and their posterity. But God, at the same time, made his mercy known to them; and gave them the comfortable promise, that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent,

pent, who had seduced the woman; and, at the same time, he declared, the serpent would bruise his heel.

§ 2.

The sons, who were hereupon born unto Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, were very different from each other. They both knew, that they owed their lives and every good gift to God the Lord; and that it was their duty to love, to honour, and to serve him on that account. And they both brought their gifts and offerings to him, as testimonials of their gratitude. But Cain loved wickedness, and was carried away by it; and Abel was faithful, according to his knowledge, suffering himself to be led and governed by the Spirit of God. Wherefore God looked graciously upon Abel and upon his offering, which was made by faith, Heb. xi. 4. but he did not look graciously upon Cain and his offering. This made Cain wroth, and his anger was enkindled against his brother Abel. For this the Lord reproved him; yet nevertheless he afterwards lifted up his hand against Abel, and slew him. And when God questioned him concerning it, he answered as though he knew nothing of it. But God did not leave him unpunished. Thus the warfare between good and evil, between light and darkness, between the children of God and the children of men, commenced in the world; and thus it continues.

§ 3.

After this, mankind multiplied greatly, and the Lord cared faithfully for them. He manifested to them his loving-kindness, wisdom, and omnipotence, not only by the works of creation, but he also gave them a rich and daily enjoyment of his manifold blessings for the supply of their wants and for their nourishment. How could they have otherwise

otherwise subsisted? Moreover, he condescended even to speak immediately himself with certain persons. For instance, he warned Cain, before he slew his brother, and reproved him for it afterwards. (§ 2.) And since he spoke personally with this very wicked man, who would doubt, that he conversed in a most cordial and confident manner with an Enoch (of whom it is recorded, that he, for three hundred years, walked with God), and with such other souls, as resigned themselves up to his grace? We have a clear instance of this, in what we read concerning God's interview with Noah, Gen. vi. 8. &c. It is not in our power to ascertain all that God revealed to these his children; because so little of it is recorded: but who can doubt, that he gave mankind instructions about sacrifices? How should they else have known, that they could serve him in this manner? (§ 2.) And because it is, moreover, expressly said of Abel, that "by faith he offered unto God a more "excellent sacrifice than Cain;" it seems very probable, that God himself made known to him the sense and meaning of such sacrifices, according to the degree of knowledge peculiar to those times. Moreover, a testimony is given of Enoch, that "by faith he was translated and did not see death;" and of Noah, that "by faith, being warned of "God, he prepared an ark to the saving of his house," &c. From hence it appears very plain, that God, even in those very early times, led mankind chiefly to faith, "it being, without "faith, impossible to please God." It can also be proved, that he revealed many other things unto them. For how could God have spoken with Noah concerning the clean and unclean beasts, and commanded him to take seven male and seven female of each sort of the clean, and only one male and one female of each sort of the unclean, with him into the ark, had he not first revealed to mankind, which of the beasts he would have them esteem clean, and which unclean? And how could Enoch, "the seventh from "Adam,"

"Adam," have prophesied, "Behold, the Lord cometh "with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment "upon all," &c. Jude, 14. had it not been revealed to him by God?

With respect to the will of men, the Lord hath put into the hearts of men a sense, or feeling, by which they know what they are to do, and what to leave undone. For there is an inward monitor, which says, either this and that is not right, or this God will not have, that he will punish; or this and that is good; He will that this be done, that he will reward: And as this is now common to all men, it was certainly likewise the case in those times. In the mean time, the Spirit of God occupied himself with men; and shewed unto them, in a more distinct manner, what was good, and what was evil; sought to restrain them from the one, and to incline them to the other. Had this not been the case, God could not have said at length, "My Spirit "shall not always strive with man, for that he is also flesh," Gen. vi. 3.; or, according to Luther's translation, "Men "will no more receive the reproof of my Spirit; for they "are flesh."

As now the Lord, according to his great mercy, did at *that* time commune *immediately* with many persons, revealing himself to them; so did he also treat with them *mediately* by means of those to whom he had disclosed his mind. For it was by his direction, that at the time of the birth of Enos, "Men began to call upon (to preach, Luther's "version) the name of the Lord," Gen. iv. 26. But Noah, who is called a preacher of righteousness, did not only bear his testimony with words, but also by building his ark, that God would punish the sins of men, unless they should be converted. But most men acted against better knowledge, not having God before their eyes, tyrannizing one over another, and living in sins and abominations. The number of those who sought God, walked before him, and

ſerved him, was very ſmall. At laſt the very children of the men of God joined the multitude of the ungodly; ſo that, excepting Noah, ſcarcely any remained who ſuffered themſelves to be governed by the Spirit of God. This grieved and provoked God the Lord to ſuch a degree, that he ſwept away and deſtroyed all theſe workers of iniquity, by the deluge, from the face of the earth.

After this dreadful judgment, under which eight ſouls only were preſerved in the ark, God did, with new grace, take again upon himſelf the care of the human race. He comforted Noah with the promiſe, that he, for the ſake of man, would no more deſtroy the earth. On the other hand, he promiſed him, that he would not be weary in doing good to mankind. For while "the earth remaineth, ſeed-time and "harveſt, and cold and heat, and ſummer and winter, and "day and night ſhall not ceaſe." Through his bleſſing they were fruitful, did multiply and repleniſh the earth. All the beaſts upon earth, all the fowls under Heaven, all the fiſhes in the waters, and every creeping thing on the earth, did he give unto them for their uſe. And whereas he had before appointed the fruits of the field only unto man for his nouriſhment; he now gave him alſo every thing that liveth and moveth, for his food. Farther, he made known unto them, that the life of each man was dear and precious to him; for he had created man in his own image. Wherefore he would avenge the blood of a man, as well upon the beaſts as upon man, if they ſhould preſume to ſhed it. In brief, he did every thing to prove, in the moſt effectual manner to the human race, that he is their gracious, kind, and merciful Lord and God.

But he not only provided thus graciouſly for their natural life; but ſought alſo, with great earneſtneſs, to allure them to communion with himſelf, and to bring them thereby to, and preſerve them in, a ſtate of true happineſs. He continued in the ſame manner, as he had done before the flood,

to

to reveal himſelf immediately to one or another. Thus he, for inſtance, declared his good pleaſure to Noah, when he built him an altar, and brought all ſorts of clean beaſts, and all kinds of clean fowls for a burnt-offering unto him. He made known unto him, that he would not have men like beaſts, which devour a creature, whilſt its blood, which is its life, is ſtill warm. He alſo inſtructed mankind by *means*, through other men to whom he had revealed himſelf. Such a one, for inſtance, was Melchiſedec, king of Salem, and prieſt of the Moſt High God, that is, of the Eternal and Living God: which not only implies, that he ſerved the Lord for his own perſon, but that he alſo ſacrificed for others, bleſſing and inſtructing them.

Yet all the methods the Lord took with the human race were in vain as to the greateſt number. They did not believe his word, but gave themſelves up to the ſlavery of their own luſts, and followed their own imaginations and devices. The remembrance of the judgment of God, which, by the deluge, had fallen upon all mankind, did not deter them from evil, and they acted as wickedly as the people who lived before the flood. They were intent upon rendering themſelves famous, by building a tower, the top of which might reach up to the clouds; when God, by confounding their language, put a ſtop to this their proud undertaking, and ſcattered them abroad into all countries. They then fell into the moſt horrid idolatries, with which they combined ſuch dreadful and Heaven-provoking ſins, vices, and abominations, that God was conſtrained, by his juſtice, to deſtroy certain cities by fire and brimſtone. The Canaanitiſh nations bordering upon theſe cities were ſo little moved and deterred from their ungodlineſs and profligacy by this judgment, that they rather committed greater abominations than theſe cities; on which account God took the righteous reſolution of cutting them off from the face of the earth.

§ 4.

§ 4.

Of those who, at *this* period, kept God, the Creator of all things, before their eyes, and loved and honoured him, Abraham is the most remarkable. God led him forth out of his native country, and from amongst his kindred and acquaintance, and brought him into the land of Canaan; where he, as a stranger, in the midst of these idolatrous and ungodly people, built altars unto the Lord his God, confessed and called upon his name, honoured him by an holy walk, and inculcated the fear of God on his whole house. God made a covenant with this beloved man, and gave him the promise, that in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed: the whole meaning of this was, that the Saviour of the world should descend from him. He also took the posterity of Abraham for his own inheritance, and in this respect bestowed special prerogatives upon them above all other people of the earth. After this, he led them with a mighty hand, by Moses his servant, out of Egypt, where they sighed, being under a grievous bondage; that he might bring them into the land which he had promised to their father Abraham. But, for wise reasons, he did not lead them the most direct road from Egypt to Canaan, but he led them through the Red Sea, into the wilderness of Arabia. Here he gave them his law in a manner so majestic, that the people were thereby struck with great awe. At the same time he declared unto them, that he would preserve them in peace, and protect them against their enemies; preserve them from evil, and heap every kind of blessing upon them, if they kept his covenant: whereas, on the other hand, if they did not keep it, he would punish them with dearth, sicknesses, pestilence, and other dreadful judgments. He then took them under his care with incomprehensible grace. He gave them water out of the

the rock, and ſupplied all their wants in a manner unheard of before. But they were, on their part, ſo ſtiff-necked, that at laſt he reſolved to let the whole of this refractory generation, conſiſting of ſix hundred thouſand perſons, die in the wilderneſs; but to bring their children into the land which he had promiſed to give to the ſeed of Abraham. All this *Moſes* deſcribes in his *Five Books*, which God has preſerved to our times.

§ 5.

After the death of Moſes, the people of Iſrael were led into the land of Canaan by Joſhua, who, with Caleb, were the only ſurvivors of the ſix hundred thouſand perſons, who, on account of their ſin, fell in the wilderneſs.—And the Lord God was with him, ſo that he was able to execute all that which he was appointed to do. Then he divided and diſtributed the land amongſt the twelve tribes of Iſrael. And, before his end, renewed the covenant with them, that they would cleave unto the Lord with all their hearts, and abide by his word and commandments. All this we find in the *Book of Joſhua*.

But it was not long before they began to give themſelves up to the ſins of the nations, which were an abomination to God, and to turn away from the commandments of God. Then God let their enemies become mighty, and oppreſs them in ſuch manner, as was intolerable to them. But no ſooner did they repent, and return to God, than he had compaſſion upon them; raiſing up judges, who ſtood up in their behalf, and delivered them from the tyranny of their enemies. And this continued till the days of Samuel, who not only filled the office of a judge, but alſo adminiſtered divine worſhip amongſt them. The *Book of Judges*, and the little *Book of Ruth*, give us the hiſtory of theſe times.

After

After this the people of Israel desired a king in a tumultuous manner, rather choosing to be like the heathen nations round about them, than to submit to the government of the Lord alone. God gave them Saul; but he proved disobedient to the word of the Lord, on which account he rejected him, and chose David. This was a man after God's own heart. He punctually performed every thing that the Lord commanded him, and God was with him. He had, before this, under the reign of Saul, experienced much tribulation, and learned much by it. He also loved God with his whole heart: but, becoming mighty, he committed great sins against God, and thus he brought upon himself, his family, and also his kingdom, great misfortunes, troubles, and distresses. Yet he turned again with all his heart to the Lord. He was the author of those excellent *Psalms*, which, together with the Psalms of other men of God, are still extant in the Bible.

§ 6.

SOLOMON succeeded him, who had no equal in wisdom. He built a temple for the Lord, and the kingdom of Israel was brought by him into the most flourishing condition. But he suffered himself to be so infatuated by his wives, as to bring idolatry into the land, and thereby to provoke God to wrath. However, from his book intituled *Ecclesiastes*, or the Preacher, we have reason to conclude, that, before his end, he recovered the soundness of his mind, and turned again to God. Under his name we have also the *Book of Proverbs*, and the *Canticles*, or the Song of Songs.

After his decease, the kingdom was divided. His son Rehoboam retained the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, whilst the remaining ten tribes chose Jeroboam for their king. From that time every thing tended to ruin. For though the kingdom of Judah maintained the true divine

worſhip, yet, at the ſame time, the idolatrous ſervice went on. But the kingdom of Iſrael devoted itſelf to idolatry in the moſt irrational manner, and to the ſins and abominations naturally connected with it; which were of ſo deteſtable a nature, that they are not fit to be mentioned. On which account God, having warned them, and reproved them, for a long ſeaſon, but without effect, was at length moved to deſtroy their whole conſtitution by the Aſſyrians; when a part was cruelly exterminated, and a part carried away captive into the moſt deplorable circumſtances.

The kingdom of Judah maintained itſelf ſtill ſome time. But when the very ſame ſins, which had plunged Iſrael into deſtruction, like a flood overflowed the whole kingdom of Judah, the ſame judgments of God, which had paſſed upon Iſrael, fell likewiſe upon Judah. The Babylonians deſolated the kingdom, burnt the temple, laid Jeruſalem waſte; and ſuch as were not cut off by famine, peſtilence, and the ſword, were taken captive and carried away to Babylon. The hiſtory of theſe times we find in the *Books of Samuel*, in the *Books of the Kings*, and in the *Books of the Chronicles*.

In Babylon, the Jews however began to ſee and confeſs their heinous tranſgreſſions: and after a term of ſeventy years they returned, under the government of Cyrus, into their own country; and under manifold difficulties they rebuilt Jeruſalem and the temple. To theſe times the *Books of Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, and the *Hiſtory of Eſther* refer. From that time forth the Jews guarded againſt idolatry; yet they did not attain to that which was the chief point in the law of God; and on that very account were, with reſpect to the whole people, in a very deplorable ſituation.

§ 7.

§ 7.

In the mean time, as amongst the rest of the nations some appeared, who, by the grace of God, knew, loved, and honoured him; as we learn, for instance, in the *Book of Job*; so God had some who were his, and devoted unto him, amongst the people of Israel, who, though so wretched, yet were greatly distinguished, and enjoyed many privileges beyond all other nations. From amongst these his peculiar people he chose unto himself, from time to time, persons to whom he revealed himself in a particular manner, in whom his Spirit dwelt, and whom he employed, according to the counsel of his grace, to make his will known to the rest of men. These men then wrote, at the command of their Lord and God, and by the impulse of the Holy Ghost, all that which he committed unto them, not only as a testimony for those who lived at that time, and with whom they had to do, but also for the sake of those who should come after them. And of such writings, by the providence of God which watched over them that they might not be lost, we have, besides the books already cited, a most excellent collection, which are called the *Prophets*; of whom *Hosea*, *Joel*, *Amos*, *Jonah*, *Isaiah*, *Micah*, *Nahum*, and *Habakkuk*, lived before the captivity of the Jewish people in Babylon; *Jeremiah*, *Zephaniah*, *Daniel*, *Ezekiel*, and *Obadiah*, lived at the time of this captivity; and *Haggai*, *Zechariah*, and *Malachi* prophesied after it.

§ 8.

Thus God made known his will, in the clearest manner, concerning the people of Israel and the neighbouring nations, by the prophets. Their deviations and transgressions were earnestly set before them; and, at the same time, they were

told, in the name of God, what heavy judgments God would inflict upon them, if they did not turn from their ungodliness. Moreover God did, by his servants the prophets, make the promise which he had given to the first man and woman after the fall (§ 1.), clearer from time to time. The words of God, which he spake unto Abraham, that "in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed (§ 4.)," were also, by the Spirit of God, which was in the prophets, more and more unravelled, and more distinctly named. For after that Abraham's posterity had multiplied itself into many hundreds of thousands, God gave the promise unto David, that the Saviour of the world should lineally descend from him; and afterwards, not only the time, but the very place of his birth, was by the prophets fixed in the most express manner. Of his life, doctrine, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension, every thing was so plainly foretold, as though they had seen all transacted with their own eyes. And when they speak of the times of grace and blessing, which not only the Jews, but also the heathen, should once enjoy under the sceptre of this king, they describe these times in such a lively manner, as we now, blessed be God, can, and by his grace actually do experience, and shall experience still more abundantly in eternity. What more is said of him in the Prophets will be more fully mentioned in § 16.

§ 9.

THERE was amongst the people of the Jews a general expectation of this King, whom they usually called the Messiah, or the Anointed of the Lord. And as the time of his appearance, mentioned in the Prophets, drew nigh, those hearts, in which the Holy Ghost had his work of grace, were filled with an ardent desire after him. Then the child Jesus was born in the city of David, which is Bethlehem,

Bethlehem, of Mary of the houſe of David, according to the word of the Lord; and was made known to the ſhepherds in the field by the holy angels; to the congregation or aſſembly in the temple, by Simeon and Anna; to the wiſe men in the Eaſt by a miraculous ſtar; but to king Herod and the city of Jeruſalem, as the new-born Saviour and Meſſiah, by the wiſe men from the Eaſt. When, thirty years afterwards, he made his public appearance, God gave him the teſtimony from heaven, "This is my "beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed; hear ye him." Whereupon he entered upon his miniſtry, with a demonſtration of the Spirit and of power, and his words were the words of eternal life. He made the blind to ſee, the deaf to hear, the lepers to be clean, the dumb to ſpeak, the lame to walk, the dead to live; he caſt out devils, and the like. All theſe works did God perform by him, thereby acknowledging him and his teſtimony. And when Chriſt had, according to the counſel of grace, given himſelf up unto the death for us, God raiſed him up again the third day. And thus was every thing that Jeſus had done and ſaid, beyond controverſy, confirmed. All which we read in the writings of *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, and *John*.

§ 10.

But not only our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf taught the people, but he likewiſe choſe men, whom he called his Diſciples, to be the witneſſes of the truth. Theſe were conſtantly with him, did not only hear his public diſcourſes, but enjoyed alſo his eſpecial inſtruction; they ſaw his walk and his works, took a ſhare in his ſufferings, and were particularly beloved by him. Theſe he commanded to go through all the cities of Judea and Galilee, and to teſtify every where and to all men, that the time of grace, ſo long expected, was now come; that they ſhould therefore turn to

God with all their hearts, and receive this word of grace in faith. At the ſame time he gave unto them faithful inſtructions how they were to conduct themſelves, and power over the unclean ſpirits, and to cure all manner of diſeaſes, as a proof of their vocation. And when, after his reſurrection, he had been ſeen of them forty days, and had ſpoken with them of the kingdom of God, he commanded them to go into all the world, and preach the goſpel to all nations; but yet to ſtay ſo long in Jeruſalem till the Holy Ghoſt ſhould, according to the promiſe of God, be poured out upon them. When this had come to paſs, they began to preach at Jeruſalem, and from thence proceeded with the goſpel to all parts. Whoever received the faith they baptiſed, teaching him to obſerve all things which the Lord had commanded them. They gathered the baptiſed together, and formed them into congregations, that they might edify each other, and grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt. Concerning this their labour we find much related in the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, and the *Epiſtles*, which were written by them to *congregations* at large, and to ſeveral *individuals*, which are ſtill extant; as is alſo that book concerning the circumſtances of the church of Chriſt in the time to come, which we commonly call the *Revelation of John*.

Of

Of the HOLY SCRIPTURE.

§ 11.

WE are now to ſpeak in particular of the ſcriptures mentioned in § 4, 5, 6, 7. 9, and 10. They have been moſt carefully preſerved by faithful hands, and collected; and this collection is called the *Bible*. That part which was written by men of God before the birth of Jeſus, refers principally to the covenant of grace made by the Lord God with Abraham and his poſterity, the children of Iſrael; for which reaſon it is called the *Old Teſtament*. That which we have from the diſciples and witneſſes of Jeſus, in the time following, refers to the new covenant of grace, promiſed by the prophets, and eſtabliſhed by Jeſus Chriſt, and is called the *New Teſtament*.

Indeed it is uſual to reckon the whole time preceding the nativity of Chriſt as belonging to the old covenant; but if we ſpeak with accuracy, it begins with Abraham, and ends with the death of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. For in the period before the Flood, which is uſually placed in the year of the world 1657, God made no difference amongſt men; that is, did not choose one people preferably to the reſt for his inheritance; although he always had a ſeed which ſerved him, and lived to his glory. God did indeed make a covenant with Noah after the Flood, and with his ſeed, that he would no more deſtroy the earth by a flood; and he placed his bow in the cloud, as a token of this covenant, Gen. ix. 9—17. But this covenant was not confined to any particular nation, but extended to the whole human race. About five hundred years afterwards, God made a covenant with Abraham (§ 4.), and appointed the ordinance of circumciſion to be practiſed by him and his family, Gen. xvii.

1, &c. And about five hundred years after that, he entered into a ſpecial covenant with the whole people of Iſrael, as the poſterity of Abraham. The aim of this covenant was, that he would make them, in all reſpects, a very proſperous and happy people. He loved Abraham; and therefore it was not enough to ſhew love and kindneſs only to him perſonally, but he would ſhew grace and mercy to his poſterity likewiſe unto the lateſt time.

§ 12.

IF we ſum up in brief all that is implied by this covenant, it is contained in theſe words: "I will be your "God, and ye ſhall be my people." Levit. xxvi. 12. How can a people be more proſperous and happy, than by having the almighty, the only wiſe, the merciful, the infinitely gracious, the omniſcient, and unboundedly rich God, for their God? Is *he* their ſhield, what can hurt them? Is *he* their reward, what can they want? And what higher honour could be conferred upon a people, than to be preferred to all other nations upon the earth, without any merit and worthineſs of their own; and to be made God's own people, his people conſecrated unto himſelf, and to be owned and declared as ſuch by God himſelf?

God did, according to the promiſe made to Abraham, Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 15. xv. 18. xvii. 8. xxiv. 7. acknowledge this people to be his own people, when they were in the moſt wretched circumſtances, and ſighed under the moſt cruel tyranny, § 4. He told Pharaoh by his ſervant Moſes, "to let his people go, that they might "ſerve him:" and when Pharaoh oppoſed it, and, contrary to the frequently repeated command of God, refuſed to ſet the people of Iſrael at liberty, although he was often forced to promiſe, by means of many dreadful, richly merited judgments, that he would let them go, then did God with

with a mighty arm lead his people out of Egypt, and destroyed their enemies in the Red Sea. By this marvellous deliverance God sought to bring his people to faith in him, and a reliance upon him, and to awaken in them a holy awe for his majesty.

§ 13.

UPON this he gave them, in the wilderness, from Mount Sinai, the most glorious law. For besides the ten commandments, which he himself wrote first, and afterwards by Moses, on tables of stone, he made known unto them, how in all circumstances they were to act towards God and towards their neighbour. He told them every thing which was to be done, or not to be done by them, in relation to their own souls, and to their bodies, in relation to their goods and chattels, to their wives and children, to their men servants and maid servants, to their cattle and other creatures, to their parents and relations, to their superiors and teachers; and in brief, in relation to every circumstance in life. And these his laws were so replete with wisdom, and so really calculated for their benefit, that they might have become and remained an exceedingly prosperous and happy people, had they received them with child-like obedience, and regulated their whole walk and conversation according to them.

Besides this, he, in his wisdom, regulated their divine service, with a view of bringing them into, and keeping them in a confident communion with himself; and at the same time, of preserving them from the abominable idolatries which at that time prevailed among the neighbouring nations. He himself appointed the priests, and their assistants the Levites; prescribing most minutely where they were to dwell, how they were to be maintained, their vestments, and how they were to deport themselves. He himself

ſelf ſignified how every thing was to be conducted amongſt them, in reſpect to the gifts and offerings they were enjoined to bring to God: how a man was to appeaſe his conſcience, and purge it from ſin and guilt; what ſteps he ſhould take to expreſs his gratitude for every particular benefit, and more of the ſame kind: all this he made known to them in the cleareſt manner. He gave them the ſeventh day for a Sabbath and a day of reſt, appointing, moreover, other days for ſpecial days of memorial, thankſgiving, and feſtivity amongſt them. He explained to them what beaſts they could regard as clean, and make uſe of them for food, and alſo for offerings; and which of them muſt be looked upon as unclean, and from which they ſhould abſtain. What they were to obſerve in certain diſeaſes, the leproſy, for inſtance; in their raiment, and other things; alſo in regard to the dead: all this, he tells them, is his law. The tabernacle, which could be taken to pieces, be carried from one place to another, and be there ſet up again, and in which he was accuſtomed to manifeſt himſelf very glorioufly, was ſo exceedingly beautiful and precious, that nothing equal to it could be found among all the other nations. All this did God regulate in ſuch a manner, that he might preſerve his people, for their own good, in his ways, and to cut off all occaſion of ſeeking any thing more excellent.

There was ſtill ſomething more; which was, that the Lord himſelf condeſcended ſo far, as to take the government amongſt this people into his own hands. Whatſoever might have been expected from the moſt careful, the moſt wiſe, the moſt gracious, the moſt righteous, and the very beſt of kings, this, and incomparably more, did the people of Iſrael poſſeſs in the Lord. He gave them the laws requiſite for the maintenance of peace and quietneſs; and theſe were calculated for every thing that concerned the perſon, property, and other circumſtances of each individual.

He made known his will in ſpecial caſes by the prieſts, who had the urim and thummim, the light and right, and by his ſervants the prophets. Now, when this people yielded themſelves to be led by his eyes, and to be ruled by his ſceptre, they could rejoice greatly in, and boaſt highly of their King; for under him they were in truth a very proſperous and happy people.

This was the covenant which God made with the people of Iſrael; and of this treat the books written by the men of God before the birth of Jeſus; which books are a part of the Bible, and are commonly called the *Old Teſtament* (§ 11.). This covenant is conſtantly inculcated, renewed, and elucidated; when this people forſake it, they plunge themſelves into miſery. Do they return to the Lord, then is he graciouſly found of them: for man's unfaithfulneſs does not remove or change the faithfulneſs of God.

Is it aſked on this occaſion, But could the people of Iſrael in general, and each Iſraelite in particular, keep the law of God? The anſwer muſt be made with ſome diſtinction: Many of the commandments of God were of ſuch a nature, that, by the grace of God, they were undoubtedly able to keep them. They could, for inſtance, keep from idolatry, from taking the name of God in vain, from the unhallowing the Sabbath, from diſobedience towards parents, from murder, from fornication and adultery, from ſtealing and cheating, from bearing falſe witneſs, *&c.* They could abſtain from the different kinds of food which God had prohibited, obſerve the feſtivals appointed by God, give meat to the hungry, attend the ſick, lodge a ſtranger, and more of the ſame kind.

Yet, according to the deep meaning contained in the commandments of God, by which, to the outward action, is always required a heart which loveth God the Lord above all things, and its neighbour as itſelf; in this reſpect every one remained a great debtor. And to this the words of

of God were ſuperadded, which, for inſtance, run thus: "Thou ſhalt not covet." Exod. xx. 17. As to ſuch commandments, the Iſraelites were altogether ſinners; and it was moreover manifeſt, by all they did and left undone, that by the works of the Law they were not able to purchaſe everlaſting life. For whoever will be ſaved by the Law, muſt needs keep it perfect, not offending againſt any one commandment.

The Law then directed them to appear before God, to confeſs their ſin, and to bring their ſacrifices for it. And thus did the Law lead them to Chriſt, the ſole cauſe of our ſalvation: for the ſacrifices were a type of Chriſt.

§ 14.

A GREAT part of the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament refers to that promiſe given by the Lord to Abraham, and very frequently repeated, that "in him ſhould all the fami-"lies of the earth be bleſſed." Gen. xii. 3. § 4. 8. Theſe words were afterwards thus explained to him by the Lord, "*In thy ſeed* ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed." Gen. xxii. 18. And this ſame promiſe did his ſon Iſaac receive alſo. Gen. xxvi. 4. And his grandſon Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 14. Here the Lord doth not ſpeak of *many*, but of *one ſeed*, in which all the nations of the earth were to be bleſſed; and Paul ſays, that "*that ſeed* is Chriſt." Gal. iii. 16. Abraham was ſeventy-five years old, when he firſt received this promiſe; and by it believed, that Sarah would bear him a ſon; but twenty-five years elapſed, before this came to paſs. For he was an hundred years old, when Iſaac was born to him. Now when Iſaac was grown up, God tried Abraham, and ſaid, "Take Iſaac, thy only ſon, "whom thou loveſt, and get thee into the land Moriah, "and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the "mountains, which I will tell thee of." Gen. xxii. 2.

Abraham

Abraham was willing to do this, although he had the promiſe, " In Iſaac ſhall thy ſeed be called." Gen. xxi. 12. That is, thy ſeed, in whom all the nations of the earth are to be bleſſed, ſhall have its deſcent from Iſaac——for he thought, that " God was able to raiſe him up even from " the dead." Heb. xi. 17, &c.

§ 15.

THIS was the great affair, upon which true believers thought conſtantly until the appearance of Chriſt (§ 9.); and the promiſe of God, that he had given in Paradiſe, " the ſeed " of the woman ſhall bruiſe the ſerpent's head;" which from that day until the times of Abraham, was continually in the hearts of the children of God, harmonized with it. The meaning then of this promiſe was this, amongſt the children of men, whoſe lineal deſcent is from Abraham, there will be a man, through whom all the nations of the earth, that is, the whole world, ſhall be bleſſed. As Abraham held faſt by this promiſe, and believed aſſuredly, it would not remain unaccompliſhed, even though he ſhould make a burnt offering of his ſon Iſaac, from whom this man, appointed for a bleſſing to the whole world, ſhould lineally deſcend (on which account alſo he is called the father of all the faithful); ſo did alſo thoſe, who from the heart clave unto the Lord, and were his genuine children, follow after him in the ſame faith.

§ 16.

IT appears alſo from the books of the Old Teſtament, if they be read in the order in which they chronologically follow one another, that the Lord did not only renew the remembrance of this in the minds of his ſervants, concerning the ſeed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be bleſſed; but that he alſo, by his Spirit, from time

time to time, rendered it more clear, pointing it out more distinctly, and made it the chief article, of which his Prophets have thought, testified, and written. See § 8. and Luke, xxiv. 44. They represent the seed of Abraham himself as a Teacher of righteousness, filled with the Spirit of God; who is himself holy and righteous, and has the law of God in his heart; who shews men the way of salvation, and in the power of God administers counsel and help to all the miserable, weary, and oppressed, and to such likewise as are under bodily infirmities. They describe him, at the same time, as a man, upon whom God lays the iniquity of us all; who is wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; and executed as a malefactor. God the Lord likewise pointed to this, by many sacrifices enjoined the people of Israel; and whosoever was taught by the Spirit of God, to him this matter could not remain hidden and locked up. Moreover, it was likewise testified concerning him, that he is the Lord from Heaven, who after his victory sits down at the right hand of God, until all his enemies be made his footstool: Nay, they call him the mighty God, the everlasting Father. But how should we be able to quote here all the glorious things that are said of him? The blessings, which the seed of Abraham was to bring to all the nations of the earth, are commonly clothed in such words, as are suitable to the œconomy of the Old Covenant. But it is quite manifest, that they are very different from those blessings which God, in the Old Covenant, promised to them who keep his commandments. The blessings of the Old Covenant do almost all of them turn upon outward prosperity, as may be seen from Levit. xxvi. 1. &c. and from Deut. xxviii. 1. &c. Whereas the blessings that Christ gives us, bring us spiritual, heavenly, and eternal possessions; for instance, the forgiveness of sins, the Holy Spirit and his manifold gifts, the peace of God, the joy in the Holy Ghost, and the like.

Much

Much alſo occurs in the Old Teſtament concerning all the nations of the earth, who are to be bleſſed in the ſeed of Abraham; and to one and another nation quite ſpecial promiſes are given. However, theſe promiſes are alſo often delivered in ſuch expreſſions, as were uſual in the Old Teſtament, but which are to be taken in a New Teſtament ſenſe.

§ 17.

IN ſhort, the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament treat of God, and of his works, and of his will. They ſpeak of the Covenant which God made with the people of Iſrael; but alſo of the New Covenant, which was at that time looked for, but is now executed through Chriſt. We find in them the law given by the Lord to the people of Iſrael, and likewiſe the great promiſes which were made unto them. For when the Prophets ſometimes burned with zeal againſt the corruption which prevailed amongſt the people, God turned their minds to the future time; and they ſpeak, by the Holy Ghoſt, glorious things about it. By the hiſtory of the Jews the deep depravity of mankind is to be ſeen moſt evidently. Are we then better than they?—We alſo ſee from thence, with what patience, long-ſuffering, faithfulneſs, compaſſion, forbearance, mercy; but alſo, with what earneſtneſs and zeal againſt ſin and wickedneſs, God deals with mankind. His grace, love, truth, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, and holineſs, alſo his mighty arm is every where diſplayed in this book. There is a treaſure of the eternal truths of God in the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament.

§ 18.

BUT how is it with the Scriptures of the New Teſtament? Whatſoever is ſaid about God, and about his works, and

and about his will in the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, is all confirmed by the Scriptures of the New Teſtament. We have in them all, what God hath ſpoken with us by his Son; and what the Holy Ghoſt hath revealed unto us by the diſciples of Jeſus. The New Covenant of Grace has this peculiarity, it is univerſal, not being confined to one or another nation only. The Old was a ſpecial covenant with the people of Iſrael. See § 11. &c. Whoſoever believeth in Jeſus belongeth to the New Covenant. In Jeſus Chriſt we have the ſubſtance; therefore, in the New Covenant all thoſe things drop of courſe, which were, in the Old Covenant, a ſhadow of that which was to come. For inſtance, after that Chriſt was himſelf become a ſacrifice for us, having atoned for us with his own blood, we now ſtand no longer in need of the ſacrifices, which God enjoined to the people of Iſrael. In a word, when the New Covenant began, the Old Covenant ended: and thoſe commandments which properly belong to the ſpecial covenant of God made with the Iſraelites, are no more binding upon us in the New Covenant; for inſtance, all that belongs to the Divine worſhip according to the Levitical Law. See § 13.——But we have alſo in the New Teſtament all the commandments in the Old Teſtament, that are univerſal. And all the promiſes of the Old Teſtament which point to the New, are in the New more plain and clear, and we enjoy them. In the doctrine of Jeſus and of his diſciples, like the links of a chain, one truth hangs on the other, and they ought not, and muſt not, be ſeparated.

This doctrine of Jeſus and his diſciples, in its whole connexion, is called in the Holy Scripture, *the Goſpel*. Thus ſpeaks our Lord and Saviour: "The law and the "prophets (*were*) until John; and *ſince that time the king-* "*dom of God is preached* by the *Goſpel*, and every man "preſſeth into it;" *viz.* into the kingdom of God, when in faith they receive the Goſpel with eagerneſs of heart,

Luke, xvi. 16. Hence Paul ſaith, "*God hath promiſed the* "*Goſpel concerning his Son afore by his prophets* in the Holy "Scriptures," Rom. i. 1, 2, 3. Now, in this Goſpel, Jeſus Chriſt, and the atonement which is made by his blood, is doubtleſs the chief point. In this view Paul ſays, "the god of this world, that is, Satan, hath blinded the "minds of men which believe not. Leſt *the light of the* "*glorious Goſpel of Chriſt*, who is the image of God, ſhould "ſhine upon them," 2 Cor. iv. 4. And therefore doth he alſo call the Goſpel the preaching of the croſs, *viz.* the croſs of Chriſt, 1 Cor. i. 18. and ſays of it, that it is "the power of God unto ſalvation to every one that be-"lieveth," Rom. i. 16. Therefore alſo on this account it is called "the Goſpel of our ſalvation," Eph. i. 13. and "the Goſpel of peace," Eph. vi. 15. Thus may we plainly ſee, that the word Goſpel is ſometimes taken in a ſpecial, limited ſenſe. But in the moſt paſſages of the New Teſtament, as hath been ſaid, by the word Goſpel, the whole doctrine of Jeſus and his diſciples is underſtood; ſo that Jeſus's ſermon on the mount, Matt. v. 6, 7. is pure goſpel.

Should it then be aſked, What are the contents of the Scriptures of the New Teſtament? the anſwer is, the Go-ſpel; for it all connects harmoniouſly together. When Jeſus Chriſt is preached, then are thoſe who receive him as their Saviour by faith, freed from all guilt and puniſhment, and their ſin is pardoned. They are, at the ſame time, filled with the love of Jeſus; for to whom much is forgiven, the ſame loveth much. God doth, for Chriſt's ſake, adopt them as his children, and ſealeth them with the Holy Spi-rit. They, through Chriſt, obtain an acceſs unto the Fa-ther, and are able, with courage and entire confidence, to pray unto and beſeech him, as loving children beſeech their dear father. Becauſe they love Chriſt, therefore do they alſo keep his commandments; and this they do with all their heart. For a new heart is beſtowed upon them,

and God himſelf doth write his law in their heart; that is, he not only makes known unto them what is well pleaſing to him, but he beſtoweth upon them likewiſe the deſire and power to be obedient to his commandments, and eſpecially to walk in love towards every man. Do they err, and are they defective and debtors? they then confeſs their ſins unto the Lord, who doth not only forgive, but alſo cleanſes them from all unrighteouſneſs. They ſuffer for Chriſt's ſake with joy, for they carry within themſelves a living hope of eternal life: and thus, when they finiſh their courſe in this world, they depart full of comfort to their Lord and Saviour, and ſee his face in everlaſting joy and bleſſed light. All this, as was ſaid, connects harmoniouſly together, and muſt not be ſeparated. Whoever ſeparates it, he is certainly in error, and walks not according to the Goſpel. Whoever abideth in ſimplicity, and will not be moved from it, he certainly experiences every thing, as the Goſpel lays it down.

§ 19.

THUS much concerning the contents of the Old and New Teſtament; and whoever duly conſiders the whole, he muſt value the Bible highly, and bleſs and praiſe God with his whole heart, that it has been preſerved unto our times. For had this not been done, we ſhould have been at a very great uncertainty, not only with reſpect to the hiſtory, but alſo with reſpect to the doctrine concerning God, and his works, and his will. We ſhould have always had too much reaſon to think, Who knows, whether that which we hear from our forefathers is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; for we find by daily experience, that a ſtory, if it paſſes through the mouths of three or four perſons only, commonly becomes quite another thing than it was at the beginning.

But by this occaſion a queſtion ariſes, which ought in juſtice to be explained; *viz.* whether the Bible has not the pre-

pre-eminence above all the other writings of men? nay, whether we are not to look upon and receive it as a divine book; that is, as a book that has been written by men of God, through the impulse, and with the especial assistance, of the Holy Ghost; and that, through grace, it has been given unto us by God for our salvation. To a heart that has tasted the sweetness of the word contained in the Bible, and upon whom it has proved itself to be the power of God, that has found, and still daily finds life and nourishment in it; to such a heart, I say, it must appear strange to hear any one starting a question like this. He thinks, is not this as if I should attempt to prove to a person that cannot see, or will not see, that the sun shines bright? But yet more, Is it not strange to begin to prove to those, into whose eyes it shines, that it is bright? Yet it is however possible, that the answering this question may be useful to one or another person. But because the question refers as well to the Old as to the New Testament, we will therefore divide it, and take a view of the one part after the other.

§ 20.

THAT the New Testament has been written by men of God, through the impulse and peculiar assistance of the Holy Ghost, and graciously given unto us by God for our salvation, may, in the first place, be seen by its contents. It contains, for instance, the Gospel (§ 18.), which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth it. Thus hath it proved its divine origin to many thousands, yea, millions of men. Through faith they became the children of God; they received the forgiveness of their sins, and thereby a quiet and an appeased conscience; they obtained freedom from the slavery of sin and of the devil; they became new creatures, and partakers of the Holy Ghost; the love of Jesus, and of their neighbour, filled their heart; they became willing and meet for every good

work; they were enabled to endure tribulations joyfully, for the ſake of Jeſus; and God beſtowed a living hope of everlaſting life upon them, in which they either cheerfully departed this life, or yet continue in it. We learn this not only by the hiſtory, but we have in our own times alſo many thouſand examples of it, who bear witneſs to it with great confidence. If it be aſked, But cannot the ſame be effected by other writings of pious men? I anſwer, Yes; but then theſe are taken out of the Holy Scriptures: for otherwiſe it is impoſſible, and can be proved by no one example, that ſuch effects can be produced by human writings, though written with great underſtanding.

§ 21.

IF, beſides this, we reflect, who the perſons were from whom we have the books of the New Teſtament, this alſo furniſhes us with a cogent demonſtration of their divine origin. They were mean men, and yet of ſuch good character, that they were eſteemed by all men as worthy and excellent people; and their very enemies themſelves could not call their character in queſtion. The moſt of them were, at the ſame time, diſciples of Jeſus (§ 10.), to whom he afterwards gave the teſtimony, "Ye are they which have "continued with me in my temptations; and when the Son "of Man ſhall ſit upon the throne of his glory, ye alſo ſhall "ſit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of "Iſrael." Theſe men he called to be apoſtles, commanding them to preach the Goſpel, not only in the land of Judea, but alſo to all nations; and they having, notwithſtanding all the grievous ſufferings that befel them on this account, done this, he owned them by many and great ſigns and wonders. He promiſed theſe his witneſſes, that they ſhould be baptiſed with the Holy Ghoſt, Acts, i. 8. And this came accordingly to paſs after his aſcenſion, Acts, ii. He then, according to the word of our Saviour,

was

was in them, and abode with them, John, xiv. 16. He did guide them, as the Spirit of Truth, into all truth, John, xvi. 13. He taught them all things, and brought all things to their remembrance, whatsoever had been said unto them by their Lord and Master, John, xiv. 26.; and what was at that time yet to come, he revealed unto them. Into the number of these witnesses and apostles Paul also came afterwards. He had been before a strict Pharisee, and a quite blameless man, but a blind persecutor of the doctrine of Jesus and of its confessors. But when, by the grace of God, he was afterwards truly converted, our Lord Jesus Christ himself took him under his own tuition, and revealed his Gospel to him. Hence was he also able to say, "I "have received of the Lord that, which also I delivered "unto you," 1 Cor. ii. 23.

Thus he was "an apostle, not of men, but by Jesus "Christ and God the Father," Gal. i. 1. and no ways inferior to the other apostles. Nor did the Lord our Saviour own him less than the rest of the apostles, by many signs and great wonders. The Holy Ghost was also in him, so that he could confidently say, "*We speak*, not in words "which man's wisdom teacheth, but *in words which the* "*Holy Ghost teacheth*," 1 Cor. ii. 13. See Rom. xv. 18. 1 Thess. ii. 13.

Besides these men of God which we have but just mentioned, we have also other writings in the New Testament, of Luke and Mark, who, though not of the number of the apostles, yet their writings have been deemed by the church of Christ of equal authority with the other Scriptures of the New Testament, and been taken into the Canon with the other books of the Bible.

Thus the conclusion of all that which hath been now said is this: Did our Lord Jesus Christ, and his Father in heaven, ordain the apostles to go into all the world, and to make the Gospel known to all men?—Was also the Holy Ghost in, and did he abide with them, to the end that he

might guide them into all truth, and bring all the words to their remembrance which our Lord Jesus Christ had said unto them; and also revealed to them those things which at that time were still to come to pass? And were the apostles really obedient to the guidance of the Holy Ghost in such a manner, that they have spoken that which the Holy Ghost gave them to utter, with words which he taught them? See Matt. x. 20.—We cannot doubt of these things, because they proved their doctrine to be the power of God unto salvation to all them that received it in faith; and God owned them by so many great signs and wonders.—Therefore they certainly experienced, when writing, the grace and assistance of the Holy Ghost, in such a manner, that we must esteem and receive their writings not as words of men, but as words of God to us; and these writings had as large, yea a much more extensive aim, than their Discourses, because they were intended for the instruction of mankind to the end of the world.

§ 22.

WE have the greatest reason to rejoice, and to render the sincerest thanks to God for the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and particularly because they testify of Jesus, as he has himself said, John, v. 39. 46. Luke, xviii. 31. and xxiv. 44. When the two disciples were going to Emmaus, he pointed out that which was written concerning him, in order to demonstrate to them, that what he had suffered, he ought to suffer, and thus to enter into his glory; he at the same time having opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures—they afterwards confessed,

"Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked "with us by the way, and while he opened to us the "Scriptures?" Luke, xxiv. 13, &c.

Whoever

Whoever is in this manner led by Jesus Christ, and by the Holy Ghost, into the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and whose understanding he opens to understand it; whoever experiences in his heart that fire, which by the word of Jesus's sufferings is enkindled in it, as in the case of the disciples on their way to Emmaus, such a person will not doubt of the divine origin of the Old Testament. Such poor men, who seek only for the evidence of human reason, will certainly in that way never arrive at any certainty concerning the divinity of the Holy Scripture. See 1 Cor. ii. 1, &c.

But we find in the Holy Scripture of the New Testament sufficient proof of the divine origin of the Old Testament. One proof of this is, that our Lord Jesus Christ refers continually to that which is written in the Old Testament. In his heavy temptation, of which we have a description, Matt. iv. 1, &c. he strictly adhered to the words which are found in the Old Testament, and with them overcame the Tempter. He answered the unbelieving Jews, especially the Pharisees and Saducees, with the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and thereby put them to silence: yea, from the very beginning of his ministerial office he bore witness to them.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the "prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For "verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot "or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be "fulfilled." Matt. v. 17, &c.

Moreover, he gives to more than one prophet of the Old Testament the testimony, that he spoke by the Holy Ghost. Could our Saviour have spoken thus concerning the Scriptures of the Old Testament, if he had not looked upon them as being of divine, and not of human origin? His disciples and apostles, after that the Holy Ghost had been poured out upon them, acted as their Lord and Master had done, and appealed constantly to the Scriptures of the Old

Teſtament; as, for inſtance, Acts, ii. 14, &c. iii. 22, &c. and iv. 25, &c. Would they have done this, nay, could they have done it, had they not believed that Moſes and the prophets ſpoke and wrote by the Holy Ghoſt? To which we may further add the expreſs words of the apoſtles, by which they teſtify, that God did ſpeak by the prophets, Heb. i. 1. Acts, iii. 21.; and that "Holy men of God," whoſe writings we find in the Old Teſtament, "ſpake as "they were *moved by the Holy Ghoſt.*" 2 Pet. i. 21.; and that all "Scripture *is given by inſpiration of God*, and is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for "inſtruction in righteouſneſs," 2 Tim. iii. 16. Beſides, were not whatſoever things that "were written aforetime," that is, in the Old Teſtament, for of it the apoſtle is ſpeaking, "written for our learning, that we through patience "and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope?" Rom. xv. 4. Is not alſo the Scripture of the Old Teſtament, according to Paul's expreſſion, "able to make us wiſe "unto ſalvation through faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus," 2 Tim. iii. 15. Is not all this ſufficient to convince any perſon, who is deſirous to be taught of God, that we are indebted to the Holy Ghoſt for the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament likewiſe.

§ 23.

WE accordingly find the whole counſel of God concerning our ſalvation in the Holy Scriptures, which we call the Bible. Timothy, during his childhood, had only the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament; and yet Paul writes to him,

"Since from a child thou haſt known the Holy Scrip-"tures, which *are able to make thee wiſe unto ſalvation,* "*through faith*, which is in Chriſt Jeſus," 2 Tim. iii. 15. For the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament "teſtified of "Chriſt," John, v. 39. Nay, "to him give all the pro-"phets

"phets witness, that through his name, whosoever be-
"lieveth in him shall receive remission of sins," and withal everlasting life, Acts, x. 43. Paul still adds, "All Scrip-
"ture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for
"doctrine, &c. *that the man of God may be perfect*, tho-
"roughly furnished unto all good works," 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

Can the Holy Scriptures thoroughly furnish a man of God, that is, a man devoted to God, then certainly it contains completely the way of life. As to the Scriptures of the New Testament, it has been shewed, § 18. that in them the Gospel concerning Christ is contained. But what is the Gospel concerning Christ? *The* "*power of God unto*
"*salvation to every one that believeth.*" Rom. i. 16. The Holy Scripture directs us to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. To the same purpose John says,

"God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his
"Son. *He that hath the Son of God, hath life.*" 1 John, v. 11, 12.

What John speaks of the writing which we call his Gospel,
"These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is
"the Christ (the Messiah), the Son of God, and *that be-*
"*lieving ye might have life* through his name," John, xx. 31. The same may we also confidently maintain of the other Scriptures of the New Testament; although John wrote his Gospel with a very especial view to this end.

What Isaiah writes concerning the word of God, "The
"grass withereth, the flower fadeth, *but the word of our God*
"*shall stand for ever*," Isai. xl. 8. Peter applies, in the most proper sense to the Gospel, and says, "And *this is the word*,
"which by the Gospel is preached unto you." Thus, though men may be enraged at, and rave violently against the Gospel, we can nevertheless confidently believe, that "the
"word of the Lord endureth for ever," 1 Pet. i. 25.

There appears in the style, throughout all the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, a very peculiar simplicity.

city. In none of them are there any traces to be met with of that art of writing, which is learnt in the ſchools of oratory and poetry. Nay, the holy writers have, even when they lived in places where oratory was generally ſought for, as in Rome and Greece, guarded with the greateſt care againſt it. Paul atteſts this; for example, to the Corinthians:

"And I, brethren, when I came to you, *came not with* "*excellency of ſpeech, or of wiſdom*, declaring unto you the "teſtimony of God," that is, the Goſpel.—"And my "ſpeech and my preaching *was not with enticing words of* "*man's wiſdom*, but in demonſtration of the Spirit and of "power: that your faith ſhould not ſtand in the wiſdom of "men, but in the power of God." 1 Cor. ii. 1, &c.

His Epiſtles, written from Rome to the Galatians, Epheſians, Philippians, Coloſſians, and to Timothy, are indeed full of wiſdom, but alſo full of ſimplicity.

But though all the Scriptures in the Holy Bible, are uniform in ſetting every thing forth in ſimplicity, and without human art, yet they are nevertheleſs in expreſſion and ſtyle in certain reſpects different one from another. For who were the writers of them? Peter, John, and James, were fiſhermen; Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Ezra, prieſts; Daniel and Nehemiah, courtiers; David and Solomon, kings; Joſhua, an heroic ſoldier; Moſes, a man educated in all the philoſophy and literature of the Egyptians; Paul a ſcribe and Phariſee.—Now, as all theſe men of God had neither the ſame education, nor the ſame way of life, nor the ſame complection, ſo their ſtyle could not, in the natural courſe of things, be the ſame. But God found it fitting to make as little alteration in the natural abilities as in the ſtature of the ſervants he employed. If only they gave him their heart, and were willing to be led and governed by his Holy Spirit, for all the purpoſes he had with them, he then left all the reſt to take its own natural courſe, as far as there was nothing ſinful in it. Thus it is, the ſame thing is propounded differently by the different

holy

holy penmen, and yet it is all perfectly harmonious, and is ultimately the ſame. They convey the ſame ideas, or ſpeak, in fact, the ſame truths.

But here we have this further remark to make; that the Holy Scripture, notwithſtanding all that which hath been ſaid of its ſimplicity, doth, even in reference to its ſtyle, evince itſelf to be a divine book. Where, for inſtance, is there an hiſtorian, who has related ſo much, and things of ſuch importance, in ſo few and ſuch artleſs words as John? Where has any one teſtified, in ſuch an incomparable manner, concerning the Majeſty of God, and other ſubjects thereunto appertaining, as Iſaiah hath done? But upon this ſubject alone a volume might be written, if we would treat it in its extent.

§ 24.

THAT the Holy Scripture is in many places hard to be underſtood, is ſufficiently proved by the numberleſs commentaries that have been written upon it. For, if we are not to believe, that all the perſons who have publiſhed this kind of writings, have not been doing an unprofitable, fruitleſs, and ſuperfluous work, we muſt be forced to grant, that many paſſages of the Scripture require an illuſtration and expoſition. But now both the Law and the Prophets, and alſo the Goſpel, are called a *light*. Of the Law it is ſaid,

"The commandment of the Lord *is pure, enlightening* "*the eyes*," Pſalm xix. 8.

"Thy word *is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my* "*path*," Pſalm cxix. 105.

"The Commandment *is a lamp*, and the *Law is light*," Prov. vi. 23. Paul ſpeaks of "the *light of the glorious* "*Goſpel of Chriſt*," 2 Cor. iv. 4.; and Peter calls "the "word of prophecy *a light that ſhineth* in a dark place, un- "til the day dawn, and the day-ſtar ariſe in the hearts," 2 Pet. i. 19.

Now,

Now, if the Law, if the Prophets, if the Gospel, if all this be light, how then can it be obscure? and if it be not obscure, why then do men explain it?

There are many passages of the Holy Scripture, which may be illustrated by history, chronology, geography, mathematics, and other sciences. In the prophetic Scriptures many things are yet unaccomplished; and if in this respect we search for the times the Holy Ghost points at, even conjectures and probabilities may not be regarded as quite fruitless, provided only they be not given out for truths of absolute certainty. All these, and still more things, which occur in the Holy Scripture, have their use and advantage; but to salvation they are not necessary.

But then there are other passages in the Holy Scripture, which contain the fundamental truths necessary for our salvation. These are either in themselves quite plain; as, for instance, "This is the commandment of God, "that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus "Christ, and love one another," 1 John, iii. 23. or they stand elsewhere in the Bible in words perfectly plain; and they are, without racking of our brains about them, clear and plain by means of other Scripture-passages that treat of the very same subject. For example, when we read,

"The anointing, which ye have received of him, "*abideth in you*; and ye need not, that any man teach you, "but as the same *anointing teacheth you* of all things, and is "truth, and is no lie; and even as it hath taught you, *ye* "*shall abide in him*," 1 John, ii. 27. And if by this occasion we are reminded of that which Jesus Christ says concerning the Holy Ghost; then it is no longer obscure. The Lord our Saviour says, for instance, "The Comforter, the Holy "Ghost, *abideth with you*, and shall be in you." John, xiv. 17. "The Spirit of Truth *will guide you into all truth*." John, xvi. 13. "The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will "send in my name, *he shall teach you all things*, and bring "all

"all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said "unto you," John, xiv. 26. That is pure truth, *and in it we are to continue*, John, viii. 31.

Accordingly, whoever by God's grace receives in faith, and simply follows those things that stand plainly in the Bible, such will not miss the way to everlasting life.

§ 25.

BUT how is it, that just that which appertains to salvation, and stands so plainly in the Bible, is to many so hidden and obscure? Certainly the reason is not, because the words are not plain, but because that which is opened to them by the words is not acceptable to them. This I will illustrate by an example. The Lord our Saviour said to his disciples, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things "that are written by the prophets, concerning the Son of "Man, shall be accomplished. For (by the Jews) he "shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mock-"ed, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on; and they "shall scourge (him), and put him to death, and the third "day he shall rise again."

Now, were not these plain words? Yea, had not our Lord Jesus Christ spoken the same things several times before to them; and yet it is immediately subjoined,

"And they understood none of these things, and this "saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things "which were spoken," Luke, xviii. 31, &c. But why were such plain and clear words hid from them? And why could they not understand them? The thing itself, which was thereby told them, was not at that time acceptable to them. For Peter had some time before, upon our Lord's having expressed himself in much the same words, taken him aside, and rebuked him thus, "Be it far from thee, Lord: "this shall not be unto thee;" upon which our Saviour

rebuking him, called him a Satan. Matt. xvi. 21, &c. Thus, because they did not like the thing itself, therefore the words remained incomprehensible to them.

The case is now exactly the same with men, in respect to the otherwise clear and plain words of the Holy Scripture concerning the way of Life; that is, concerning Jesus Christ, and the faith in him. This doctrine of Christ, and of the faith in him, was in Paul's time a stumbling-block to the Jews, who would by their own works obtain grace, forgiveness of sins, and everlasting life: but to the Greeks, or Heathens, who deemed themselves to be wise, seeking only after the wisdom of this world, the gospel concerning Christ the crucified, was Foolishness. The latter did therefore despise the counsel of God concerning their salvation, just as the former, and rejected the Gospel. And to all such, as were lost on account of their unbelief, the Gospel was hidden, 2 Cor. iv. 3. And Paul proceeds,

"The god of this world, that is Satan, hath blinded the "the minds of them which believe not, lest *the light of the* "*glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them.*"

But this is a righteous judgment of God upon them. For they loved darkness, rather than light, because their deeds were evil, John, iii. 19. and had more pleasure in unrighteousness than in the truth, 2 Thes. ii. 12. Therefore doth our Lord Jesus Christ praise his dear Father in Heaven, *because he had hid these things from the wise and prudent*, and revealed them unto babes, Matt. xi. 25.

Thus it went with the Gospel, in those days, when preached by Christ and his disciples: to them that perished it was foolishness, 1 Cor. i. 18. and was an hidden affair, 2 Cor. iv. 3.

What wonder, if in our days the Gospel, which was, by the grace of God, committed to writing for our sakes, should have the same effect as at that time, that to those that perish, it should be a hidden writing. Just as is the case

case of the Jews in their reading the Old Testament, as Paul speaks, 2 Cor. iii. 14, &c. O that the veil, which hangs before their eyes when they read the Scripture, were once taken away! Then would they soon find, that the Scripture testifieth of Jesus. John, v. 39.

§ 26.

THE heart-cheering promise of God, That, "as the "rain cometh down, and the snow from Heaven, and re-"turneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh "it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the "sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that "goeth forth out of my mouth, *it shall not return unto me* "*void, but it shall accomplish that, which I please, and it shall* "*prosper in the thing whereto I sent it*," Isai. lv. 10, 11. hath been sufficiently proved by the effects of the preaching of the Gospel in all the world. Wherever it meets with good ground, there doth the word bring forth fruit thirty-fold, sixty-fold, yea, an hundred-fold; and our Lord and Saviour shews us the reason why it brings forth no fruit, Mark, iv. 3, &c. Paul says,

"The preaching of the Cross of Christ *is to us, which are saved, the power of God.*" 1 Cor. i. 18. See Rom. i. 16. Even thus is the word of God, written by the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost for us, it's own evidence.

That we are to make this word of God, entrusted to us by the Lord in the Holy Scriptures, the rule and measure of our doctrine and life, is quite evident from that which hath been shewn in § 20. &c. Christ and his disciples have shewn from the Old Testament, that such and such things are to be received, and such and such things to be rejected. Of this the Scriptures of the New Testament are full. Thus, when teaching the Old Testament, they laid this as the foundation of their doctrine, and proved from thence, that Jesus is the true Messiah; and that which

they deliver is the truth. Ought we not also now to have an high esteem for the Scriptures of the Old Testament as the basis of the New? The Bereans, having heard the Gospel, received it "with all readiness of mind, *searched* "*the Scriptures daily* (those of the Old Testament) *whe-* "*ther those things were so?*" Acts, xvii. 11. This is mentioned as being praise-worthy. *We* ought to do the same. But that we should abide by the Gospel, as it has been preached and written by the apostles, without adding to, or taking from, or altering of it; and that every thing must be tried by it, is to be seen by the awful test which Paul has fixed, "Though we, or an angel from "Heaven, *preach any other Gospel unto you, than that ye* "*have received*, let him be accursed. Gal. i. 8, 9.

Now who would doubt, whether we ought not to make use of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament with all diligence? Are they not given us of God for our salvation, according to § 20, &c.? And shall this grace be bestowed upon us in vain? Were those things, which were written aforetime, written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope? Rom. xv. 4. And shall we then not read them? Is the Holy Scripture profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness? 2 Tim. iii. 16. And shall we then not make use of it? Shall the word of God dwell in us richly in all wisdom, &c.? Col. iii. 16. We ought then certainly to make ourselves well acquainted with it. Did the Lord our Saviour speak words of everlasting life, according to the expression of Peter? John, vi. 68. Should we not then be deeply concerned, to have a continuance and practical experience of it?

But if we, while we read the Bible, were frequently to put the same question to ourselves, which Philip once put to the treasurer out of Ethiopia, when he found him upon the way reading Isaiah, "Understandest thou what thou read-"est?" Acts, viii. 30. it would render us the more atten-

tive,

tive. And then it is well and neceſſary for us, not only to receive gladly, as the treaſurer did, good inſtruction from thoſe who underſtand it; but alſo to do that in particular, which Paul, in reference to the Epheſians, did:

" I make mention of you *in my prayers*, that the God of " our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of Glory, *may give* " *unto you the ſpirit of wiſdom and Revelation in the knowledge* " *of him:*" (that you may become acquainted with him;) *the eyes of your underſtanding being enlightened*, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, &c. Eph. i. 16, &c. Alſo chap. iii. 14. &c.

For the Holy Ghoſt guideth us into all truth, and maketh us wiſe, rightly to underſtand the Scripture.

Of God *the* Creator *and* Preserver *of all Things.*

§ 27.

WHOEVER ſurveys and reflects at all upon the earth, with all that is in and upon it; the ſea, and that which lives and moves in it; the Heavens, together with all thoſe great bodies which perform their regular courſes in them; cannot but think, who has made and created all theſe things; for if we ſee only a ſhoe, a pot, or any ſort of veſſel, we are immediately ſure that there muſt have been ſome one that made it. If ſo, how ſhould the many thouſands, yea millions of things, which can neither exiſt nor ſubſiſt of themſelves, be without a Creator, from whom they derive their origin, and by whom, as long as it is his good pleaſure, they are preſerved? Therefore it is ſaid in the Holy Scripture, " That which may be known of God " is manifeſt in them; for God hath ſhewed *it* unto them. " For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the

" world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that " are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; ſo that " they are without excuſe," Rom. i. 19, 20 *.

Thus no man in his ſenſes can doubt that there is a Creator of all things, or a God; of whom no other thought can be formed, than that he exiſts in, by, and for himſelf, without having had a ſource or beginning. Concerning thoſe, who would perſuade themſelves into a different way of thinking, the Holy Scripture, in this very point of view ſays,

" The Fool hath ſaid in his heart there is no God," Pſal. xiv. 1.

But *when* the world was created, and *how* it was done, we ſhould never have known, if we had not the Bible. So far then it is a matter of faith, that, by his grace, we hold ſtedfaſtly, and doubt not of that which God hath made known unto us concerning it. Here the following words are very appoſite:

" *Through Faith*, we underſtand that the worlds were " framed by the word of God; ſo that things which are ſeen, " were not made of things which do appear," Heb. xi. 3.

§ 28.

That which we have concerning the Creation, Gen. i. and ii. is expreſſed conciſely, but with great majeſty: for inſtance,

" God ſaid, let there be light, and there was light," &c.

* In Luther's verſion it is thus: " The knowledge of God's " exiſtence is ſelf-evident to men, for God hath ſhewed it unto " them. For God's inviſible eſſence, even his eternal power " and Godhead are from the creation of the world clearly ſeen, " being underſtood by the things that are made, namely, by the " creation of the world; ſo that they are without excuſe."

The

The whole description which Moses has made of the creation, is suited to the nature of God, and the glory of God revealed by it is immense.

Moses calls the Creator GOD, and explains himself no further upon that head. But the Holy Scripture gives us in other places some further information. Paul says,

"To us there is but one God, the Father; of whom are "all things, and we in or for him; and one Lord Jesus "Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him," 1 Cor. viii. 6. And,

"God created all things by Jesus Christ," Eph. iii. 9.

These words harmonise with what we read, Heb. i. 2.

"God hath spoken unto us by his Son, by whom he also "made the worlds."

We will therefore speak first, how Jesus Christ, or the Son of God, stepped forth in the work of Creation, and was in a particular manner active.

It is in many places of the Old Testament declared, that God, who revealed himself so graciously to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; God, who led the people of Israel out of Egypt, and adopted them for his own people, is none other than HE who created all things; of which we may read particularly in Nehemiah, ix. 6. &c.

But the New Testament says plainly, that it is Christ; God, who manifested himself, as a very man in the flesh. For thus it runs,

"By him were all things created, that are in Heaven, "and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they* "*be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: "all things were created by him and for him," Col. i. 16.

The same doth John also speak concerning the WORD, which was made flesh, and dwelt among the Jews, whose glory the apostles saw, the glory as of the only-begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth: who came to his own,

the Jewiſh people, and his own received him not: and of him he expreſsly teſtifies, that

"All things were made by him, and without him was "not any thing made that was made," John, i. 3.

But if any one would conclude from hence, that Chriſt is only to be regarded as an inſtrument in the hand of God, he would err. For the Son of God at the Creation proved himſelf to be God; and this the Scripture teſtifies, when ſpeaking of it, with energy. For John, bearing a teſtimony concerning the Word, that is the Son of God, that all things were made by him, and that without him was not any thing made, that was made, ſaid in the words immediately preceding,

"In the beginning" (before any thing had been yet created) "was the Word, and the Word was with God, "and the Word was God," John, i. 1.

The ſame we ſee from Heb. i. 8, &c. when it is ſaid,

"Unto the Son *he ſaith*, Thy throne, O God, is for "ever and ever.——And *thou, Lord, in the beginning haſt* "*laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the* "*works of thy hands:* they ſhall periſh, but thou re-"maineſt," &c.

Chriſt is therefore, juſtly and according to the Scripture, called the Creator of all things. Our old divines alſo acknowledged this, and proved the Divinity of Chriſt, amongſt other arguments, by aſſerting, that he was the Creator of all things; and of conſequence he muſt be God. Their mind is likewiſe to be ſeen in the ancient Hymns. Where, for inſtance, it is ſaid, "The whole world's "Maker, Sovereign,—aſſum'd a ſervant's body, mean, "&c." "O Lord, Creator without end!—How could'ſt "thou ever condeſcend, &c." "O thou of all things "Creator, thou kind paternal power, &c." Not to mention many other paſſages to the ſame purpoſe.

§ 29.

§ 29.

BUT that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things, and is with right so called, is evident from what follows. In the Acts of the Apostles, iv. 24, &c. the church, speaking to God, against whose holy Child Jesus, whom he had anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel gathered together, says,

"Lord, thou *art* God, which hast made Heaven and "earth, and the sea, and all that in them is."

And although we do not find in the Holy Scripture such clear and plain passages concerning the Holy Ghost, in which the creation is ascribed to him, as are concerning the Father and the Son; (although, Gen. i. 2. Psal. xxxiii. 6. and Prov. viii. 22. 27. 29, 30. may be alledged to this purpose) yet doth the church sing with good warrant, "Come, God Creator, Holy Ghost, &c.;" forasmuch as Father, Son, and Spirit are one. For there is one God, and of consequence only *one* Creator of all things. See Isa. xliv. 24.

§ 30.

AFTER the Creator had made all things, he last of all took the creation of man in hand. Him he would create after his own image, that he might be like him, Gen. i. 26. He was also to have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth, Gen. i. 28, &c.

He made every thing else by his mere word, when he spoke, Let it be! each thing came, by this word, into existence. But he did more than speak when he made man. As a potter takes a lump of clay, and forms a vessel of it; thus did he form man out of a clod of earth; and by means of that breath which he breathed into it, he gave him life.

The woman he formed afterwards out of a rib taken from man, and brought her to him, Gen. ii. 7. 18, &c. Thus then God finiſhed his work of creation, and reſted upon the ſeventh day. And Moſes ſays, that for this reaſon "God "bleſſed the ſeventh day and ſanctified it, becauſe in it he "had reſted from all his work," Gen. ii. 2, 3.

§ 31.

What moved God to create the world, a heart that truly knows him may eaſily diſcover. He being the bleſſed God, 1 Tim. i. 11. vi. 15. who is defective in no perfection or bleſſedneſs; his motives in creating the world could not be that he might acquire more. But he is, if truly defined, Love, 1 John, iv. 8. 16. Now love is gladly communicative: and if it has none to whom it can communicate itſelf, it ſeeks one; and this is, in the higheſt degree, the caſe with GOD the Lord. With this deſign of doing good, he brought millions and millions of creatures, and eſpecially man, into exiſtence; both themſelves and alſo every thing requiſite to their ſupport. All this is to the praiſe of his glorious grace.

§ 32.

That God feeds and preſerves all the creatures which he has made, and hath not only the helm of the great ſhip, the univerſe, but alſo the ſupport of each creature, how minute and mean ſoever it may be, but eſpecially man, in his own hand; is as certain as it is incomprehenſible to our underſtanding. We call this the preſervation of the creatures, the providential care of them, and the government of God over them: and this is in all reſpects as great a work of God, as creation. Indeed every object that ſtrikes our eye, and our daily experience, as well as hiſtory, eſpecially the Bible, teach us much of this. But yet the moſt valu-

able

able knowledge of all, is that which we either do, or may know of it by the teſtimonies of the prophets and apoſtles, and by Jeſus Chriſt himſelf.

There are many and great things, of which we know little more than that they exiſt. What, for inſtance, do we know of the ſtars? We find, however, that all theſe great heavenly bodies, which are numberleſs (and we only ſee part of them), keep conſtantly in their order; their motions being ſo regular, that it may be, and really is known, for many years beforehand, upon what day, and at what hour, the Sun and the Moon, and the planets will be in this or that ſtation: and, for inſtance, when there will be an eclipſe of the Sun or of the Moon. Who then upholds theſe, ſo that they not only ſtill exiſt, but alſo continue in ſuch order? Who elſe, but HE, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things. He it is of whom it is written,

"He *upholdeth all things* by the word of his power," Heb. i. 3.; and, "He is before all things, and *by him all* "*things conſiſt*," Coloſſ. i. 17. (See Pſal. lxxiv. 16, 17.)

What can this imply, but that the creatures do not ſubſiſt of themſelves, they muſt be upheld; and that it is the Son of God, who by his powerful word upholdeth all things. *To him* were all things created, and nothing ſhall ſubſiſt without him, for itſelf, and barely by its own power. Why this? would it not be better, if every thing could run its courſe, to all eternity, like a piece of clock-work, without any ſuperior attendance or winding up? I anſwer with Paul,

"Shall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, why "haſt thou made me thus?" Rom. ix. 20.

Is it not a favour ſufficient for the creature, that the Creator gives himſelf, as it were, ſo much trouble about it; and takes upon himſelf the care of it ſo graciouſly?

It is farther found, that the trees, the ſhrubs, the plants, and the herbs, have a life in their kind. They come forth into being, they grow, and having reached their proper

age, they decay; yet they come again, and propagate themselves perpetually. But they have their nourishment likewise. And who is it that keeps all this in order? God the Lord, who is the Lord as well of the earth as of heaven. Of this we may see and read in the whole civth and the cxlviith Psalms, and in many other parts of the Scripture. See Matt. vi. 28—30.

The creatures which live either in the water, or in the earth, or in the air, are innumerable; they propagate their own kind; they grow up to their full stature; they have their nourishment and food, such as are suitable to their own nature; they pass away again, and others succeed in their places. Who provides for them? who sustains them? God the Lord.

"The eyes of all wait upon thee," (are the words of the cxlvth Psalm, 15, 16. "*and thou givest them their meat in* "*due season: Thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire* "*of every living thing*; and, *He giveth food to all flesh:* for "his mercy endureth for ever," Ps. cxxxvi. 25. which the words of Christ do further corroborate,

"Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither "do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet *your Heavenly* "*Father feedeth them*," Matt. vi. 26.

"*Not a sparrow falleth on the ground without your Fa-* "*ther*," Matt. x. 29.

§ 33.

If we consider men in particular, it seems sometimes, as if God had left them, to take their own course like the fishes in the sea; but he that believeth the Holy Scripture cannot think so. For that teacheth us, that "He (the "Lord) giveth to all life, and breath, and all things," Acts, xvii. 25. Likewise, that "he hath determined the "times before appointed, and the bounds of their ha-"bitation,"—Where they shall live upon earth, and how long

long—Acts, xvii. 26. Consequently that a man lives at such or such a time, and is born in such or such a place, is not the result of chance, but is ordered by the hand of God, Ps. cxxxix. 16.

Paul says, "He has not left himself without witness, *in* "*that he did good, and gave us rain from Heaven, and* "*fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness,*" Acts, xiv. 17.

God attends to the whole human race; "The eyes of "the Lord are *in every place, beholding the evil and the good,*" Prov. xv. 3.

"He maketh his Sun to rise *on the evil and on the good,* "and sendeth rain *on the just and on the unjust,*" Matt. v. 45.

§ 34.

THERE is not a nation in the world, to whom he has left himself without witness, and to whom, by numberless proofs of his wise, gracious, and mighty providence and provision, he hath not furnished an opportunity of knowing him, and of honouring and serving him. If they attain to a regular constitution by the assistance of wise magistrates, it commonly seems as if it was only derived from natural causes. But, according to the Scriptures,

"There *is no magistrate,* or *higher powers, but of God*; "so that the powers that be, *are ordained of God,*" Rom. xiii. 1.

"HE *removeth kings, and setteth up kings: He giveth wis-* "*dom to the wise, and knowledge to them that know under-* "*standing,*" Dan. ii. 21.

That one nation becomes more potent than another, obtains dominion over it, is not the effect of *chance,* and is not to be ascribed to natural causes only: For God says,

"I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are "upon the ground, by my outstretched arm; *and have* "*given it to whom it seemed meet unto me,*" Jer. xxvii. 5.

And

And thus did he at that time, "give all the lands (and "nations) into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the King of "Babylon,—and into the hand of his ſon, and his ſon's "ſon," Jer. xxvii. 6.

Thus bloody wars ariſe from the righteous judgments of God; and he puniſhes one nation, on account of their ſins, by means of another nation that is not much better; and the ſame afterwards befalls the latter likewiſe, as ſoon as it exalts itſelf, by means of other nations. Here men are apt to think, this or the other king has acted in this or the other caſe wiſely; he is become ſo powerful by ſuch or ſuch meaſures; on this account he has proved victorious: but in the Holy Scripture it is ſaid,

"The horſe is prepared againſt the day of battle; *but* "*ſafety* (or *victory*) *is of the Lord*," Prov. xxi. 31.

"The Lord looketh from Heaven, he beholdeth all the "ſons of men; from the place of his habitation *he looketh* "*upon all the inhabitants of the earth*.—There is no king "ſaved by the *multitude of an hoſt*; a mighty man *is not* "*delivered by much ſtrength*. An horſe is a vain thing for ſafety," Pſ. xxxiii. 13, &c.

And God himſelf ſays, "*I make peace* and *create evil*— "(as a righteous judge) I, the Lord, do all theſe things," Iſa. xlv. 7.

By the evil which God creates, ſin cannot be here underſtood, for that is not from God; (§ 1.) but the puniſhment of ſin, the devaſtation of whole countries, the extermination of many nations, and the grievous circumſtances, which are uſually the attendants and conſequences of war.

To the evil which God brings, according to his righteouſneſs, upon a nation, this alſo belongeth, that he ſends them either too much or too little rain; as for inſtance, in Elias's time, Luke, iv. 25. James, v. 17, 18. partly by this and partly by other means bringing famine into the land. Now men look for the reaſon of ſuch a famine in

theſe

these or the other natural causes, but the true reason of it is apparent from the following words:

"*When the land sinneth against me, by trespassing grievously,* "*then will I* stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break "the staff of the bread thereof, and will *send famine* upon "it," Ezek. xiv. 13.

When pestilential fogs, and an infectious air, and other things, bring grievous disorders upon man and beast, by means whereof thousands are swept off, these are the judgments of God, and not the effect of chance.

This is also the case with the devastations occasioned by fire or water, by hail and lightning, by earthquakes, by locusts, and other epidemical afflictions. Certain causes of all these things may be assigned; yet nothing befalls men, without God, the just and righteous judge. Amos says,

"Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not "done it?" chap. iii. 6.

§ 35.

BUT the following things are to be observed with attention upon this occasion.

1. If we compare the undeniable benefits which accrue to men from the hand of the Lord, with the things which are grievous to them; we shall see that the former outweigh the latter beyond all description. Likewise, whenever God does punish, doubtless it is done with severe wrath; yet, however, either with a view to amendment, or to stop such a course of wickedness, by which men would have aggravated their own damnation; and such dispensations are truly love.

2. God does not plague and grieve men willingly; neither is it a pleasure to him, when he must exercise such severity; and it is his joy, when he can shew them mercy.

"At what instant I shall speak (says he), concerning a "nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to "pull

" pull down, and to deſtroy it: *If that nation*, againſt " whom I have pronounced, *turn from their evil, I will* " *repent of the evil* that I thought to do unto them," Jer. xviii. 7, 8.

We cannot read the ſtory concerning the city of Nineveh, as it is deſcribed in the Prophet Jonah, without emotion: and whoever reads the Old Teſtament with attention, finds there very many examples of the mercy of God towards men; who having contracted the moſt horrible guilt, yet found grace in their wretched condition.

3. Whoever, under ſuch ſevere afflictions, murmurs againſt God, does not make his load lighter, but heavier.

" *Neither murmur ye* (ſaith Paul) as ſome of them alſo " murmured.——(See Numb. xiv. 2. 36.) and were de- " ſtroyed of the deſtroyer," 1 Cor. x. 10.

Jeremiah gives the beſt advice; who, amidſt the dreadful judgments which befel the Jews, ſays, amongſt other things,

" Wherefore doth a living man complain? A man, for " the puniſhment of his ſins: *let us ſearch and try our ways,* " *and turn again to the Lord.* Let us lift up our heart " with our hands unto God in the Heavens. We have " tranſgreſſed and have rebelled," Lament. iii. 39, &c.

4. O might we never forget theſe words, " *Except the* " *Lord build the houſe*, they labour in vain that build it. " *Except the Lord keep the city*, the watchman waketh but " in vain," Pſal. cxxvii. 1.

§ 36.

But God does not only take upon himſelf the care of whole nations and countries, but his providence extends even to all and each perſon in particular.

Should any one aſſert, that the benediction pronounced by God before the fall, upon mankind, " Be fruitful, and " multiply, and repleniſh the earth, and ſubdue it," Gen. i. 28.

i. 28. has operated powerfully, and with effect, through all the ages of the world, and will continue to operate, until the judgment, or last great day, enabling men to be fruitful, to multiply, and to replenish the earth, such an assertion cannot be reasonably contradicted; but, should he from hence draw the conclusion, that from that day God concerns himself no farther about the propagation of the human race, but only permits every thing to take its own natural course, we cannot agree with him, consistently with the doctrine of the Holy Scripture. Abraham complained to God, that he had no son, and obtained the promise, that he would give him a son, Gen. xv. 2, &c. This was consonant to that promise, which God gave him at his going out of his own country, and from his kindred, Gen. xii. 2, 3. Between this, and the time when Sarah, according to the word of the Lord, conceived and brought forth Isaac, twenty-five years had elapsed, Gen. xxi. 1, &c. Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife (after having lived with her in the matrimonial state above nineteen years), because she was barren, and *the Lord was entreated of him*, and Rebekah his wife conceived, Gen. xxv. 21. After Jacob had had Rachel seven years to wife, it is said, "God remembered Rachel, and *God hearkened to her*, and "opened her womb, and she conceived," &c. Gen. xxx. 22, 23. David says to the Lord, "*Thine eyes did see my* "*substance, yet being imperfect*," (that is, "before I was "yet formed in my mother's womb;" for this is implied by the context), "*and in thy book all my members were writ-* "*ten, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there* "*was none of them*," Psalm, cxxxix. 16.

The Lord saith to Jeremiah, "*Before I formed thee in the* "*belly*, I knew thee; and *before thou camest forth out of the* "*womb*, I sanctified thee, and ordained thee a prophet," &c. Jer. i. 5. From which passages it is evident, that in respect to the procreation and birth of man, God doth not suffer every thing to go, as it can and will go, according

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to the course of nature, but that he directs the whole with great wisdom. Therefore doth the Scripture say,

"*Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of* "*the womb is his reward,*" Psal. cxxvii. 3. See also Gen. xxix. 33. xxxiii. 5. xlviii. 9.

Now, as God the Lord doth, even in the mother's womb, take the care of a child upon himself, and provide for it, so, whether one be born a male, or another a female, we are to receive it, as by his appointment, and as out of his hand. That one child is born healthy, and in its right form, and with all its senses and faculties of soul, is an especial blessing of the Creator; and we are also to receive it as from his hand, if a child comes infirm, blind, deaf, deformed, sickly, or as an ideot, into the world. Wherefore Solomon says,

"Whoso mocketh the poor," (for instance, a cripple,) "*reproaches his Maker,*" Prov. xvii. 5.

§ 37.

If we consider the circumstances of men, as they present themselves to us, we find that one person is of a larger, and another of a smaller stature; to the one a more beautiful form is given than to another; one has more understanding than another; this man is rich, and that man is poor; with one man every thing succeeds according to wish, whereas the other meets with nothing but difficulties; one becomes very eminent, whereas the other is low, mean, and an object of contempt; one is sprightly and healthy, the other is weakly; one has many and great talents, the other has either none, or in a small measure; the one is strong and courageous, the other infirm and impotent; in the one there is a capacity for all kinds of work, whereas with the other little or nothing can be done; one has a singular dexterity and turn for certain arts and employments, which the other is destitute of, &c. &c.

We

We cannot, on this view of things, but lament, that ſuch who excel are liable to be ſelf-conceited, and to deſpiſe the others; although they ſhould rather conſider, that they are indebted to God, and ſhould thank God for all their gifts; that they will have the more to anſwer for if they do not make the right uſe of them; and that, on the other hand, thoſe who are not poſſeſſed of ſuch advantages, are commonly diſcontented, if they do not even murmur againſt God, and often envy others. Whereas, if they would only conſider juſtly, they have abundant reaſon to thank God for the talents with which he has intruſted them; admiring the wiſdom of his providence, which ſuperintends the whole, and connects and unites mankind, by means of the various gifts which he has diſtributed to them, and the diſtinct wants of each.

There are few ſerious people, who, if they review their paſt life, will not call to mind ſome ſpecial circumſtances which have occurred to them, beſides the numberleſs benefits which they have enjoyed in common with others. One has been involved in this, and another in that diſtreſs; the one has had this, and another that heavy ſickneſs; the one has been in this, and the other in that danger; God has marvelouſly delivered him, and that has left ſuch an impreſſion upon him as can never be defaced. Thus doth God ſeek to draw man to himſelf, in order to beſtow ſtill more benefits upon him, to his everlaſting ſalvation. Yet God doth not ſtop here, but he addreſſes himſelf to the heart of man, and none is left without a viſitation. But the misfortune is, that either the poor human race, for the moſt part, pays no attention to ſuch calls, or does not follow the divine drawing.

A man of underſtanding will readily allow this, if we are ſpeaking of thoſe who have had an opportunity to hear the Goſpel of Jeſus. But how is it with the poor heathen, who have never heard any thing of the Goſpel? It is probable, that he deals with them in the ſame manner in which

he ſought after mankind before they had the Holy Scripture. If Job lived in the time of Moſes, or earlier, as is thought by ſome, and not without grounds, then the words of Elihu are applicable to this ſubject:

"In a dream, in a viſion of the night, when deep ſleep "falleth upon men, in ſlumberings upon the bed; *then he* "*openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction, that he* "*may withdraw man from his purpoſe*, and hide pride from "man. He keepeth back his ſoul from the pit, and his "life from periſhing by the ſword. He is chaſtened alſo "with pain upon his bed. *Lo, all theſe things worketh God* "oftentimes with man, *to bring back his ſoul from the pit, to* "*be enlightened with the light of the living*," Job, xxxiii. 15, &c.

In a word, the œconomy of God with every individual man in the world is ſuch, that each, at the great judgment day will be left without all excuſe.

We have only to add this, that God, in an eſpecial manner, keeps a watchful eye upon his children and ſervants. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt tells us, "that the very "hairs of their head are all numbered, ſo that not one of "them can fall to the ground without their Heavenly Fa-"ther. For not ſo much as a ſparrow can fall to the "ground without the Father's will, of how much more va-"lue are they than many ſparrows?" Matt. x. 29, 30. Therefore alſo ought the children and ſervants of God to take every thing which befalleth them, whether it be great or little, ſweet or bitter, as out of the hand of God, with contentment and thankfulneſs, and by no means to murmur or to be enraged at things or perſons which oppreſs them.

§ 38.

Whoever has received grace from God, to underſtand the views and ways of God with man, he will find, that the aim of God is, by all occurrences, and each thing that befals

befals him, to lead him into the right way, and save him, either with loving kindness or severity. Yet numberless instances of God's dealings with men in this world, remain hidden and inexplicable to us; especially if we do not recollect at the same time, that we have an eternity before us.

One thing, in particular, has the appearance as if it was inconsistent with the providence of God. By far the greatest part of mankind are poor, and many are slaves, or at least vassals, who are the property of their lords, and they are, in general, treated severely; they maintain themselves with anxiety, and what arises from, and is earned by their hard labour, is either laid up, or squandered away by their masters. If they are guilty of any misdemeanor, they are punished for it unmercifully. If they beget children, they know beforehand, that such are born in the same state of slavery and vassalage with themselves. And where people do not live in such a state of slavery and vassalage, yet the weaker are usually oppressed by the more powerful. Now, if God has an eye upon all and each of the human race, how is it possible that he can allow these things to be so? Ought he not to lift up his arm, and to destroy those who thus torment their neighbour?

The following may be a sufficient answer: The thoughts of God concerning riches and poverty are entirely different from the thoughts of men here below. And he finds poverty to be much more conducive to preserve men from many sins than riches. To what then do riches and affluence lead men? Do we speak of the fact; in respect to the far greatest part of rich men, it is impossible to pass any great eulogiums upon their conduct. For the most part they are forgetful of God and of his commandments, little considering themselves to be but stewards of their substance; and that God will one day call them to an account, whether they have conducted their stewardships, and employed their riches according to his mind, and according to his word. They are, of all others, the most unfit for the king-

dom of God: therefore our Lord ſays, "That ſooner may "a camel go through the eye of a needle, than a rich man "enter into the kingdom of God." But the poor have not ſo many hindrances. The thorns, that is, according to our Lord's expoſition, the cares of this world, and the deceitfulneſs of riches, do not, in them, choak the word of God. Their underſtanding is not ſet in oppoſition to the truth by ſuch artful deceits as thoſe in which the rich are generally educated. Their ſelf-love is not fed by ſuch flatteries as are offered to the rich. They eſcape an hundred enticements to evil, which the rich ſeek with eagerneſs. Their neceſſity drives them to God. And in eternity it will become ſtill more evident, that many thouſands have reaſon to bleſs God for their having been poor in this world.

§ 39.

But what return is made to God for all his labour, if we may ſo ſay, and for providing for every human being, as he does likewiſe for every bird and worm? From the far greateſt part of men he receives but little thanks. They are the ſmalleſt number, who are pleaſed with what he does. Men have always ſomething to except to his government. If a man has enjoyed a good ſtate of health for forty years together, and God then viſits him with a fit of ſickneſs, which is often only for a few weeks, and may even ſerve to the preſervation of his life; for which he ſhould be, as a child, thankful; yet the effect this has upon him is, alas! too, too often, nothing but vexation. Though God gives a perſon food and raiment, ſo that he and his family are ſufficiently ſupplied, yet is he very often diſſatisfied, becauſe his neighbour has more than he. If ſome misfortune befals him, even though he has contributed to it himſelf, he is full of complaints.

But to allege only one more example, which we meet with almoſt daily; men make commonly many objections

to the weather. God gave to Noah, who was, after the flood, the anceſtor of all mankind, this amongſt other promiſes:

"While the earth remaineth, ſeed-time and harveſt, and "cold and heat, and ſummer and winter, and day and "night, ſhall not ceaſe," Gen. viii. 22.

But theſe his words do not imply, that he would leave theſe things to take their own courſe as they could, and as the natural cauſes produce their effects, without his ſpecial direction. Jeremiah preaches againſt Judah,

"This people hath a revolting and rebellious heart; "they are revolted and gone; neither ſay they in their "heart, Let us now fear the Lord our God, *that giveth* "*rain, both the former and the latter, in his ſeaſon; he* "*reſerveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harveſt,*" chap. v. 23, 24.

"If ye walk in my ſtatutes, and keep my command-"ments, and do them, *then I will give you rain in due ſea-*"*ſon, and the land ſhall yield her increaſe, and the trees of the* "*field ſhall yield their fruit,*" Levit. xxvi. 3, 4. See alſo Deut. xi. 13, 14. Iſa. xxx. 23.

"He giveth ſnow like wool, he ſcattereth the hoar froſt "like aſhes: He caſteth forth his ice like morſels: Who "can ſtand before his cold? He ſendeth out his word and "melteth them: He cauſeth his wind to blow, and the "waters flow," Pſal. cxlvii. 16, &c.

In brief, the Holy Scripture puts thunder and lightning, hail and ſtorm, hoar froſt and ſnow, thaw and rain, heat and cold, wind and tempeſt, yea every thing, into the hand of God. Therefore we ought not to murmur, for by ſo doing, we ſin againſt God, and againſt his government.

§ 40.

WHAT Paul ſays concerning the creation of the world, that "from it the inviſible things of God are clearly ſeen,"

Rom. i. 20. the ſame may be alſo ſaid concerning the *preſervation* of the creatures. The faithful of the Old Teſtament occupied themſelves often and much with both theſe great works of God, and with the contemplation of them; and by them God alſo revealed himſelf to them. Moreover God entered into ſuch an intercourſe with them, as to appear to ſome, and ſpeak with them face to face; but to others he made himſelf known by his Spirit, (§ 7.) Thus, what they have left to us in their writings concerning God, is of great value. In the New Teſtament, God has, by the work of Redemption, revealed himſelf in a much more glorious manner. He has alſo ſpoken with us, as well by his only-begotten Son, as by the Holy Ghoſt, who was in the diſciples of Jeſus. If we therefore keep to that which the Old and the New Teſtament tell us concerning God, we ſhall be ſafe.

§ 41.

When our dear Lord and Saviour was ſpeaking with a poor woman about the true worſhip of God, he ſaid, amongſt other things,

"*God is a ſpirit*, and they that worſhip him muſt worſhip "him in ſpirit and in truth," John, iv. 24.

This admits of no further explanation; for we know not what a ſpirit is. Thus much is, however, plain, that "a "ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones," as men have, Luke, xxiv. 39. But as to the nature of a ſpirit, we rather chooſe to confeſs our ignorance, than to adopt the ſtrange definitions that are made of it in ſome philoſophical, and even in ſome theological ſchools, together with the inferences from thence deduced, 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16.

When the attributes of God are ſpoken of, firſt of all, it is to be obſerved, that he is *eternal*, *everlaſting*. Abraham, as early as his own time, "called upon (or preached) *the* "*name of the Lord, the everlaſting God*," Gen. xxi. 33.

Every

Every created thing has a beginning; but God neither has, nor can have a beginning. See Pſal. xc. 2. Doubtleſs our ſenſes loſe themſelves, whenever they enter into this ſubject. For though we go back in our thoughts as far as poſſible, yet eternity goes farther ſtill; and though we think as far forward as we can, yet we cannot reach the mark. The continuance of the creature depends upon its Creator. He could as eaſily annihilate as he could cauſe it. But God remains ever the ſame, and never ceaſes to be. He is therefore called, "The firſt and the laſt," Iſai. xliv. 6. Of our Lord and Saviour, the Son of God, it is ſaid,

"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," Pſal. xlv. 6. in combination with the words, Heb. i. 8. 10. and Pſal. cii. 26, 27. On this account he alſo calls himſelf, "The firſt and the laſt," Rev. i. 17. xxii. 13. and Iſai. xliv. 6. But when he is called, "The Beginning of "the creation of God," Rev. iii. 14. this can by no means mean, that he was the firſt creature, but that the creation took its beginning from him: "He created all things *," John, i. 3. Col. i. 16.

§ 42.

THE *omnipotence* of God is more plainly deſcribed than his eternity.

"Whatſoever the Lord pleaſeth, *that* did he, in hea-"ven, and in earth, in the ſea, and all deep places," Pſal. cxxxv. 6.

"Our God is in the heavens, *he hath done whatſoever he* "*pleaſed*," Pſal. cxv. 3. From hence the ſtrong declarations of the Scripture are aſcertained, ſuch as,

* Col. i. 15, 16, 17. Our Saviour is called, in our verſion, the *firſt-born* of every creature; but πρωτοτοκος ſignifies the firſt producer, as well as the firſt produced; and in the connection the firſt ſenſe ſeems to be the real meaning: "The firſt pro-"ducer, *for by him were all things created*," &c.

"*With God nothing shall be impossible,*" Luke i. 37.; and, "*He spake, and it was done, he commanded, and it stood* "*fast,*" Psal. xxxiii. 9.

For God, who is able to do all things, will however do nothing but that which is conformable to his own wisdom and truth, holiness and righteousness, loving-kindness and mercy.

By this many questions may be answered, which would otherwise occasion doubt: for instance, when a poor heathen hears, that there is an evil spirit, who seduces mankind, and blinds their eyes, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them, he is apt to say, But is not God greater than this evil spirit, whom you call the devil? why then cannot he kill him? cannot he annihilate him? The answer is easy; God is certainly greater than the devil, and could undoubtedly annihilate him, because to him nothing is impossible: but he will not, and has wise reasons for yet sparing him, until the time of his judgment, which will certainly take place.

Moreover, the omnipotence of God beams forth with great brightness from the works of creation, and by the preservation of his creatures. The Jews were in amaze, when they saw before their eyes that our Lord Jesus Christ fed so many thousand men with such a few loaves; and they had reason enough for wondering. But they did not know and reflect, that this Christ, who resided amongst them, was the Son of God; the very same, who for forty years successively had fed, in the wilderness, the people of Israel, the number of whom was so great, that exclusive of wives and children, it amounted to six hundred thousand. Yea, they understood not, that it was He, who is the Almighty (Rev. i. 8.), who had fed and nourished all the creatures, which are in the water, in and upon the earth, and in the air, for so many hundred, yea thousand years: and who has given him any thing towards it?

§ 43.

§ 43.

THAT God is *omnipresent*, he himself says by the mouth of Jeremiah,

"Am I a *God at hand*, saith the Lord, and not a *God* "*afar off?* Can any hide himself in secret places, that I "shall not see him? saith the Lord. *Do not I fill heaven* "*and earth?* saith the Lord," Jer. xxiii. 23.

Hence says Paul,

"He is not far from every one of us. For *in him we* "*live, and move, and have our being*," Acts, xvii. 27, 28.

"*Whither shall I go from thy spirit?* or *whither shall I* "*flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art* "*there*; if I make my bed *in hell*, behold thou *art there.* "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the "*uttermost parts of the sea*, even *there* shall thy hand lead "me, and thy right hand shall uphold me," Psal. cxxxix. 7, &c.

It is therefore infallibly certain, that God, who filleth heaven and earth, is not far from every individual person, wherever he may be. Our Saviour makes an especial application of this to himself, and to his believing people, in these words,

"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, "there am I in the midst of them," Matt. xviii. 20.; and,

"Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the "world," Matt. xxviii. 20.

Certain it is, therefore, according to the Scripture, that God is omnipresent, and that Christ is ever among such as believe on his name, though they be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth. But who is able to comprehend this? Indeed people have not been wanting, who have endeavoured to make this comprehensible both to themselves and others. But since we know not God's invisible essence, in its true nature, how is it possible for us to make *that* comprehensible, which must spring from his unsearchable

essence? In the mean time, however, this doctrine is to the faithful, and to such as love God, as heart-gladdening and comfortable, as it is dreadful and formidable to the rest.

§ 44.

With the omnipresence of God is his *omniscience* connected; to which not only that which is past, but also that which is to come, is, in all its parts, and without exception, as clear and evident as that which is present. On which very account, eyes like a flame of fire are especially ascribed to the Lord our Saviour, Rev. i. 14, because he knows all things, John, xxi. 17. The Holy Scripture speaks every where of this omniscience of God. We may consult 1 Sam. xvi. 7. 1 Kings, viii. 39. 1 Chron. xxix. 17. Psal. cxxxix. 1—4. Prov. xv. 3. Jerem. xvii. 10, xxxii. 19. to say nothing of other passages. To those who love him, this proves a great consolation, that he knows the bottom of their heart, is acquainted with their inmost wishes, sees their desires, hears their prayer, and is always furnished with the means whereby they can be helped: whereas those that do not love him, are afraid of him on this account, and have also reason. But woe unto such who are unconcerned, and with an audacious mind run on in their wicked ways.

§ 45.

The *wisdom* of God is so immeasurable, that he for that reason is styled *the only wise God*, Rom. xvi. 27. 1 Tim. i. 17. He always chooses that which is the best, and whatsoever he undertaketh, that he gloriously executeth. Whether we take a view of the creation in general, or of any of its parts, the wisdom of God is every where displayed. In the preservation of all things which he hath created, and in the government of the whole world, it is no less evident.

But

But above all it appeareth in the work of Redemption, which gives occasion to Paul to say, "That now," namely in the New Testament, "unto the principalities and "powers in heavenly places," that is, to the angels, "may "be known by the church of Christ the manifold wis-"dom of God," Eph. iii. 10. Also in another place, treating of this subject, viz. the church of Christ, and the members chosen of God for it, he concludes with these words:

"O the depth of the riches both of the *wisdom* and "knowledge of God!" Rom. xi. 33.

§ 46.

WHEN God is called *holy*, we are told thereby, that he is absolutely devoid of all impurity and pollution, and that he is the source of all purity and perfection. In this sense he says,

"Ye shall be holy, for *I am holy*," 1 Pet. i. 16. Levit. xix. 2.

Upon Isaiah's seeing the King, the Lord of Hosts, with his eyes, Isa. vi. 5. (that is, when he saw the glory of Christ, John, xii. 41.), the seraphims, that were by, cried one to another,

"*Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts*, the whole earth "is full of his glory," Isa. vi. 3.

But the holiness and righteousness of God are frequently combined one with the other in the Holy Scripture; as, for instance, Psal. cxlv. 17.

"The Lord is *righteous* in all his ways, and *holy* in all "his works."

In this passage is first implied, that his works are irreprehensible, and that every thing he does is right, Deut. xxxii. 4.; and then it also indicates, that he will render to every man according to his deeds, Rom. ii. 6. 2 Thess. i. 6, 7.; and therein consists his righteousness. The Bible history is replete

replete with this, and distinguishes itself particularly by this, that, amidst the judgments which God brings upon a whole country, or upon individuals, the reasons are recorded which moved him to it. And when the prophets predict, how God will punish this and the other country, this and the other person, they at the same time specify the sins whereby they have justly deserved it. See Psalm v. 5, &c. In the New Testament frequent and ample mention is made of that day which God has appointed, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, Acts, xvii. 31; and the way is pointed out unto them, how they may fly from the wrath that is to come; viz. The faith in Jesus Christ, in whom we have redemption through his blood; even the forgiveness of sins.

§ 47.

Love and *loving*, is so proper to the essence of God, that, for this reason, he is called *Love*, 1 John, iv. 8. 16. When this love refers to the majesty of God and our unworthiness, it obtains the name of *Grace*. Does it refer to the kind and tender share he takes in our distress and misery; then it is called *Compassion*. If it has respect to the creature suffering under distress and misery, and especially to such men as are quite helpless; then it is called *Mercy*. If our attention is fixed on this, that God waits long, before he chastises and punishes, although they had deserved it; then it is called *Long-suffering*. See Rom. ix. 22.

Moses, having besought the Lord to shew him his glory, received this answer from the Lord:

"I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I "will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee," Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19.

Thereupon the Lord descended in a cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD, Exod. xxxiv. 5. What then was the subject of this Proclamation?

clamation? As the Lord passed by before Moses, HE (the Lord) proclaimed:

"The LORD, the LORD GOD, merciful and gra-
"cious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and
"truth: keeping mercy for thousands, and forgiving ini-
"quity and transgression and sin," Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

And that we might not doubt that the Lord himself spoke these words, we must add, Numb. xiv. 17, 18. There Moses says unto the Lord,

"*Thou hast spoken and said*, the Lord *is* long-suffering,
"and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgres-
"sion," &c.

This proclamation of the Lord, who stood with Moses, concerning the LORD, who passed by Moses, remained ever in remembrance amongst the faithful, both of the Old and of the New Testament; and they very frequently call it to mind: For instance, 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. Psal. ciii. 8. cvi. 1. cvii. 1. cxlv. 8. Joel, ii. 13. Joah, iv. 2. Luke, i. 50. Eph. ii. 4. Nay, God himself reminds them of it; for instance, Isai. liv. 7, 8. Jerem. xxxi. 20, &c. (See § 32, &c.)

§ 48.

FINALLY, when we say that it is an attribute of God to speak the truth; the meaning then must be, that it is impossible for Him to do otherwise; should a man say in his haste "all men are liars," Ps. cxvi. 11.; or, as it is otherwise expressed, no man can be depended upon; none would venture to contradict him. The very Angels of God themselves did not all abide in the truth, John, viii. 44. But that GOD could err or lie, that is impossible, Heb. vi. 18.

All the promises of God, wherein he has engaged himself to men, to have mercy upon them (and abundance of such there are in the Prophets of the Old Testament) have been fulfilled

fulfilled in Christ, who is himself the Truth, John, xiv. 6. And therefore, says Paul,

"All the promises of God *in Him are yea*, and *in him*, "*Amen*," 2 Cor. i. 20.

It seems however by one or another occurrence of the Old Testament, as if the threatenings of God had not taken place. Jonah, for example, preached at Nineveh,

"Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown," Chap. iii. 4.

Elijah said to Ahab, in the name of the Lord,

"Behold I will bring evil upon thee," &c. 1 Kings, xxi. 21.

But whereas the people of Nineveh believed the word of the Lord, proclaimed a fast, cried mightily unto God, and turned every one from his evil way; God also repented of the evil he said he would do unto them, and he did it not. Jonah, iii. 5——10. And whereas Ahab, having heard the words of Elijah, rent his clothes, put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly; the word of the Lord came to Elijah,

"I will not bring the evil in his days," 1 Kings, xxi. 27, &c.

But we are to understand the true meaning of this kind of threatening. Although the words, if you do not turn from your evil ways, are not expressly mentioned, yet are they however implied. And so the people of Nineveh took it, and they were not mistaken. Thus also Ahab understood it, and not improperly. If we look upon the threatenings of God in this light, then the event perfectly harmonizes with them. See § 35.

Of

Of the Image *of* God.

§ 49.

BUT we come again to man; of whom, § 30. it hath been ſaid, that he was created in the image of God. Moſes doth not explain, in what that image and likeneſs of God conſiſted. But would we clearly diſcover, what man was poſſeſſed of before the Fall, and unto what, by the grace of Jeſus Chriſt, he is to be reſtored; we muſt turn our eyes to Jeſus Chriſt; not properly in that character of the Lamb of God, who made himſelf an offering to God for us, but only in that point of view, as he was a man. As a man he was in the cloſeſt communion with his Father; and the Holy Ghoſt dwelt in him. The law of God was in his heart; that is, he was full of the love of God and of men. He was filled with wiſdom, and was in favour with God and men; that is, he was well-pleaſing to God, and eſteemed by men. He gladly did the will of his Father, and it was his meat; that is, he lived in it, and hungered to do the will of his Father. He had no ſelf-complacency, nor did he ſeek his own glory; for he was lowly in heart. He was alſo meek of heart; when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he ſuffered, he threatened not, but committed himſelf to the Father. Nevertheleſs he was zealous for his Father's honour, and was provoked to wrath by men, becauſe of the hardneſs of their hearts. Otherwiſe he was compaſſionate; he was deeply affected when he ſaw the miſery of poor men. Whoever ſtood in need of his aſſiſtance, him he gladly aſſiſted, without examining whether he was worthy of it or not. Amidſt the temptations of Satan, he ſtood firm and unſhaken; keeping to the word and commandments of God. He looked to his Father for every thing, and often ſpent whole nights in prayer. He ſought not

not after good days, nor did he ſeek the pleaſures of this world. He was always and entirely ſatisfied with the circumſtances wherein he found himſelf, according to the will of his Father. He bore the greateſt trials with patience, and with perfect reſignation to the will of his Father. His converſation was holy; and he was able boldly to ſtand before his enemies, and to ſay, Which of you can convince me of ſin, or with juſtice accuſe me? He confeſſed the truth, even in ſuch circumſtances when he knew it would coſt him his life. Having no ſin, he would not have died, had he not given himſelf up to death for us.

What hath been here ſaid concerning the man Jeſus Chriſt is not conjecture, but every circumſtance of it is clear and plain from the Holy Scripture. Now, as Chriſt is expreſsly called the *Image of God*, Heb. i. 3. Col. i. 15. 2 Cor. iv. 4. it is from thence evident, that this was the condition of Adam before the fall, when he was like unto God, and bore his image; and that thus we ſhall alſo be, as ſoon as we are reinſtated into the Image of God.

No ſooner doth a poor man, by faith in Chriſt, become a child of God and a new creature, but the Image of God begins to take place in him. And, if he grows in grace and in the knowledge of Chriſt, that is applicable to him which Paul deſcribes,

"We all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs the glory "of the Lord, *are changed into the ſame image, from glory* "*to glory*, even as by the Spirit of the Lord," 2 Cor. iii. 18.

If we add the words of Paul;

"Put on the *New Man, which is renewed* in knowledge "*after the Image of Him that created him*," Col. iii. 10.

Alſo the words,

"*Put on that New Man, which after God is created* in "righteouſneſs and true holineſs," Eph. iv. 24.

Then may we comprize what hath been ſaid in a few words, and confidently aſſert, That the Image of God, or likeneſs

likeneſs to God, conſiſts in the knowledge of the truth, and in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.

Of the deep DEPRAVITY *of* MEN.

§ 50.

OUT of this happy condition, in which men had been created, they fell into the depth of miſery by ſin. Their ſin conſiſted in diſobedience to the only prohibition which God the Lord had given them; if they did not attend, they were poſitively threatened to be puniſhed with death. They ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; although God had told them they ſhould not eat of it. Eve yielded to the ſeduction of the ſerpent (whereof, in § 57.); who cauſed her to ſuſpect the truth of the prohibition of God; intimating at the ſame time, that by eating of this fruit, ſhe would be truly wiſe, and become as God; and ſhe need not be afraid of death, for ſhe ſhould not die on that account.

Should any man think upon this occaſion; but was it then ſuch a great ſin, that man ate of the fruit of the tree which was in the midſt of the garden? and did it merit ſuch a ſevere ſentence of death, as extends to the whole human race?—The anſwer is, diſobedience to God is properly the ſin (See Rom. v. 19.), and this is a deteſtible, horrible, and dreadful wickedneſs, whether it ſhew itſelf in little or in great matters, 1 Sam. xv. 23. Accordingly the notion; oh, this or that is a mere trifle, and though we act otherwiſe, than is the will of God, yet it is of no great ſignification; can be looked upon in no other light, than as a doctrine which takes its riſe from the ſchool of Satan. But if we reflect duly upon the conduct of our firſt parents, we ſhall

ſhall ſoon diſcern how deteſtable their tranſgreſſion againſt God was. God had created them in his own image, and given them the preference before all other creatures. The more he had entruſted to them, ſo much the more might he juſtly expect of them, and ſo much the more heinous was their tranſgreſſion. If we are to take his words of prohibition in their literal meaning, (and is it not the moſt agreeable to the ſubject to abide by this meaning?) then he put them in poſſeſſion of Paradiſe, and gave unto them the fruits of all the other trees; it was therefore nothing leſs than a daring undertaking againſt God, to eat of the forbidden tree. God had ſaid to Adam, "In the day "that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die," Gen. ii. 17. Whereas the ſerpent ſaid, "Ye ſhall not ſurely die," Gen. iii. 4. Ought they not, according to the grace beſtowed upon them, to have believed God more than the ſerpent? The ſerpent endeavours to ſtir up in them a ſuſpicion of their Creator, and an inclination to be independent of him, by theſe words, God doth know, that in the day ye eat of this tree, you will be, as he is; and *this favour* he would not have you to enjoy. Ought they not to have been immediately affrighted at a ſuggeſtion like this; ſo as either to have baniſhed it from them, or to have fled from it? But Eve believed the ſerpent, (2 Cor. xi. 3.) and longed to eat of this tree, *becauſe it made wiſe*. I will however eat of it, and thus will my eyes be opened, and I ſhall become as God. It was a Luciferian thought, and this was the dreadful fall.

§ 51.

THE conſequences of this fall were in all reſpects lamentable; but here we will ſpeak only of the deplorable change it made in men. They had been naked hitherto, and were not aſhamed; they appeared juſt as God had created them; and knew nothing of a perverſe nature, and

what was unbecoming a creature of God, that bears the image of its Creator. But now various things occur, which are unſuitable to the image of God, and of which they have reaſon to be aſhamed: and therefore they make themſelves aprons of fig-leaves. Their hearts alſo ſmite them, and they are conſcious of their having done wrong; therefore they dread God, and hide themſelves, when they hear his voice. Alas! what blindneſs! whom do they dread? Their only and gracious Benefactor, from whom they, and all creatures had hitherto received nothing but love and kindneſs. From whom do they hide themſelves? From the Omniſcient God, whoſe eyes are like flames of fire, and in whoſe ſight the moſt hidden receſſes of the heart are diſcloſed. Thereupon God charges them with their ſin, and ſeeks to bring them to know, to be ſorry for, and to confeſs it. But how little effect had it upon them! The anſwer Adam gives to God is, The woman, *whom thou gaveſt to be with me*, ſhe hath ſeduced me; thus laying the fault upon God. There is no other meaning in his words than this; If thou hadſt not given me the woman, I ſhould not have fallen into this misfortune. Eve ſays, The Serpent beguiled me. Conſequently they were already darkened, and neither knew themſelves, nor their Creator, nor his will.

§ 52.

THIS was the death with which God had threatened them, in theſe words, In the day that thou eateſt thereof, *thou ſhalt ſurely die*. The life, which comes from God, with which both the knowledge of the truth, and holineſs and righteouſneſs are connected, they had loſt. The Spirit of God, who dwelt in them, as long as they were like unto God, and in his own image, and who undoubtedly had faithfully warned them when they began to treat with the Serpent; He was withdrawn from them. Joy in the Lord, and fellowſhip with him, likewiſe love to him, and to his word, were now

vanifhed. They were now as to themfelves, and according to the prefent ftate of their depraved nature, unfit for, and dead to all that was good. On this account this ftate of man is in the Holy Scripture called, Death; for inftance, Rom. viii. 6.

" To be carnally minded *is Death*; but to be fpiritually " minded is Life, and Peace."

And when a man is converted, he is faid to be *paffed from Death to Life*. And on the other hand, if any one continues in this wretched condition, and efpecially does not love his brother, he abideth *in Death*, 1 John, iii. 14. What James fays,

" Sin, when it is finifhed, *bringeth forth Death*," chap. i. 15. was experienced immediately by our firft parents, on the very day they had committed fin.

Thus then they forfeited the happinefs which God had beftowed upon them, of being in the image and likenefs of God. Therefore we fhould not tranflate the words of God, Gen. iii. 22. " Behold, Adam is become as one of us, to " know good and evil;" but, behold, Adam has been,—— but now is no more,——as one of us; the image of God is now gone, and by fin loft; now he knows what is good and evil; that is, he has tafted of fin and its fruits, which he knew nothing of before. Hence his children came into the world in the fame condition: on which account it is faid, Gen. v. 3.

" Adam begat a fon *in his own likenefs, after his image*," and not after God's.

Bodily death likewife followed upon this death; and how muft our firft parents have been affected at the news of Cain's having flain his brother Abel? The earth was alfo curfed for the fake of man; it was only to produce thorns and thiftles of itfelf, and he fhould eat his bread with trouble as long as he lived.

§ 53.

§ 53.

WE will now ſee what the Holy Scripture ſays of the poſterity of the firſt man and woman; that is, of the whole human race deſcending from them. When the eyes of the Lord, from which nothing can be hidden, looked upon man, before the deluge, he found, that

"Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was "only evil continually," Gen. vi. 5.

But was this ſtate of man altered and amended by the dreadful judgment which paſſed upon all fleſh? Far otherwiſe!—For God teſtified immediately after the deluge, that,

"The imagination of man's heart is evil from his "youth," Gen. viii. 21.

Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, when he would ſhew Nicodemus, how impoſſible it was for any one to enter into the kingdom of Heaven, unleſs he became a new creature, aſſigns this as the reaſon of it:

"That which is born of the fleſh is fleſh," John, iii. 6.

The corrupted ſinful nature both of the body and ſoul, is called Fleſh in the Bible. Therefore the meaning of the words of Chriſt is, all and each of the human race, that is begotten and born of parents depraved both in ſoul and body, are both in ſoul and body depraved ſinful creatures. As a red hot iron is pervaded by the fire, and a wet ſponge by the water, ſo are they likewiſe full of ſin. And as a piece of ground, which lies under the curſe, brings ſpontaneouſly forth nothing but thorns and thiſtles; ſo do they alſo, unleſs they be amended by the grace of God, produce nothing but bad fruits. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt informs us, that the heart of man is the ſpring from whence wicked things flow. For he ſays,

"*From within, out of the heart of men,* proceed evil "thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, "covetouſneſs, wickedneſs, deceit, laſciviouſneſs, an evil

" eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. *All these evil things* " *come from within*," Mark, vii. 21, &c. See also Matt. xv. 19, &c.

If then all these evil things come from within, and out of the heart, they must certainly have been first there, though hidden.

§ 54.

HENCE it is indisputably plain, that poor man, before he becomes a new creature, doth not resemble his Creator; nor can the image of God be found in him. See Rom. iii. 23. We need but compare what has been said, § 49. concerning the image of God, with what has been alleged from the Scripture, § 53. and there can no doubt be left upon that subject. This corruption of soul and body is called in Scripture, the Old Man, which is corrupt through the deceitful lusts; as the image of God, whereunto we by Christ are renewed, is called the New Man, which is created by God in righteousness and true holiness, Ephes. iv. 22. &c.

From hence it appears, that no man, after the fall, is in such a condition, that he can fulfil the law of God by any powers inherent in himself, or that he can be saved in this way. For, being carnal, he is of course carnally minded; and,

" The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not " subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be*," Rom. viii. 7.

Therefore says the Scripture,

" There is none righteous, *no, not one*," Rom. iii. 10, &c.

But not only is man's will, but also his understanding, depraved. What Paul says of the Gentiles,

" Whose *understanding is darkened*, being alienated from " the life of God, through the *ignorance that is in them*, be- " cause of the *blindness of their heart*," Ephes. iv. 18. is every man's case, as long as he continues in his deplorable

rable condition, and does not, by the grace of God, which is ready to help him, yield himſelf up to amendment.

The queſtion is ſometimes ſtarted, whether, in the nature of things, man does not always chooſe exactly that which he eſteems to be the beſt? Whoever anſwers this in the affirmative, muſt alſo be obliged to allow the underſtanding of man to be extremely depraved. Why? Men commonly chooſe the moſt abominable things, which plunge them into temporal and eternal deſtruction. Now if, according to this ſuppoſition, they never choſe any thing but what they eſteem to be the beſt, they muſt neceſſarily be dreadfully deceived by their underſtanding.

§ 55.

YET what has been ſaid of men's depravity, is not to be taken ſo, as if man were ſunk into ſuch a ſtate, as to be incapable of being any more renewed, or rectified. For although he is become like a field, which ſpontaneouſly brings forth nothing but thorns and thiſtles, yet may he nevertheleſs, for Chriſt's ſake, and by Chriſt, be turned into a ſoil which produces good fruit. His underſtanding, which, as to the things appertaining to ſalvation, is darkened (notwithſtanding that otherwiſe, in arts and ſciences, he may make ſuch a proficiency as is aſtoniſhing), may be enlightened, and made able rightly to comprehend and judge of ſuch things as tend to his ſalvation. His will, which by nature is inclined to evil, and in oppoſition to that which is well-pleaſing to the Lord, may be changed, ſo as to long after that which is good, and to abhor that which is evil. He can again attain to ſuch a ſtate, that ſin ſhall not reign in his mortal body, that he muſt obey it in the luſts thereof.

This is the aim of God with all men, and with each. For he created them out of love, with a view of communicating himſelf to them, and by ſo doing, to make them

happy creatures. And after they had loſt this happineſs, and plunged themſelves into unſpeakable miſery, then did he, through Chriſt, find out a way to redeem them. How he obtains his aim with ſuch as hear the Goſpel, and receive it in faith, hath been touched upon already, § 18. But how is it with thoſe to whom the Goſpel of Chriſt is unknown, and who have no opportunity of hearing or reading it? The words, "God would not, that any ſhould "periſh; and God will have all men to be ſaved," we are without all doubt to apply to them alſo; and thus is God ſaid to be "*the Saviour of all men*, eſpecially of thoſe that "believe," 1 Tim. iv. 10. Seeing Chriſt is the propitiation for the ſin of the whole world, they cannot of courſe be excluded. That God purſues each man, with the aim of bringing him into the right path, has already occurred, § 37. The way and manner in which he, according to his loving-kindneſs and wiſdom, takes upon himſelf the care of ſuch people to whom he has not given the Goſpel, in order to bring them into another way, cannot indeed be ſo preciſely determined, becauſe the Bible does not ſpeak much about it: yet we have good ground to form the following ideas on this head:

(1.) That every man who takes a view of the things which preſent themſelves to his ſight, cannot but conclude, that there muſt be a great God, who has made all theſe things. See Rom. i. 19, &c.

(2.) That every man, who not only conſiders how all theſe things aroſe, but alſo how they are all preſerved, may directly ſee that he muſt be an incomprehenſibly wiſe, good, and mighty God, who governs all this.

(3.) That every man who gives himſelf the trouble to examine into things, may find the thought ariſe in him: this good, wiſe, and mighty God, to whom I myſelf, as well as all other creatures, am indebted for my exiſtence and preſervation, I ought in juſtice to fear, to honour, to

love,

love, to ſerve him, to thank him, to praiſe him, and to do his will. See Rom. i. 21.

(4.) That every man may know that he ſhould not injure men, whom God has created, and who are preſerved by him; but that he ſhould ſhew love and kindneſs towards them.

(5.) That every man may ſee wherein he is deficient in the above points, and what he ought to ſtrive for. See Rom. ii. 15. Moreover, that he ſhould ſeek for the pardon, grace, and help of this good God.

(6.) That God doth, partly by means of his loving-kindneſs, and partly by his ſeverity, impel every man to ceaſe from evil, and to do that which is good: that by his ſpirit, and according to his immeaſurable grace, he alſo inclines his heart to this, and enables him ſo to do. See § 37. For he it is, who "worketh in men both to will "and to do, of his good pleaſure," Phil. ii. 13. James i. 17. Thus a man may, after the fall, be preſerved, by the grace of God, from wicked ways; as, for inſtance, not to tell lies, not to ſteal, not to whore, not to commit murder, &c.; yea, he can practiſe that which is good; for inſtance, he can be induſtrious, live a ſober and temperate life, be thankful to God for his benefits, pray for his help, be ſerviceable to his neighbour, and behave towards him with diſcretion, tend the ſick, relieve the poor, lodge a ſtranger, confeſs the truth, defend the innocent, avoid evil company, behave as a good citizen, and the like. In this way even a heathen, who has never heard either of the law of Moſes, or of the Goſpel of Chriſt, may do the works of the Law, according to Rom. ii. 14. although his ſufficiency for ſo doing comes from God, 2 Cor. iii. 5. This does not indeed make him a new creature, becauſe we become ſuch only by faith in Jeſus Chriſt; yet is it very certain, that God will alſo not leave this unrewarded.

§ 56.

OUT of that original corruption, of which § 54 treats, flow of course numberless sins. For every thing which, in the propensities, desires, passions, thoughts, words, demeanor, and works of a man, is opposite to the mind and will of God, that is sin. Consequently there is no man who could look upon himself to be innocent. See § 53.

Thus, "if we say we have no sin, we make him a liar, "and his word is not in us," 1 John, i. 10.

Therefore says David,

"Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for *in thy* "*sight shall no man living be justified*," Psal. cxliii. 2.

And Paul says, "There is no difference, for *all have* "*sinned*, and come short of the glory of God," Rom. iii. 22, 23.

But men do not sin merely by mistake, or out of ignorance; but they do it, alas! even with better knowledge, and with deliberation. Thus it is said, for instance, of the Jews, "Thou that preachest, a man should not steal, "dost thou steal? Thou that sayest, a man should not "commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou "that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou "that makest thy boast of the law, dishonourest thou "God?" Rom. ii. 21, &c. To this class belong also such, who, though inwardly full of hypocrisy and iniquity, assume the appearance of virtue and piety, as did the Pharisees and scribes, Matt. xxiii. 27, 28. Do men persist in their sins; then, of course, wickedness becomes such a habit, that they are as little capable of doing good, as the Ethiopian is to change his skin, or the leopard his spots, Jer. xiii. 23.

And if they do not become obedient to the truth, of which God gives them the knowledge, but persist in the evil mind, they are then punished with sins. This was the very case both with the heathen and with the Jews. For seeing

ſeeing the former knew the exiſtence of a God, and yet did not glorify him as God, neither were thankful, therefore were they, by the righteous judgment of God, given over to a reprobate mind, and fell into the moſt deteſtable ſins: and with the latter, to whom God had entruſted more, it went ſtill worſe; becauſe they did not prize ſuch grace, but trod it, as it were, under their feet. See Rom. i. 21, &c. ii. 19, &c. iii. 10, &c. I will not enlarge here on the conſideration, that men, "being entangled in the ſnare of the "devil, are taken captive by him at his will," 2 Tim. ii. 26. becauſe more will ſoon occur on that head. Thus then are all men, who do not ſubmit to be delivered from their corruption, under the wrath of God, according to Epheſ. ii. 3.; and foraſmuch as they have all ſinned, 1 Kings, viii. 46. ſo hath death alſo paſſed upon all men, Rom. v. 12. vi. 20, &c.

Of the ANGELS.

§ 57.

WE now come from men to ſpirits, and attend to that only which we find upon this head in the ſacred Scripture. For all that hath been thought, ſpoken, and written beſides, is ſo little to be depended upon, that nothing can be built upon it. Could, and would mankind conſign to oblivion, and bury thoſe ſtories about the appearance of ſpirits, which ſo many carry about, and are uſually related to children, it would prevent a great deal of miſchief.

It is undeniable, that many ſtories of ſpirits, if ſolidly examined into, would prove to be nothing elſe, but that people have, either by the fancies of others, or by their own, ſuffered themſelves to be impoſed upon. But he who would from hence conclude, that there is nothing in all that is ſaid and

and taught, even according to Scripture, about ſpirits, is certainly greatly miſtaken.

The Holy Scripture ſpeaks of ſome creatures which are, and of others which are not, the objects of our ſight. When we term the latter inviſible, the meaning is only this, that commonly they are not ſeen, although they might appear and be ſeen. The nature of ſpirits is unknown to us, and all we know of it is, that they have not fleſh and bones, as men have. The Holy Scripture teaches us, that there are evil as well as good ſpirits; and we may learn from it every thing that is neceſſary for us to know, both of the one and the other.

Since John teſtifies, that all things were made by the Word, which is God, and that without him was not any thing made that was made, John, i. 3. it is clear, that not only the good, but alſo the evil ſpirits, derive their origin from him. This is alſo corroborated by the following words:

"*By him*," (the Son of God) "*were all things created*, "that are in heaven, and that are in earth, *viſible* and *invi-* "*ſible*," &c. Col. i. 16.

Not one of all the ſpirits was created evil; for God can create nothing which is in itſelf evil. But the devil and his adherents abode not in the truth, that is, in the holineſs their Creator endued them with, John, viii. 44. But he himſelf, and his angels, left their own habitation, and their principality, which means their glorious ſtate, Jude, vi.; and by their ſin, 1 John, iii. 8. drew a heavy judgment down upon themſelves, 2 Pet. ii. 4.

Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, Luke, xi. 18. aſcribes to Satan, by whom here, as appears by the context, the chief of the evil ſpirits is meant, a kingdom; declaring, that all that belong to this kingdom have a wicked mind and aim, and it is, in ſo far, not divided againſt itſelf. Therefore the Dragon and his angels, and their war with Michael and his angels, is ſpoken of, Rev. xii. 7.; and the Dragon is called directly after, the

the great dragon, the old ſerpent, called the Devil and Satan, ver. 9. See alſo Rev. xx. 2. His name is *Satan*, becauſe he is an enemy of good; the *Devil*, becauſe he delights in lies, and deceit, and accuſation; the *old Serpent*, becauſe he beguiled Eve with his ſubtility, 2 Cor. xi. 3. Therefore alſo Chriſt calls him a *murderer* from the beginning, for he plunged our firſt parents into death; alſo the *father of lies*, becauſe he impoſed a lie upon our firſt parents, telling them, that they ſhould not ſurely die, but be like God, if they would eat of the forbidden tree, John, viii. 44. See § 50.

He it is that deceiveth the whole world, Rev. xii. 9.; and the world, that is, thoſe who love darkneſs rather than light, becauſe their deeds are evil, will alſo do his luſts, John, viii. 44. They are under the power of Satan, Acts, xxvi. 18. He and his angels are called, "*Principalities* "and *powers*, and the *rulers of the darkneſs of this world*," Eph. vi. 12. Our Saviour himſelf calls him "The *prince* "*of this world*," John, xiv. 30. xvi. 11.; and he is that ſpirit, who at this time worketh in the children of diſobedience, that is, in thoſe who do not ſtand in the faith of the Son of God, Epheſ. ii. 2. He it is, who ſoweth the tares, thoſe are the children of the wicked one, wicked men, amongſt the wheat, namely, the children of the kingdom, the true members of the church of Chriſt, Matt. xiii. 38, 39. Nay, he is the *god of this world*, whom it ſerves, and according to whoſe will it acts, who likewiſe blinds the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt ſhould ſhine unto them, 2 Cor. iv. 4. It is alſo he who taketh away the word of God, which they have heard, out of the hearts of many men, leſt they ſhould believe it, and be ſaved, Luke, viii. 11, 12. As long as they continue in their ſins, and do not turn to God, they are called his children, and he is their father, according to John, viii. 44. If men do not recover themſelves out of "the ſnare of the devil, they are then taken captive by him

"at

" at his will," 2 Tim. ii. 26. Thus, as it is on the one hand certain, that men, who are yet children of the devil, *will* do their father's lusts, so is it likewise, on the other hand, certain, that they often *must* do it. They are his slaves, and he tyrannizes over them, as long as they will not be set free from his yoke.

§ 58.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ did therefore become man,

" That, through death he might destroy him *that had* " *the power of death, that is, the devil*; and deliver them, " who through fear of death were all their life-time subject " to bondage," Heb. ii. 14, 15.; and, " That he might " destroy the works of the devil," 1 John, iii. 8.

Thus, when a poor man finds himself bound to do the will of the devil, and that he is unable to free himself from the slavery of the devil, and of sin, though heartily weary of it, he wishes from the very bottom of his soul to be set free from it, and turns in faith to the Lord our Saviour, who on this very account obtained of God the name of Jesus, because he saveth his people from their sins;—such a person will certainly be delivered. Our Saviour takes such a poor man under his protection, gives him power to become a child of God, and Satan must yield, and depart from him. Then is a man delivered from the power and dominion of darkness, that is, from the dominion of the devil and of sin, and translated into the kingdom of Jesus Christ; and then he has " redemption through his blood, even the " forgiveness of sins," Col. i. 13, 14. " For the prince " of this world is judged," John, xvi. 11. Coloss. ii. 15.

But from the time that a soul has escaped from Satan, he is always contriving, by every kind of way, to catch it again in his net, and to entangle it with sin. He not only " goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may de- " vour," 1 Pet. v. 8. but he also " transformeth himself " into an angel of light," 2 Cor. xi. 14. seeking by such arts

arts to enſnare men. Thus it may, for inſtance, happen, and it actually is the caſe, that he induces poor men to an outward ſhew of holineſs, and ſelf-righteouſneſs, that thus he may prevent them from laying hold of their eternal ſalvation in Chriſt. Others he deceives, under the pretence that they muſt examine into the truth, that they may not be obliged to believe every thing ſo ſimply as it ſtands in the Bible: thus he draws them firſt into a confidence in their own underſtanding, and then into grievous errors, 2 Cor. xi. 3. Others he again ſeduces to ſins and ſhameful practices, plunging them thereby into miſchief and deſtruction. As for inſtance, David and Judas, Ananias and Saphira. Againſt others, he, by his inſtruments, ſtirs up heavy perſecutions, with a view thereby of wearying them out, and of drawing them away from the faith. Thus ſaith our Saviour,

"Behold, the devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon, "that ye may be tried," Rev. ii. 10. And who can recount all the arts with which he endeavours to ſeduce mankind.

§ 59.

LET no one think himſelf advanced ſo far, as to be quite out of Satan's reach. He deſired to have the diſciples, that he might ſift them like wheat, Luke, xxii. 31.; and he even ventured an attack upon our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, Matt. iv. 1, &c. Therefore doth our Saviour teach his diſciples to pray, "Lead us not into temptation," (do not leave us, that he may tempt us) "but deliver us "from evil," (the evil one) Matt. vi. 13. Paul gives the believers at Epheſus full inſtruction how they ſhould conduct themſelves, ſo as to be able to ſtand againſt the wiles of the devil, Eph. vi. 11, &c.; ſaying, amongſt other things, "Above all, taking the ſhield of faith, wherewith ye ſhall "be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one," ver. 16. The whole of Paul's advice there is worthy of every

every man's consideration, and that each should apply it to his own heart.

But if we, as children, who are insufficient of ourselves, and by any power of our own, to encounter the wicked one, lay hold by faith on Jesus Christ, who himself has prayed the Father to keep his own from the evil one, John, xvii. 15. and in this manner withstand him, he then flies from us, Jam. iv. 7. The Scripture says,

"He that is begotten of God, keepeth himself, and that "wicked one toucheth him not," 1 John, v. 18.

"The Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep "you from evil," (the evil one) 2 Thess. iii. 3.

"Jesus Christ shall confirm you unto the end," 1 Cor. vii. 8.

But that is earnestly to be wished for all those, that cleave to the Lord, what Paul said to the church at Rome:

"The God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet "shortly," Rom. xvi. 20.

Moreover, the Lord has told us, that an everlasting fire is prepared for the devil and his angels, Matt. xxv. 41. See Rev. xx. 10. But it is evident, that before the devil shall be cast into the lake, all sorts of judgments will be inflicted upon him, from Rev. xii. 9.; also chap. xx. 2, &c. and other texts.

But when it is said,

"God spared not the angels, that sinned, but cast them "down to hell, and delivered them into chains of dark-"ness, to be reserved unto judgment," 2 Pet. ii. 4. This is clearly explained by the foregoing: they are cast down, go into chains of darkness, and have even now a hell; but shall yet be cast into another place of eternal torment, Luke, viii. 31.; which sentence God will execute upon them in due time. See Epist. Jude, 6.

§ 60.

§ 60.

CONCERNING the good Spirits and the holy Angels, or messengers of God, we know from the Holy Scripture in general thus much, that their appearance was not very uncommon before the pouring out of the Holy Ghost. After that we meet with fewer traces of it, except what we read of it in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the *Revelation* which John has left us. John was however *in the Spirit*, as he terms it, Rev. i. 10. Chap. iv. 2. when he saw and heard all those things which he has described for us, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, in this prophetical book. Therefore he did not see and hear this with his bodily eyes and ears.

We have, blessed be God, the Holy Scripture; and besides this, if we lay hold of Jesus by Faith, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit. Now, if we faithfully attend to that which the Holy Scripture tells us, and which the Holy Ghost by means thereof teaches; it is not necessary to our salvation, that an Angel should appear to us. The heathen centurion, Cornelius, saw and heard evidently an Angel of God, in the day-time, with his bodily eyes and ears. Acts, x. 3, &c. But he did not preach the Gospel to him, but only told him to send for Peter, who would tell him what he ought to do.

But although the holy angels are not sent of God, to preach the Gospel to us, yet, as genuine friends of mankind, they take great share in our affairs, 1 Peter, i. 12. Having testified to the elect strangers, that the sufferings of Christ, and the glory following thereupon, had first of all been preached to them by the prophets, and then also by the apostles, who, with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven, had preached the Gospel; then adds,

"Which things the angels desire to look into."

They have therefore joy in it, and look into and highly praise the wonders of the love of God, which are displayed

in the work of the redemption of poor man. And as Satan neglects nothing which can be an hindrance to the servants of Christ in their service in the Gospel; (thus, for instance, he twice hindered Paul in making the visit he had intended to the church of Thessalonica, 1 Thes. ii. 18.) so are, on the other side, the holy angels ever ready to assist them every where, and to help them upon their way.

Whereas the angels were so active at the promulgation of the law, Heb. ii. 2. Acts, vii. 53. Gal. iii. 19. who would doubt but that they would likewise employ their faithful service at the propagation of the Gospel? On this account, they are not indifferent about the good consequences attending the preaching of the Gospel, and the successful labour which is spent upon souls. Our Saviour testifies concerning them,

"I say unto you, *There is joy in the presence of the Angels* "*of God* over one sinner that repenteth," Luke, xv. 10.

§ 61.

BUT in general they are appointed by God, to serve the members of Christ, and also little children; this the following passages of Holy Writ doth testify:

"The Angels are all *ministering spirits, sent forth to mi-* "*nister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation,*" Heb. i. 14.

"The Angel of the Lord *encampeth round about them* "*that fear him*, and delivereth them," Psal. xxxiv. 7.

"*He shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee* in all "thy ways: *they shall bear thee up in their* hands, lest thou "dash thy foot against a stone," Psal. xxi. 11, 12.

The extraordinary cases of Peter, Acts, v. 19, &c. chap. xii. 7, &c. and of Daniel, chap. vi. 22. who were delivered by the ministration of Angels; together with many others, for instance, 2 Kings, vi. 16, 17. have been recorded for our consolation. But with respect to children, our Saviour says,

" In Heaven, *their Angels* do always behold the face of " my Father, which is in Heaven," Matt. xviii. 10.

It muſt be here remarked, that the angels who ſtand before GOD, ſuch as Gabriel, for inſtance, Luke, i. 19. have a prerogative before others. The meaning is conſequently this, God gives his neareſt and dearest angels to the ſervice of children; and therefore children, who are of ſo much value with God, ſhould be valuable and dear to us likewiſe.

But there are grounds to believe, that the holy Angels are not only employed in averting evil from us, but that they alſo lend us their aſſiſtance in our different occupations. How many calamities may they, according to the will of God, faithfully preſerve us from, of which we know nothing! They are paſt before we diſcover them. Thus alſo many a kind ſervice is done to us by them, of which we take no notice; and ſcarcely perceive them.

§ 62.

AGAIN, we read of the holy Angels, that they in a particular manner make the praiſes of God their conſtant employment; and that although they are *many thouſand times ten thouſand in number*, Rev. v. 11. yet are they all one in this, Rev. vii. 11, 12. To our Lord Jeſus Chriſt are ſubjected the angels, and authorities, and powers, 1 Pet. iii. 22.

" He is far above all principality, and power, and might, " and dominion, and every name that is named," Eph. i. 21.

Hence we ſee, that there is, even amongſt the angels, a holy ſubordination, wherein one ſtands under the other, according to the arrangement made by our Lord, But Chriſt is the Head over all. He it was, whom Iſaiah ſaw in his glory, according to John, xii. 41.; concerning whom the Seraphims, with covered faces, cried one unto another,

" Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of Hosts, the whole " earth is full of his glory; so that the posts of the door " moved at the voice of Him that cried," Isa. vi. 1, &c. It is HE, whom " *ten thousand times ten thousand, and thou-* " *sands of thousands of angels* magnify, and saying with a " loud voice,

" Worthy is the LAMB, that was slain to receive " power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and ho- " nour, and glory, and blessing," Rev. v. 11, 12.

It is HE, *whom* " *all the Angels of God* are to worship," according to Heb. i. 6.; and whom they do also actually worship. Shall *WE* then not worship him also, *we* who have been redeemed by his own blood?

But as the angels of God thank and praise him, so they also do his will. Therefore the Lord our Saviour enjoins us to pray to the Father, " Thy will be done on earth, *as* " *it is in Heaven*," Matt. vi. 10. Daniel says, " Thou- " sand thousands minister to him," chap. vii. 10.; and David, " Bless the Lord, ye Angels that excel in strength, " that do his commandments," Psalm, ciii. 20. They do them with joy, without delay; on which account they are also described as having wings; and the Scripture says,

" Thou makest thy Angels Spirits (winds), and thy " Ministers a flaming fire," Psal. civ. 4. That is, they go to do that which is commanded, with as much courage, liveliness, and velocity, as the wind, and as lightning.

Of

Of Jesus Christ *our* Saviour.

§ 63.

TO whom could the lamentable condition of the human race be better known, than to God the Lord, who knoweth all things? (§ 44.) Who could possibly find out an expedient for man's deliverance from his misery and wretchedness, but the all-wise God? (§ 45.) Who was so compassionate towards poor men, and so full of an ardent desire of helping them as the most gracious and merciful God? (§ 47.) Who was able to redeem man by right from the bondage of Satan, and from the shackles of sin, but the Almighty and righteous GOD? (§ 42. § 46.) From whom could be expected the accomplishment of the divine promises given to men, that a Saviour and Redeemer would come, but from the true and faithful GOD? (§ 48.) and of this we are now to treat.

That God gave very special promises and revelations concerning the Messiah, or the Saviour of the world, in the Old Testament, has been taken notice of in § 8. &c. § 14. How he did truly appear in the flesh, and enter upon, and conduct his ministerial office, something has already been mentioned in § 9. O were we now enabled, by grace, worthily to express that which is yet to be said of our Lord Jesus Christ!

We begin, as is fitting, with the *Incarnation* of our Lord Jesus Christ; and here we will not omit to mention first of all, that the holy Scripture, when it speaks of his incarnation, doth at the same time make mention of his divinity: For instance,

"When the fulness of the time was come, *GOD sent* "*forth his Son, made of a woman*;" or, as others render it, formed, or prepared in a woman, Gal. iv. 4.

"Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; *GOD was manifest in the flesh*;" 1 Tim. iii. 16.

" The Word *was GOD*, and the" very ſame " Word was " *made fleſh*, and dwelt among us," John, i. 1. 14.

Of conſequence we are not only to ſpeak of the man Jeſus Chriſt, but alſo of Jeſus Chriſt, who is over all, GOD bleſſed for ever. See Rom. ix. 5.

§ 64.

CHRIST was in all parts that conſtitute a man, a very man, and that of the male ſex; which is rendered indiſputable by his being circumciſed on the eighth day, and called *Jeſus*, Luke, ii. 21. See Luke, i. 31. Matt. i. 21.

" Foraſmuch as the children are partakers of *fleſh and* " *blood, HE alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame*," Heb. ii. 14.

He was born like any other child, and ſome weeks after preſented in the Temple, Luke, ii. 22, &c. He increaſed in ſtature like other children. He was nurſed, taught, and educated, and was in ſubjection to his parents, Luke, ii. 51. He grew in underſtanding and wiſdom from time to time, Luke, ii. 52. He learnt a trade, and was a carpenter, Mark, vi. 3. He uſed his hands in labour, his feet in walking, his ears in hearing, his eyes in ſeeing, and his mouth in ſpeaking. He partook of meat and drink; for we find him hungry and thirſty. He was tired and ſleepy, and conſequently ſtood in need of reſt and ſleep. He was ſeen at one time rejoicing, at another grieving; and again much concerned, John, xi. 33. Matt. xxvi. 37, 38. Sometimes he was of good cheer, then ſympathiſing, then full of zeal, John, ii. 17.; and even in anger, Mark, iii. 5. In ſhort,

" *He was made in the likeneſs of* (other) *men, and found* " *in faſhion as* (another) *Man*;" that is, in his deportment, Phil. ii. 7.

But he choſe poverty; and took upon him the form of a ſervant: Phil, ii. 7. (Servants were at that time the very meaneſt

meaneſt and moſt abject claſs of men) and ſo, it neceſſarily followed, he was obliged to endure many difficulties.

He became a man, that he might die; and that "through *death, he might deſtroy him* that had the power "of death, that is the Devil; *and deliver them*, who "through fear of death were all their lifetime ſubject to "bondage," Heb. ii. 14, 15.; and he ſubmitted to ſuch wretched circumſtances: For "*In all things it behoved him* "*to be made like unto his brethren*, that he might be a mer-"ciful and faithful high prieſt, in things pertaining to "God, to make reconciliation for the ſins of the people," Heb. ii. 17.

§ 65.

HOWEVER, although he was very man; yet he was, in certain reſpects, different from all other men. When God created man and woman, "he bleſſed them, and ſaid to "them, be fruitful and multiply," &c. Gen. i. 28. Thus it is by his appointment that a huſband ſhould beget children with his wife: neither is any woman pregnant without the concurrence of a man. But it was otherwiſe with Mary, the mother of Jeſus. She was a Virgin, and knew no man; but was eſpouſed to Joſeph, a man of the houſe of David. The Angel Gabriel was ſent of God unto Mary, who informed her in the name of God, that ſhe ſhould conceive and bring forth a ſon, whoſe name ſhould be called JESUS; ſhe being affrighted, and wondering at his words, as ſhe could not conceive how this could be; the Angel anſwered her, "The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon "thee, and the power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow "thee," &c. Luke, i. 26, &c.

Being thereupon with child, and Joſeph being ſcrupulous about her, an Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, and ſaid,

"Joſeph, thou ſon of David, fear not to take unto thee "Mary thy wife; (he had been eſpouſed to her) for that

" which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost," Matt. i. 18, &c.

Whoever, by the grace of God, considers aright the entire history of the Virgin Mary, of whom Christ was born, Luke, ii. 6, 7. Matt. i. 22, 23. Luke, ii. 10, 11. Isa. ix. 6. will, with the most profound awe and veneration, adore God on that account.

This is the first point wherein our Lord Jesus Christ is different from all other men.

The second point is this, all men are, in consequence of the fall, sinners; there is no man guiltless in the sight of God, in his sight there is no man living that is righteous; as has been shewn, (§ 54.) But our Lord Jesus Christ was no sinful man.

" *HE was a LAMB without blemish, and without spot,*" 1 Pet. i. 19. And,

" *In Him was no sin,*" 1 John, iii. 5.

" *HE knew no sin,*" 2 Cor. v. 21.

" *HE did no sin,*" 1 Pet. ii. 22.

The same is evident from Heb. vii. 26, &c.; and from that which hath been alleged, (§ 49.)

How much, for the rest depends upon this divine truth, that Jesus Christ is a true and real man, and how strenuously we ought to maintain it; appears from hence, that John, with great emphasis, declares him, who is not sound in this point, to be a false prophet.

" Every spirit *that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come* " *in the flesh,* (or, that he did not become a true and real " man) *is not of God; and this is that spirit of Anti-Christ,*" 1 John, iv. 3.

§ 66.

Now as our Lord Jesus Christ is a true and real man, so is he also the true and real GOD. At the time of his walking in such a poor condition upon earth, this was hard to be comprehended.

comprehended. And therefore our dear Lord did not ſpeak of it, either to his own diſciples, or to the Jews of thoſe days ſo plainly, as was done in the time following by his diſciples, after the out-pouring of the Holy Ghoſt. He ſays to his diſciples,

"I have yet many things to ſay unto you, but ye can-
"not bear them now. Howbeit when HE, the Spirit of
"Truth, is come, he will guide you unto all truth,—and
"glorify me, or teſtify of me," John, xvi. 12, &c.

Our Saviour did not ſeek his own glory, John, viii. 50. That is, he did not ſeek to magnify himſelf, but the Father, that had ſent him, John, vii. 18.

However, he, from the very beginning of his miniſtry, did confeſs that he was the Son of GOD. And to Nicodemus he ſaid,

"*God* ſo loved the world, that *he gave his only-begotten*
"*Son*," John, iii. 16.

And this he avowed, when he knew that he ſhould be ſentenced to death on account of this confeſſion, Mark, xiv. 61, 62. His Father alſ gave him this teſtimony from Heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well
"pleaſed," Matt. iii. 17. Chap. xvii. 5. See 2 Pet. i. 17. See beſides, John, i. 13, 14. And what is further ſaid about it, § 99.

Of how great conſequence it is to know and confeſs Jeſus Chriſt to be the Son of God, may be ſeen from 1 John, iv. 15. where it is ſaid,

"Whoſoever ſhall confeſs that Jeſus is the Son of God,
"God dwelleth in him, and he in God."

Is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt the only-begotten Son of God, then is he alſo truly God. This indiſputable concluſion may alſo be drawn, not only from the divine attributes aſcribed to him; where he, for inſtance, is called "The
"Firſt and the Laſt," Rev. i. 17. See § 41. &c. but alſo from the works of Creation and of Preſervation aſcribed

to him; whereof mention hath been made, § 28. and § 32. when our Lord Jesus Christ says,

"If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go "unto the Father; for my Father is greater than I," John, xiv. 28. We must connect with it that which he says in another place:

"All men shall *honour the Son, even as they honour the Fa-* "*ther*," (that is, in the very same manner, and no otherwise), John, v. 23.

It would be impossible to make this declaration harmonise with other very precious words of the Scripture, wherein we are so strictly and earnestly forbidden to pay divine honour to any but to the one only true God, if our Saviour were not the true God. But moreover, the Scripture expressly says, that He is God, not only in the quotations alleged, § 63. but also Rom. ix. 5. and 1 John, v. 20. In the former place it is said,

"Christ cometh from the fathers, according to the flesh, "*who is over all God blessed for ever. Amen.*"

And in the latter,

"*This*, Jesus Christ, *is the true God, and eternal life.*"

On this account Thomas also called him *his Lord and his God*, John, xx. 28, 29.; which were not mere words of astonishment, but were words of faith, agreeable to the testimony given him by our Saviour immediately upon this confession,

"Thomas, because thou hast seen me, *thou hast believed.*"

§ 67.

WHY then did the Son of God come into the world? The Scripture says plainly,

"God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, *that* "*we might live through him*," 1 John, iv. 9, 10.

"This

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all accepta-
"tion, that Jesus Christ came into the world *to save sin-*
"*ners*," 1 Tim. i. 15.

Also,

"The Son of Man," (that is, Christ) "*is come, to seek*
"*and to save that which was lost*," Luke, xix. 10.

Our Lord Jesus Christ chose, for the accomplishment of these great designs, the way of lowliness and obedience. He was, as hath been said, sent by his Father, as the only-begotten Son of God, into the world, John, x. 36. that the world through him might be saved, John, iii. 17. Here then we are to remark, how, on the one hand, the Father acted towards this his Son; and on the other, how the Son acted towards his Father, during the days of his walking here upon earth. I will only allege that which follows.

The Father confessed the Son, immediately upon his entry into his ministerial function, by a voice from heaven,

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Matt. iii. 17. See § 66.

He also repeated this his testimony from heaven more than once, John, xii. 28. Matt. xvii. 5.

Besides, the Father remained in the most close union with his Son, which is thus expressed by our Saviour:

"*The Father is in me*, and *I in him*," John, x. 38. xiv. 11.

And therefore he saith,

"*He that seeth me, seeth him that sent me*," John, xii. 45. and xiv. 19.; and

"*He that sent me is with me; the Father hath not left me*
"*alone*," John, viii. 29.

To this belongs further, that the Father settled with him all those things which our Lord Jesus Christ was to do, and to deliver, as well publicly to the people, as particularly to his disciples. Hence our Saviour says,

"The Father loveth the Son, *and sheweth him all things*
"*that himself doth*," John, v. 20.

"*My*

" *My doctrine* is not mine, but *his that sent me*," John, vii. 16.

" He that sent me is true; and I speak to the world *those* " *things which I have heard of him*," John, viii. 26.

" I have not spoken of myself; but *the Father* which sent " me, he *gave me a commandment, what I should say and what* " *I should speak*. Whatsoever I speak, therefore, *even as the* " *Father said unto me*, so I speak," John, xii, 49, 50.

" The words that I speak unto you, *I speak not of myself*," John, xiv. 10.

" That the world may know, that I love the Father; *and* " *as the Father gave me commandment*, even so I do," John, xiv. 31.

" I have given unto them," (my disciples), or, (I have delivered unto them), " *the words which thou*," (Father), " *gavest me*," John, xvii. 8.

It is also no less clear, that the Father punctually attended to the prayer of his Son; whence the Lord our Saviour gives him this testimony:

" *I know that thou hearest me always*," John, xi. 42. See Heb. v. 7.

Finally, we must still add, that the Father, by the great signs and wonders which he himself did through Christ, both confessed him, and gave a sanction to his doctrine. No one who considers the following words of Christ, can doubt of this.

" The works *which the Father hath given me* to finish, the " same works, that I do, bear witness of me, that the Fa- " ther hath sent me," John v. 36.

" The Father, that dwelleth in me, *he doth the works*. " Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in " me; or else believe me for the very works sake," John, xiv. 10.

§ 68.

We will now take a view of the manner in which the Son of God acted towards his dear Father, during the days of his walking upon earth. He demeaned himself as became a man that bore the image of God, in the most submissive manner towards him. Of his own free will, and of his own mere motion, he divested himself of all the glories, and great pre-eminence which he, as the Son of God, had with his Father, before the world was, John, xvii. 5. On the other hand, being lowly in heart, he humbled himself so deeply, and condescended so low, as not only to appear as a poor honest handicraft, but in the form of a servant, a state connected with still meaner circumstances. Of which Paul speaks, Phil. ii. 6, &c. and says, "Though being indeed "in *the form of God*, (being the brightness of his glory, "and the express image of his person, according to Heb. "i. 3.), *and he thought it no robbery* to be equal with God;" yet "he made himself of no reputation," (*he emptied himself*), that is, he forbore the use of his own divine properties, or of that, which as God he knew, possessed, and was able to effect; and would be and appear in the world, just like any other man, sin excepted, and take every thing out of the hand of his Father. "He also *humbled him-* "*self*, and was obedient unto death, even the death of the "cross."

Accordingly, 1. He laid it down as a fixed rule, that he was not come to do his own will. Of this testify the words,

"I seek *not mine own will*, but the will of the Father "which hath sent me," John, v. 30. And, "I came "down from heaven, *not to do my own will*, but the will of "him that sent me," John, vi. 38.

He remained of the same mind to his end. For when he prayed in the greatest extremity,

"O my

" O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from " me;"

He immediately superadded,

" *Nevertheless, not as I will*, but as thou wilt," Matt. xxvi. 39.

O my Saviour! thou never willest any thing amiss; and yet dost thou offer up thy will to thy Father? Ought we then not much more to do it, considering how very much corrupted our will is?

2. He submitted to the law, like any other Jew, Gal. iv. 4.

" Think not," says he, " that I am come to destroy the " Law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but *to* " *fulfil*," Matt. v. 17.

But he could not bear the additions of the scribes and Pharisees; as, for instance, their expositions concerning the Sabbath, and the like. Why? Because God had, in respect of his law, very expresly commanded,

" *Ye shall not add* unto the word which I command you, " neither shall you diminish ought from it," Deut. iv. 2. And,

" What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: " *Thou shalt not add thereto*, nor diminish from it," Deut. xii. 32.

3. Whenever he came into distress, he never would help himself, but resigned himself up to his Father, expecting help purely and alone from him. Having eaten nothing in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights, and being an hungred (for he was like any other man), the tempter then said to him, " If thou be the Son of God, command that " these stones be made bread." This he could have doubtless done, and infinitely more; but he rather chose to have no help, than to help himself. See Matt. iv. 3, &c. O who reflects duly upon this!

4. Did he stand in need of strength of body, of soul, and of spirit, for the great work entrusted to him, to shew men the

the way of life; he, as it were, forgot that he was himself God, and that he could take out of his own fulness; he cast himself, like a poor man, at his Father's feet, with supplication and prayer for his grace and assistance. For example, before the nomination of his twelve disciples to be apostles, when he delivered that incomparable sermon upon the Mount, he remained in a mountain all night in prayer to God, Luke, vi. 12, &c.

And it was a very usual thing with him to proceed in this manner. Have we not a thousand times more reason to do so?

5. When people came before him, who besought his assistance in their distress, he might by his own power (for he was God) have made them whole; but yet he always turned in prayer to his Father, and took out of his treasury what was requisite for that purpose. Frequently he did it publicly, before all men that were around him; as for instance, at the raising up of Lazarus, John, xi. 41, &c.; at another time with silent sighing, as at the cure of the deaf man, who had also an impediment in his speech, Mark vii. 32, &c. But he usually did all his works looking up to his dear Father.

6. For all corporal and spiritual gifts he thanked and praised his Father with joy; receiving them from him like any other poor and necessitous person. For instance, Matt. xi. 25, &c.

His obedience towards his Father did not admit of the very least exception. He was not forced to enter into death for us. He says,

"No man taketh it," (my life) "from me, *but I lay it* "*down of myself*," John, x. 18.

But, because he knew it was the good pleasure of his Father, that he should give himself up as a sacrifice for mankind, therefore was he "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," Phil. ii. 8. Though even at the very hour of his being seized and bound, if he had prayed to the Father for twelve legions of angels to defend him against his

enemies, he could have rescued himself, Matt. xxvi. 53; but he would not do it.

"Although he were the Son of God, *yet learned he obe-* "*dience* by the things which he suffered," Heb. v. 8.

How!——learned!——What, was he not already obedient? Entirely so. It was his meat and drink to do the will of his Father. But, by constant exercise, it became as peculiar to him, as things which men have learned, with much application, are to them.

Now, though our Lord Jesus Christ did not seek his own glory in the world, nor choose to discover himself as the great God over all, blessed for evermore, but only as he, who was sent of God to be the Saviour of the world, and the Messiah, yet he was sometimes manifested to his own disciples in his Godhead. When they, for instance, heard him pray,

"O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, *with* "*the glory which I had with thee before the world was*," John, xvii. 5. how could they then entertain any other thoughts, but that he must be the true God? And when at times he was in a manner compelled to say something about himself; for instance, in such words as these: "They shall all honour "the Son *even* as they honour the Father," what could they otherwise conceive, but that he must needs be the true God? John says, "He dwelt among us, and *we beheld* "*his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full* "*of grace and truth*," John, i. 14. See 2 Pet. i. 16. And yet, notwithstanding, they (the disciples of Jesus) did not obtain the clear insight into his eternal divinity till after his resurrection and ascension, and the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost.

§ 69.

If we consider how the Son of God, of his own free motion, humbled himself, and chose a state of poverty, it occurs, at the same time, to the mind, that the thoughts of God

are not as the thoughts of men, nor his ways like their ways. However, that admonition is given to all and each who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ:

"*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Je-*
"*sus*, who humbled himself," Phil. ii. 5, &c.

But we must likewise attend to what relates further to him.

As the Father was in Christ, and dwelt in him, John, xiv. 10, 11, &c. (see § 67.), so did also the Holy Ghost dwell in him, according to the promise. "*Upon him shall*
"*the Spirit of the Lord rest*, the spirit of wisdom and under-
"standing, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of
"knowledge and of the fear of the Lord," Isa. xi. 2.

As even our Lord and Saviour himself expressly applies the words,

"*The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me*, because the Lord
"hath anointed me," Isa. lxi. 1. to himself, Luke, iv. 17—21.

Thus then Christ was sent by the Lord to preach the Gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and the recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the accceptable year of the Lord, Luke, iv. 18, 19. And for this very reason he is also called the Apostle, or the Messenger of the Lord, Heb. iii. 1. Before he entered upon his public ministry, he was baptised by that great man of God, John, Luke iii. 21, &c. John, i. 32, &c. and returned from Jordan full of the Holy Ghost, Luke, iv. 1. and was led by the Spirit of God into the wilderness, "and
"was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Sa-
"tan, and was with the wild beasts, and the angels mini-
"stered unto him," Mark, i. 12, 13. Matt. iv. 1, &c. Luke, iv. 1, &c.

Hereupon John gave a powerful testimony concerning him, calling him "The Lamb of God, which taketh
"away the sin of the world;" saying withal, "He is
"preferred

" preferred before me, for he was before me," John, i. 29, &c.

Now John was ſix months older than Jeſus, Luke, i. 36. The latter therefore came after him, though, as the Son of God, he was before John.

The preaching, then, of our Lord and Saviour, comprized in it the whole counſel of God concerning our ſalvation, viz. that " all who believe in him ſhould not periſh, " but have everlaſting life," John, iii. 16.

" How ſhall we eſcape," (ſays the Scripture, Heb. ii. 3.) " if we neglect ſo great ſalvation; which at the firſt began " to be ſpoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us " by them that heard him?"

He has ſpoken eſpecially of his dear Father, of himſelf, and of the Holy Ghoſt; ſo plainly as never had been done before: of which we cannot but be convinced, if we only compare his ſayings with the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament. He alſo foretold ſuch things as were at that time yet to come, not only in reference to the people of the Jews, but alſo in reſpect to the kingdom of God in general. He preached with the demonſtration of the Spirit and of power; whence he ſaid,

" The words that I ſpeak unto you, they are ſpirit, and " they are life," John, vi. 63. See John, vi. 68, 69.

And by this doctrine of his we are to abide, 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4. 2 John, v. 9.; conſequently the promiſe concerning that great Prophet, into whoſe mouth God would put his words, and who was to ſpeak in his name with the children of Iſrael, Deut. xviii. 19. was glorioſly accompliſhed in Chriſt. For this very promiſe is in the New Teſtament expreſsly applied to him, Acts, iii. 23.

§ 70.

BUT our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was not only the Teacher and the great Prophet ſent from God, of whom the Scripture

ture says, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him," John, i. 18. but he was also the Priest, "who through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God," Heb. ix. 14.

The first thing that we have here to observe, is this, that Jesus Christ took our sins and debts upon himself.

He is that "Lamb of God, *which taketh away the sins of the world*," John, i. 29.

He is not here styled the Lamb of God, on account of his being meek and patient (this he was certainly also); but rather because he bore our sin, and atoned for it. It was therefore as much as if he had committed the sins of the whole world. But could this be the case? Yes. It was all done according to the will of God; more of which will occur, § 79.

Upon this is grounded, secondly, that whereas he had taken our sins and debts upon himself, therefore did he also suffer the punishment which we deserved.

"He was *wounded for our transgressions*, he was *bruised for our iniquities*," Isa. liii. 5.

"Christ hath once *suffered for sins, the just for the unjust*," 1 Pet. iii. 18.

"His own self *bare our sins* in his own body on the tree," 1 Pet. ii. 24.

"Christ *died for our sins*, according to the Scripture," 1 Cor. xv. 3. And,

"God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, *Christ died for us*," Rom. v. 8.

"Such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens: who needeth not daily, as those high priests (in the Old Testament), to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's. For this he did once, when he offered up himself," Heb. vii. 26, 27. And,

" By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that " are ſanctified," Heb. x. 14. See § 79.

§ 71.

THAT which theſe texts declare in general, the evangeliſts relate very minutely; and whoever gives them due conſideration, receives aſſuredly an ineſtimable bleſſing from them. The whole life of Chriſt was a ſeries of heavy ſufferings. Not only wicked men, but the unclean ſpirits, alſo haraſſed our dear Lord and Saviour. The temptations, of which we have the deſcription, Matt. iv. 1, &c. were not all; for it is expreſsly ſaid, that

" When the devil had ended all the temptation, he de- " parted from him *for a ſeaſon*," Luke, iv. 13.

Hence it appears, that he came again, and ventured to attack him; whence the Scripture ſays, that " he was *in* " *all points tempted, like as we are*, yet without ſin," Heb. iv. 15.

Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt knew all that he ſhould ſuffer, before-hand, and was immoveably determined to endure it; and when Peter objected, earneſtly diſſuading him from it, he reproved him ſeverely, and called him a Satan, Mat. xvi. 23. But whereas Chriſt was in the world, like another man, ſin excepted, it could not but have a ſenſible effect upon him. For who does not know, that the misfortunes many men undergo, are not ſo heavily felt as the repreſentation of them beforehand was, if they had a previous knowledge that they ſhould happen? See Luke, xii. 50.

§ 72.

THE inward ſufferings of our dear Lord and Saviour were above all meaſure grievous. Of this the Scripture ſpeaks thus:

' *He began to be ſorrowful and very heavy*, and ſaid unto " his diſciples, " *My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful even unto* " *death*," Matt. xxvi. 37, 38.

" And,

"And, being in an agony, he prayed more earneſtly: "*and his ſweat was as it were great drops of blood* falling "down to the ground," Luke, xxii. 44.

Whoever feelingly conſiders this, ſurely ſin, which reduced the Man Chriſt Jeſus, who was however the Son of God, to ſuch anguiſh, muſt become a horrible abomination to him.

He was hereupon taken priſoner, and bound, as if he was a murderer and robber; and in the night brought before judges, who were his enemies. Then was he, in a ſhocking manner, ſet at nought, mocked, ſpit upon, ſtricken, ſmitten, and cruelly abuſed. That he was not inſenſible to all this, the prophetical Pſalm teſtifies, wherein, amongſt the reſt, it is ſaid,

"*Reproach hath broken my heart*," Pſal. lxix. 20.

Then was he delivered over into the hands of the Gentiles, and accuſed as a promoter of ſedition, and as a rebel; but the judge pronounced him innocent. They led him to Herod; and he treats him in no other manner than as though he had a madman before him. Then Pilate delivered him up to the wantonneſs of malicious people, who ſcourge, crown with thorns, and moſt ſhamefully abuſe him. At length they ſentence him to death, and bring him to the place where malefactors were uſually executed; and they made him bear his croſs thither himſelf. He was crucified, and in the midſt of this diſtreſs cruelly mocked and taunted. His moſt dreadful ſuffering was, that upon the croſs, when feeling the keeneſt torture, he was deprived of the comfort of the precious preſence of his Father; which made him cry out, "*My God! my God! why haſt thou forſaken me?* Matt. xxvii. 46. At length he bowed his head, and gave up the ghoſt, when out of his ſide, pierced with a ſpear by a ſoldier, a ſtream of blood and water guſhed forth. Well may we here ſay, O man! all this hath he done for thee; what doeſt thou for him?

§ 73.

IT being thus, beyond all doubt, evident that our Lord Jesus Christ truly died, we have, thirdly, to observe, That God looks upon this cruel punishment of death, which Christ suffered for us (See 1 Cor. xv. 3. Rom. v. 8. Heb. ii. 9. John, 10. 15.), just as if we men had suffered it. The words of the Scripture are plain,

"If one died *for all, then were all dead*," 2 Cor. v. 14.; that is, it is the very same as if all men, as they justly deserved, had been executed on account of their sin.

Whoever now cometh to Christ, the Saviour of the world, by faith, obtains, on account of that death which Christ suffered for him, and for the sake of that blood which he shed for us poor sinful men, Matt. xxvi. 28. remission of all his sins; and, if he abides with him, need not be afraid of punishment in time or in eternity. O, what a comfort lies in the sufferings of Jesus for poor and lost sinners, that not only the mercy of God, and his faithfulness, whereby he keeps his word, but also his righteousness, implies the forgiveness of our sins, if we with true repentance, and with faith in him, acknowledge and confess them. For so says the Scripture:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and *just, to forgive* "*us our sins*, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 John, i. 9.

This is to be particularly attended to by those who truly believe in Christ; for to such did John write. From hence it is plain, that even their trespasses also (have they not daily to pray, Forgive us our trespasses?) are pardoned for the sake of the blood and death of Christ.—How? doth then the righteousness of God require this? Yes. For Christ having paid our debt, atoned for our sin, and borne our punishment, God neither can nor will punish us for them, if we lay hold of Christ by faith.

§ 74.

§ 74.

BY this occaſion it is neceſſary that we obviate a miſtake. Our Saviour ſays,

" The Son of Man came not to be miniſtered unto, but " to miniſter, and to give his life a ranſom *for many*," Matt. xx. 28. And,

" My blood, the blood of the New Teſtament, is ſhed " *for many*, for the remiſſion of ſins," Matth. xxvi. 28.

What, did he not die then for all? Yes. " He gave " himſelf a ranſom *for all*," 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6. He by the grace of God taſted death *for every man*, Heb. ii. 9.

" He is the propitiation for our (that is, for the be- " lievers) ſins; yet not for ours only, but alſo for the ſins " *of the whole world*," 1 John, ii. 2.

" It pleaſed the Father, by him to reconcile *all things* " unto himſelf," Col. i. 19, 20.

All men! that is indeed many: and by this expreſſion our Saviour points out to us the importance of his death and his blood; which are of avail and benefit to ſo many millions of men, who have lived from the beginning of the world, are now living in the world, and will ſucceed and be in the world to the very end of it.

Here we may refer to what Paul ſays, Rom. v.; for it clears it up. There it is ſaid,

" By one man ſin entered into the world, and death by " ſin; and ſo death paſſed *upon all men*, for that *all* have " ſinned," ver. 12.

And farther,

" As by the offence of one, judgment came *upon all men* " unto condemnation; even ſo by the righteouſneſs of one, " the free gift came *upon all men* unto juſtification of life," ver. 18.

And the very ſame thing is in the very ſame place thus expreſſed by Paul:

"For if through the offence of one *many* be dead; much "more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is "by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto *many*," ver. 15.

Hence it is very evident, that the *many*, which are here pointed out in contradistinction to the one, do not mean one part of mankind, but *all* men. See 1 Cor. xv. 22. O what a depth of the wisdom, goodness, truth, and righteousness of God, lies in the sufferings, the death, and the blood of Jesus! On which account also it is solemnized even in Heaven; for instance, Rev. i. 5. and we shall thank and praise God and the Lamb for it to all eternity.

§ 75.

THE Evangelists give us a heart-rejoicing account of the burial of Jesus, of his Resurrection upon the third day, of his appearances amongst his disciples after he was risen from the dead, and of his ascension.

When we have finished our course in this world in the faith of Jesus Christ, and he shall receive our spirit in grace, and the body be laid in the grave; that will be to our benefit that HE also lay in the grave. Who would not rejoice in expectation of his resting-place, if he only knows that he is sown in Hope? See 1 Thess. iv. 13, &c.

As to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, there is not the least room to doubt, that our Lord and Saviour, who was not only a true man, but also the Son of God, was able to raise himself up again. His word is plain,

"No man taketh it (my life) from me, but I lay it "down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I "*have power to take it again*," John, x. 18.

We may also take the words,

"*He is risen* from the dead," Matt. xxviii. 7.; in such a sense, as if by his own power he resumed life. Yea, the words of Jesus,

"Destroy

"Destroy this temple, and in three days *I will raise it* "*up*," John, ii. 19. point to the very same thing: For the Evangelist adds, "But he spake of the Temple of his "body," ver. 21.

Now when he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said, ver. 22.

However, the Apostles expressed themselves concerning the Resurrection of Jesus in the following manner:

"This Jesus *hath God raised up*, whereof we are wit-"nesses," Acts, ii. 32. Likewise: "The Prince of "Life have ye killed, *whom God hath raised from the dead*; "whereof we are witnesses," Acts, iii. 15. Again: "Him," (the same Jesus whom they slew) "*God raised up the third* "*day*, and shewed him openly; not to all the people, but "unto witnesses, chosen before of God, even to us, who "did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead," Acts, x. 40, 41.

Particularly Paul testifies, that "*God the Father raised* "*him up from the dead*," Gal. i. 1. 1 Thes. i. 10. Rom. vi. 4.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews it is said, "The *God of* "*Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus*, "that great Shepherd of the sheep (who is eminently great), "through the blood of the everlasting Covenant," chap. xiii. 20.

The witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ have not only ventured substance and blood, life and limb, and offered every thing up on account of this testimony; but God also owned them by many and great signs and wonders, and accompanied their testimony with such a power, as was undoubtedly divine: For instance, Acts, ii. 37, &c. chap. x. 44, &c.

It cannot but be of very great importance to us, that God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. The Scripture says,

"God hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by "the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," 1 Pet. i. 3.

"Christ was delivered for our offences, and was *raised* "*again for our justification*," Rom. iv. 25.

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, "yea rather that is risen again," Rom. viii. 34.

That God raised again Christ, is the most powerful proof that the sacrifice of his dear Son, who gave himself up unto death for us, was perfectly acceptable and well-pleasing to him. Moreover, he hereby owned and confessed all that Jesus did and taught during the time of his walking upon earth. He thereby set his seal to our having the forgiveness of sins by the blood of Jesus, and that righteousness, which is of avail in the sight of God. There is now nothing which can condemn a poor sinner, who builds upon Christ in faith; for Christ has not only died, but been raised up also for him: and thereby hath God himself made known, that our debts have been paid, and our sins atoned for.

§ 76.

THUS then did our dear Lord shew himself alive again, after his sufferings, unto his disciples, by many demonstrations, in various ways: for instance, by shewing them the prints of the nails in his hands and feet, and his side opened by the spear, John, xx. 20.; also by his eating and drinking with them, Acts, x. 41.; fully to convince them that it was HE himself; and by letting himself be seen of them frequently during forty days, and speaking with them concerning the kingdom of God, Acts, i. 3.

The church of Christ richly enjoyed the fruits of these his conversations with his disciples, in the sermons they afterwards preached, and we, to this very day, reap the blessings of them from their writings. But he afterwards appeared separately to Paul, who was still at that time an enemy,

enemy, 1 Cor. xv. 8.; and instructed him in such a manner, that he could say,

"*I received from the Lord*, that which also I delivered to, or "taught, you," 1 Cor. xi. 23. chap. xv. 3, &c. Gal. i. 12. See § 21.

After the forty days were elapsed, he led his disciples as far as to Bethany: and,

"He lifted up his hands, and blessed them: and it came "to pass, while he was blessing them, that he was parted "from them, and before their eyes carried up into Heaven, "and sat at the right hand of God," Acts, i. 9. Mark, xvi. 19. Luke, xxiv. 50, 51.

Then were the words fulfilled, which he had said to his disciples:

"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the "world; again, I leave the world and go to the Father," John, xvi. 28.

And now it is said, that

"Christ is entered, (as the High-Priest) not into the "holy places made with hands——but into Heaven itself," Heb. ix. 24. And verily,

He is entered in once into the holy place by his own blood (which he shed for us, for the forgiveness of sins) having obtained eternal redemption for us, Heb. ix. 12.

Being then now seated at the right hand of God, that is truly come to pass which he said to his Father,

"And now, O Father! *Glorify thou me* with thine own "self, *with the glory which I had with thee before the world* "*was*," John, xvii. 5.

"He now sitteth on the right hand of the Majesty on "high," Heb. i. 3. "Angels, and authorities, and "powers being made subject to him," 1 Pet. iii. 22.

Now that word of the Lord is fulfilled with which the Son is addressed,

"Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a sceptre "of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom," Heb. i. 8.

"He

"He is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings," Rev. xvii. 14. chap. xix. 16. And, "At the name of JESUS *every* "*knee* shall bow, of things in Heaven, and things in "earth, and things under the earth," Phil. ii. 10. And,

"*All the Angels of God* shall worship him;" Heb. i. 6. *He*, also! 1 Cor. i. 2.

§ 77.

BEFORE our Lord Jesus Christ's ascension into Heaven, he testified to his disciples,

"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is "come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both "in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto "the uttermost part of the earth," Acts, i. 8.

Now the Holy Ghost having been, according to the word of our Saviour, poured out upon them, they began immediately to preach, and to testify to every one, that the same Jesus of Nazareth, whom the Jews had crucified by the hands of the Gentiles, is the Messiah, the anointed one of God, the Saviour of the whole world; who had been promised by God unto the Fathers, and for whom they had hitherto been waiting with such a longing desire. Indeed our Saviour himself, during the days of his walking upon earth, had, upon particular occasions, owned, that HE was the Messiah; or the Christ. For upon the woman of Sychar's saying, "I know that Messiah cometh, which "is called Christ," he said to her, "I, that speak unto "thee, am HE," John, iv. 26. See also John, ix. 37. To the disciples of John, who asked him, "Art thou "he that should come, or do we look for another?" He answered:

"Go and shew John again those things which ye do "hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame "walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the "dead are raised up; and the poor have the Gospel preached "to them," Matt. xi. 3—6.

Which

Which implies this, the works I do, testify of me, that I am the Messiah, the anointed of God. To the High Priest, who said to him, "I adjure thee by the Living "God, that thou tell us, Whether thou be the Christ, the "Son of God?" He answered,

"Thou hast said," or, "I am HE," Matt. xxvi. 63, 64. His disciples owned, and also confessed, that they believed him to be the Messiah. For upon his once asking them, "But whom do ye say that I am? Peter made answer, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God," Matt. xvi. 15, 16.

Our Saviour did indeed forbid his disciples, at that time, to tell any man that he, Jesus, was the Christ, Matt. xvi. 20. The reason is probably this, because he knew, that so soon as he should speak plainly that he was the Messiah, the Jews would put him to death; as it also actually came afterwards to pass: for the hour of his death and sufferings was not yet come. But now the Disciples spoke boldly and confidently, "Therefore let all the House of Israel know "assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye "have crucified, *both Lord and Christ*," Acts, ii. 36.

"Neither is there salvation *in any other*; for there is "*none other name under Heaven* given among men, whereby "we must be saved," Acts, iv. 12.

"To him give all the prophets witness, that through "*his Name*, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remis-"sion of sins," Acts, x. 43.

This was therefore the Apostles first business, to testify, "that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the "world, or the Messiah," 1 John, iv. 14. See 1 Tim. iv. 10.

§ 78.

THAT which hath been said of Jesus Christ, § 70. that he is the Priest, who, through the Holy Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, is founded upon his being the Mediator

diator between God and man. The Scripture ſpeaks thus on this head:

"There is one God, and *one Mediator between God and* "*man*, the Man Chriſt Jeſus, who gave himſelf a ranſom "for all," 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.

If any one undertakes to reconcile ſeveral parties, who are at variance one with another, and to make peace among them, he is called a Mediator. But he is alſo called a mediator who ſtands between two unequal parties, through whom both theſe parties treat with each other. In both theſe reſpects is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator between God and man.

It has been ſhewn, § 50, &c. that man, from the happy condition in which he was created, has plunged himſelf by ſin into the deepeſt miſery. All men now are carnal by nature, and of conſequence alſo carnally minded, according to Rom. viii. 5. "But the carnal mind is *enmity againſt* "*God*, for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither in-"deed can be," Rom. viii. 7. Therefore are all men by nature, and before they are converted, the enemies of God. They alſo ſhew themſelves to be ſuch; for they do not that which is well-pleaſing to God; but they love and do that which he hates. To this is added, that they maintain a fellowſhip with the Evil Spirit, who is an enemy of God, do his will, and are governed by him, as hath been proved, § 57.

This is the ſtate of one of the parties, whom Chriſt, as the Mediator, is to reconcile; that is, of man. But how was it then with God? How did HE ſtand diſpoſed towards men? Was there an enmity in him againſt them? O no! He loved the ungrateful and ungodly creatures. The wretched condition into which they had plunged themſelves, he deeply compaſſionated; it grieved him to inflict the ſevere puniſhments upon them which they deſerved. But he could have no more fellowſhip with them, than they with him. For ſin made a wall of partition between the holy

and

and juſt, on the one ſide, and the impure and apoſtate, on the other. See § 46. And yet no man, who is not in fellowſhip with God, can be happy. However, with God the love towards his poor creatures, and the deſire ariſing from thence to deliver them out of their moſt calamitous ſituation, and bring them to a participation of all that good which he had at the creation of man deſigned for them, remained unchangeably the ſame.

But the more God loved man, and ſought to ſave him, ſo much the greater was his wrath againſt *ſin*, which ſeparated him from God, and plunged him into ſuch miſery, that as a ſlave of Satan he run to deſtruction; as likewiſe his diſpleaſure *againſt thoſe men*, who gave themſelves up to the ſervice of ſin and Satan. We here premiſe, that ſuch a wrath as is common in men, who are carried away by their own corrupt nature, is incompatible with the nature of God. For *this* wrath is, Gal. v. 20, ſpecified amongſt the notorious works of the fleſh, claſſed with idolatry, witch-craft, and ſuch ſins. But God is holy in all his works, (§ 46.) and therefore it is impoſſible that he ſhould be like ſinful men. What then is the wrath of God? If we take a view of all the paſſages of Scripture which ſpeak of the wrath of God ſucceſſively, we find, firſt, that God's diſſatisfaction with certain things, his diſlike to them, his diſguſt towards, and abhorrence of them, his zealous determination to root them out, and his diſpleaſure at them, are underſtood by the wrath of God. In this ſenſe David ſays, "O Lord, rebuke me not in *thine anger*," Pſal. vi. 1. And Jeremiah; "O Lord, correct me, but with judg-"ment, (with moderation) and *not in thine anger*, leſt "thou bring me to nothing," chap. x. 24. And the Prophet Nahum: "Who can ſtand before *his indignation!* "And who can abide in the fierceneſs *of his anger?*" chap. i. 6. And John: "He that believeth not the Son, "ſhall not ſee Life, but *the wrath of God abideth on him*," John, iii. 36.

But

But then, ſecondly, The divine judgments conſequent upon ſin, are alſo underſtood, when the wrath of God is ſpoken of. So ſays Paul, for inſtance: "*The wrath of* "*God* is revealed from heaven *againſt all ungodlineſs* and un-"righteouſneſs of men, who hold the truth in unrighteouſ-"neſs," Rom. i. 18. And, "Thou, after thy hardneſs "and impenitent heart, *treaſureſt up unto thyſelf wrath* "*againſt the day of wrath*, and revelation of the righteous "judgment of God," Rom. ii. 5. "Let no man deceive "you with vain words, for becauſe of theſe things (ſins) "*cometh the wrath of God upon the children of diſobedience*," or, upon unbelieving men, Epheſ. v. 6.

Sometimes alſo the term, "Wrath of God," is made uſe of in both theſe ſenſes.

Now, if we ſpeak of the wrath of God, and take the word in the ſenſe firſt mentioned, by which is meant God's diſſatisfaction with evil things, his diſlike to them, his diſguſt towards and abhorrence of them, his zealous determination to root them out, and his diſpleaſure at them; then doth this wrath flow from his love, as well as from his holineſs and righteouſneſs. Can a father or mother, when they ſee ſomething is likely to hurt their child, or doth actually hurt it, be indifferent about it? Doth not their love enkindle in them a zeal againſt that thing? Can it be otherwiſe with God? And how could indifference, or even a placid compoſure in reſpect to evil, agree with the holineſs and righteouſneſs of God? And ſhould it ſtill be incomprehenſible to any one, that God ſhould be angry at wickedneſs, yea, and at men, ſo far as they are wicked, and are the ſervants of ſin, let him only look at our Lord Jeſus, who is the expreſs image of God, when he would heal a man who had a withered hand, on a Sabbath day; he aſked the Jews, Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil; to ſave life, or to kill? But they held their peace, becauſe they were not willing to avow the truth;—"*he looked round about on them with anger*, being "grieved

"grieved for the hardness of their hearts," Mark, iii. 4, 5. "Did not *the zeal of the house of God eat him up*, when he "found those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and "the changers of money," in the outer court of the Temple; "so that having made a scourge of small cords, "he drove them all out of the Temple, and the sheep, "and the oxen, and he poured out the changers money, and "overthrew the tables," John, ii. 14—17. Shall not hereafter the wretched men, who do not belong to Christ, "say to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide "us—*from the wrath of the Lamb?*" Rev. vi. 16.; and yet this our Lord and Saviour wept over Jerusalem, and died for these wicked men.

But if, by the wrath of God, we, according to the second meaning, understand the judgments of God consequent upon sin; to this point belong,

(1.) All those sins which fall upon mankind as the judgments of God, of which Paul, Rom. i. 21, &c. among other things treateth. For he there tells us, that, because when the heathen knew there was a God, they glorified him not as God, neither were they thankful, God gave them up unto the most abominable practices, a great number of which Paul enumerates.

(2.) Death; under which expression all the most dreadful things that are connected with it, as soon as man is deprived of the life which is from God, are signified in the Scripture. See § 51, &c.

(3.) The power of the devil, which he obtained over mankind, as soon as they had rent themselves from God, and given themselves up to sin. From that time they are under the most cruel yoke of the devil, (§ 57.)

(4.) Eternal damnation, and the punishment of hell, where indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, are upon every soul of man that doth evil, Rom. ii. 8, 9. and which is therefore in the Scripture styled, "The wrath that "is to come."

§ 79.

Now then, what did the Mediator between God and man, in order to apppeaſe the aforeſaid wrath, to reconcile man with God, and to reſtore peace? He was made a ſacrifice for men; that is, he ſubmitted to be executed in a dreadful manner for men, and in the room of men (which he had not, but they had, deſerved), to render them acceptable to God, and thereby to deliver them from that puniſhment which they otherwiſe muſt have endured for their ſins, from the power of the devil, and from all their miſery. Though this ſacrifice of Jeſus has already been treated of in general, yet we cannot forbear adding the following remarks:

(1.) That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt gave himſelf up as a ſacrifice for men, was the effect of an eternal decree of God, is to be ſeen in Acts, ii. 23. and Luke, xxii. 22. 1 Pet. i. 20. God made it alſo often known to men by the prophets, who ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt, for inſtance, Iſa. liii. Moreover, from the death of Abel, (§ 2.) until the death of Chriſt, the ſacrifice of Jeſus was conſtantly prefigured by the offerings made by blood, eſpecially among the people of Iſrael, (§ 16.) For in this caſe, the tranſgreſſor was to bring an ox, or ſome other clean beaſt, to the prieſt, and at the ſame time to confeſs his ſin. Thereupon the beaſt was ſlain, his blood ſhed, and it was offered unto the Lord; and thus was an atonement made for the guilty perſon in preſence of the Lord, and then every thing was forgiven him that he had done, whereby he had contracted guilt. See Lev. vi. 7. Num. xv. 28. Lev. iv. 26. 35. and chap. v. 13. 18. 2 Sam. xxiv. 25. Thus, upon this plan the blood of the ſacrifice made the atonement for the ſoul, Lev. xvii. 11.; yet not in and of itſelf: for theſe offerings could not, according to the teſtimony of the Scripture, by any means take away ſins, it being impoſſible that the blood

blood of bulls and of goats ſhould take away ſins, Heb. x. xi. 4.; but all this pointed to the ſacrifice of Chriſt for us.

(2.) Here we ought duly to reflect who it was that made himſelf an offering for man. It was Jeſus, who was not only a man, but likewiſe God. He was put to death in the flesh, for as God he could not die. We are, however, not to forget, in reſpect to his ſacrifice, he was God the Lord. Thus alſo the apoſtles underſtood it; and therefore Paul ſays,

"The Holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers to feed the "*church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood,*" Acts, xx. 28. See 1 John, iii. 16.

It is this which makes the ſacrifice of Chriſt for us of ſuch great weight, that nothing can poſſibly be more important.

(3.) This ſacrifice has been brought to God the Lord, againſt whom men had ſo greatly ſinned, and whoſe Majeſty they had ſo highly offended. God did alſo accept it in grace, and it was well pleaſing to him. Of this doth the Scripture plainly ſpeak:

"Chriſt hath loved us, and hath given himſelf for us, *an* "*offering and a ſacrifice to God, for a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour,*" Epheſ. v. 2. "Chriſt, through the Eternal Spirit, *offered* "*himſelf* without ſpot *to God,*" Heb. ix. 14.

Thus then are we reconciled to God by the death and by the ſacrifice of his Son; that is, an expiation has been made in the ſight of God, and our ſin has by this ſacrifice been atoned for; Chriſt by this ſacrifice has found a ranſom; our debt has been paid by this ſacrifice; Chriſt has borne the chaſtiſement deſerved by us; we, by this ſacrifice, have not only been rendered tolerable to God, but are alſo made welcome; when we now, through Chriſt, come to God, we are accepted in the Beloved.

(4.) By this ſacrifice of Chriſt for us, our ſins, as has already been ſaid, have been atoned for. "*His own ſelf bare* "*our ſins in his own body on the tree,*" (that is, he has borne

our sins, and made an atonement for them, when he gave his life for us upon the cross.) 1 Pet. ii. 24. (See § 70.)

(5.) All this has been done according to the will of God. God himself chose and prepared his Son for this, that he should become a sacrifice for man; yea, assisted in this offering.

"God made him *to be sin* for us, who knew no sin;" (that is, to be the perfect sin-offering) 2 Cor. v. 21.

"God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, "not imputing their trespasses unto them." (He rather laid them upon Christ.) 2 Cor. v. 19. This is explained by the words in Isa. liii. 6. "*The Lord hath laid upon him the* "*iniquity of us all.*" He was "the Lamb of God which "taketh away," (bore) "the sin of the world," John, i. 29. Yea, it is said, "*It pleased God, that* in Him,"—Christ,—"should all fulness dwell, and *by him to reconcile all* "*things unto himself*, whether they be things in earth or "things in heaven; in that by himself he made peace, "through the blood he shed upon the cross," Col. i. 19, 20.

§ 80.

Now we shall consider, (6.) What blessings spring from the sacrifice of Jesus, or (which in the language of Scripture has the same sense) from his death and from his blood. The first is, that we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son, though we were enemies, according to Rom. v. 10. That is, God is now ready, for Christ's sake, and for the sake of his offering, to forgive all men their sins, who receive Jesus in faith. He will damn no man, because he came into the world as a sinful man; neither will he damn any one on account of the sin he has actually committed, who, when he hears the Gospel, receives it in faith, and comes to Christ; but he will forgive him all the sins that he has committed: neither shall the wretched system of sin, in which he was born, and which dwelleth in him,

that

that is, in his flesh, hurt him. Thus Pauls says, "As by "the offence of one," (namely Adam), "judgment came "upon all men to condemnation; even so *by the righteous-* "*ness of one*," (namely Christ) *the free gift came upon all* "*men unto justification of life*," Rom. v. 18. See 1 Cor. xv. 22.

The dam is now broken down by Christ, which obstructed the stream of the loving-kindness and grace of God, so that it could not pour itself out upon us. But if a man hears the Gospel, or becomes in any other way acquainted with it, and does not receive it in faith, and will not come to Christ, he is condemned on account of his unbelief. As Christ says, "*He that believeth not shall be* "*damned*; and the wrath of God abideth on him," Mark, xvi. 16. John, iii. 36. To this belong also the words, "To this Jesus give all the prophets witness, *that through* "*his name whosoever believeth on him, shall receive remission of* "*sins*," Acts, x. 43. "God has now made us accepted "in the Beloved, that is, in his dear Son, in whom we "have redemption *through his blood*, the forgiveness of sins, "according to the riches of his grace," Eph. i. 6, &c.

Secondly, By the sacrifice of Jesus, or by his blood and death, freedom from the yoke of Satan, and from death, is purchased for us. Thus it is said, "Forasmuch as the "children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself "likewise took part of the same; *that through death he* "*might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the* "*devil*; and deliver them, who through fear of death were "all their lifetime subject to bondage," Heb. ii. 14, 15. Our Saviour Jesus Christ *hath* (by his own death) *abolished death*, and "brought life and immortality to light through "the Gospel," 2 Tim. i. 10. (See § 58.)

Thirdly, We have also by the sacrifice, or by the blood and death of Jesus, all the power requisite for a godly life and conversation. For, "*The blood of Christ*, who "through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot

" to God, purges our conſcience from dead works, *to* " *ſerve the living God*," Heb. ix. 14. " Jeſus Chriſt hath " loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood, " and *hath made us kings and prieſts unto God and his Fa-* " *ther*," Rev. i. 5, 6. " Chriſt hath reconciled us in the " body of his fleſh, *to preſent us holy, and unblameable, and* " *irreproveable in his ſight*," Col. i. 21, 22. " He gave " himſelf for us, *that he might redeem us from all iniquity,* " *and purify unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good* " *works*," Tit. ii. 14. See 1 Cor. v. 7, &c. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

Fourthly, By the blood and death of Jeſus, or by his ſacrifice, we have the certain hope of being for ever ſecured againſt all thoſe puniſhments which, in the day of wrath, will light upon thoſe men who do not know God, and are not obedient to the Goſpel; and Chriſt will be the author of ſalvation to us.

" God commendeth his love towards us, in that while " we were yet ſinners Chriſt died for us. Much more " then, being juſtified by his blood, *we ſhall be ſaved from* " *wrath through him*," Rom. v. 8. 9. " Chriſt, being " made perfect," (viz. by his ſufferings and death, Heb. ii. 10.) " *became the author of eternal ſalvation unto all them* " *that obey him*," Heb. v. 9. " *God hath not appointed us* " *to wrath, but to obtain ſalvation* by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, " who died for us, that whether we wake or ſleep, we ſhould " live together with him," 1 Theſſ. v. 9, 10. " We wait " for his Son from heaven, whom he raiſed from the dead, " even Jeſus, *who delivered us from the wrath to come*, 1 Theſſ. i. 10.

For this ſtupendous deliverance of ſo many millions of men from eternal perdition, by the ſacrifice of Jeſus made for them, we will gratefully adore in the duſt.

As to thoſe people who call God, as it were, to an account, for having puniſhed his own Son, the innocent one, with death, and for remitting it to men, who have deſerved it,

it, to dispute with them is vain. The day will come, when men are to give an account of every idle word that they have spoken. How will those men then stand, who despise this wise and incomprehensibly good decree of God concerning our salvation, and who presumptuously reject it?

O! how gloriously doth this wisdom, loving-kindness, truth, and righteousness of God, shine forth in the sacrifice of Christ. But of this more, § 144.

§ 81.

BUT how does it stand with the reconciliation of men? How are they to be induced to lay aside their enmity to God? How does the Saviour act in this respect as Mediator? Whilst he walked upon earth, he never ceased preaching the Gospel; and now he is taken up into heaven, and seated at the right hand of his Father, he sends his servants forth to preach the Gospel. In what does that now consist? Paul says, "God who was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, hath committed unto us "the word of reconciliation; therefore we now pray you, "in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God," 2 Cor. v. 19, 20.

O ye servants of Jesus! learn by the apostles wherein your office doth properly consist. Ye are, in Christ's stead, thus to beseech poor men: "Be ye reconciled to God." God would thus exhort men through you: "I love you: "come ye to Christ! Receive him in faith! In him I will "receive you as my children, and as heirs of everlasting "life! Why will ye die! Christ died for you! He has suf-"fered the punishment in your stead!"

§ 82.

THUS then has our Lord Jesus Christ, by the sacrifice of himself, which is of eternal avail (Heb. x. 12. 14. 18.),

made an atonement for us. "*Christ has redeemed us from* "*the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.*" That is, when he suffered himself to be hung upon the cross, and to be numbered with those of whom it is said, "Cursed is "every one who hangeth upon a tree," or who is crucified, Gal. iii. 13.

Thus (as was said), in that Jesus Christ offered himself up to God for us, and submitted to the death of the cross, such an all-sufficient propitiation has been made at the judgment seat of God, that nothing more could possibly be added.

Now, whoever out of Christ, and without his blood and death, seeks some other way of being delivered from the curse, which oppresses him on account of sin; whoever, as it were, would atone for his own sin, and inflict upon himself this or that punishment or penance, to appease the wrath of God, and to reconcile himself to him; whoever does this, and the other supposed good works, for example, fasting, giving much alms, leading a rigorous life, with much more of the same kind, with a view of thereby meriting and purchasing forgiveness of sins from God; such a one doth certainly not understand the grace of the New Covenant. Yea, if we consider the matter right, he thereby derogates from the merits, the death, the blood, and the sacrifice of Christ, as if it were not sufficient, and valid enough for the atonement of our sins, and for redemption, Gal. ii. 21. Whereas he that receives it by faith, and relies confidently upon it, honours God's holy counsel of grace for our salvation, and he will certainly not miss the way of salvation. But on the other hand, all those who seek a propitiation out of Christ, let them mean ever so well, certainly deceive themselves, and are miserably deceived. They choose for themselves a mean of salvation, by which they can find no rest for their souls, and which can administer to them no living hope of eternal life; yea, in this pursuit they perish infallibly, John, iii. 36. Now, inasmuch as the atonement has been made by the sacrifice of Jesus once for all, and by this

this means an eternal redemption is obtained; ſo with reſpect to mankind doth the work of reconciliation, being the work of the one only Mediator, the Man Jeſus Chriſt, continue, till the time that is deſcribed, 1 Cor. xv. 24, &c. when God ſhall have put all his enemies under his feet (the Mediator's), and when all that died in Adam ſhall be made alive in him. Then ſhall he deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, and put down all rule, and all authority and power. Till then he is conſtantly employed in the buſineſs of the reconciliation of mankind to God.

§ 83.

As Chriſt thus proves himſelf to be the only Mediator between God and Man, ſo alſo the whole work of our ſalvation is entirely wrought by him. Our Lord and Saviour ſays, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no "man cometh unto the Father but *by me*," John, xiv. 6 Farther it is ſaid, "God hath predeſtinated us unto the "adoption of children *by Jeſus Chriſt*," Epheſ. i. 5. John, i. 12. "God hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us *by his* "*Son*," Heb. i. 2. "*By Chriſt* we have acceſs by faith "into this grace wherein we ſtand," Rom. v. 2. And, "*In Chriſt* we have boldneſs and acceſs with confidence "(to God) by the faith in him, Epheſ. iii. 12. and ii. 18. Heb. vii. 25. "God hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſ- "ings *in Chriſt*," Epheſ. i. 3. "*In Chriſt* we have ob- "tained an inheritance, being predeſtinated," &c. Epheſ. i. 11. "Being now juſtified through his blood, we ſhall "be ſaved from wrath, *through him*," Rom. v. 9. And, "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain ſalva- "tion *by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*," 1 Theſſ. v. 9.

"We have peace with God *through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*," Rom. v. i. "*In Chriſt* alſo after that ye believed ye were "ſealed with that Holy Spirit of Promiſe," Epheſ. i. 13. Acts, ii. 33. Tit. iii. 6. John, xvi. 7.

"We alſo joy in God *through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, by "whom we have now received the atonement," Rom. v. 11.

"God doth richly comfort us *by Chriſt* in all our tribu- "lations," 2 Cor. i. 3—5.

"God maketh us perfect in every good work to do his "will, working in us that which is well-pleaſing in his "ſight *through Jeſus Chriſt*," Heb. xiii. 21.

"God giveth us the victory *through our Lord Jeſus* "*Chriſt*," 1 Cor. xv. 57. And Paul ſays, "I can do all "things *through Chriſt*, which ſtrengtheneth me," Phil. iv. 13.

"He, which raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe up us alſo *by Jeſus*," 2 Cor. iv. 14.

"God will in his day judge the ſecrets of men *by Jeſus* "*Chriſt*, Rom. ii. 16.

Now, as it indiſputably appears from all theſe paſſages of Scripture, that we come unto God through Chriſt, and that every thing God beſtows upon us by grace, and tranſacts with men, goes through the hand of the Mediator; ſo it is alſo apparent from thence, why our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in particular (in contradiſtinction to Moſes, who was the mediator of the old covenant, made by God with the people of Iſrael, Gal. iii. 19.), is called the Mediator of the New Teſtament, Heb. ix. 15.; which covenant is called "a "better teſtament," becauſe "it is eſtabliſhed upon better "promiſes," Heb. viii. 6. For all that appertaineth to it is accompliſhed *by him*.

From thence alſo it is as clear as the day, that whoever will preach the Goſpel, according to the mind of God, muſt direct all men to the Mediator Jeſus Chriſt. Whoever does not do this, errs himſelf, and leads others aſtray. Whoever will lead men to God, and paſſes by the Mediator, is no preacher of the Goſpel, nor does he direct men to the way of life.

"If we receive the witneſs of men, the witneſs of God "is greater; for this is the witneſs of God, which he hath "teſtified

"testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of "God, hath the witness in himself. He that believeth not "God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the "record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, "that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in "his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that "hath not the Son of God hath not life," 1 John, v. 9—12.

Of the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.

§ 84.

THE existence of a God is indeed manifest by the works of creation; but of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, we should have known nothing, if we had not had the Holy Scripture. This subject is not spoken of so plainly in the Old Testament as in the New. Yet he that knows it by means of the New Testament, finds likewise traces of it in the Old Testament. For instance, when David says in spirit, "The LORD said unto "my LORD, sit thou at my right hand, until I make "thine enemies thy footstool," Psal. cx. 1. So is there then the LORD, who sits upon the divine throne, and the LORD, who seateth himself upon the very same throne. Concerning the Jews, Isaiah says, "They rebelled and "vexed his Holy Spirit;" that is, the Spirit of God, Isa. lxiii. 10. Now he, who by the New Testament is acquainted with the doctrine of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, doth also find in the Old Testament, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

At the very baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ this mystery was made known to man. For then John saw the Spirit of

God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and behold a voice from Heaven, which said, "This is my be-"loved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

There was the Father, who spoke from Heaven; and the Son, who was baptized and who prayed; and the Holy Ghost, who hovered over him, Matt. iii. 16, 17. Luke, iii. 21, &c. Afterwards our Saviour said to his disciples, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another "Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever," John, xiv. 16. Here is the Father, who is prayed to; and the Son, who prays; and the Holy Ghost, who was promised to the disciples. When the Lord sent out his disciples, he said unto them, "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptising "them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of "the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii. 19.

The words of the Apostle Paul refer to this; "Now "there are diversities of gifts, but *the same Spirit*; and "there are differences of administrations, but *the same Lord*; "and there are diversities of operations, but it is *the same* "*God*, which worketh all in all," 1 Cor. xii. 4—6. Likewise, "The Grace *of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and the Love "*of God*, and the Communion *of the Holy Ghost*, be with "you all, Amen," 2 Cor. xiii, 14.

Peter writes, "Grace and peace be multiplied to the "Elect of *God the Father*, through sanctification of *the* "*Spirit*, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of "*Jesus Christ*," 1 Epist. chap. i. 1, 2.

And John, "There are Three that bear record in Hea-"ven, *the Father*, *the Word*, and *the Holy Ghost*, and these "Three are One," 1 Epist. chap. v. 7.

In all these passages the subjects spoken of are the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. That which the Scripture says on this head, we receive, as is fitting, in faith, and upon our knees. To enter with our speculations into the depths of the Deity, and into the incomprehensible Eternity, of which nothing has been revealed to us, is not only

only fruitless and foolish (for we are as little capable of compassing it, as a child is to empty the whole ocean with the palm of his hand, and to pour it into a hole which he has made in the sand), but it is also dangerous. Consequently if we were to leave such things as belong to the depths of the Godhead untouched, this would, in our judgment, be better than positively to define what the Holy Scripture hath not defined. From thence we see evidently, that God hath a one-only Son, and him he hath delivered up for us; and there is a one-only Spirit, which hath not been created, but proceedeth from the Father, and is through Christ sent unto us.

Of the FATHER *of our* LORD JESUS CHRIST.

§ 85.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ is the express image of his dear Father; (§ 49.) therefore "he that seeth him, "seeth the Father also; and he that knoweth him, know-"eth the Father also," John, xiv. 9. The Scripture says of the Father, that no man hath seen him at any time, John, i. 18. John, vi. 46. 1 John, iv. 12. 1 Tim. vi. 16.

But the Son of God appeared to Adam, Gen. iii. 8, 9. 13. 21; to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 1; to Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 2; to Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 24, &c.; to Moses, Exod. iii. 4, &c.; Acts, vii. 30, &c.; to the Elders of Israel, Exod. xxiv. 9, 10; to Isaiah, Isa. vi. 5. John, xii. 41; and to others. It was HE also, of whom it is said, Numb. xxi. 5, &c. "And the people spake against GOD, and "against Moses, wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt, to die in the Wilderness?" And the LORD sent fiery

fiery Serpents among the people. For this is so expressed by Paul: "Neither let us tempt *Christ, as some of them also* "*tempted him, and were destroyed of Serpents*, 1 Cor. x. 9. But in the fulness of time he clothed himself in our poor flesh and blood, and lived on earth upwards of thirty years. Then did he not only honour his Father by his preaching, and glorify him on the earth, John, xvii. 4; but also shewed in himself, what we possess in the Father. For all the representations which we can make to ourselves of the Father, give us no such impression of his invisible essence, as doth the mind, the life, and the conversation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Whosoever therefore enjoys the grace of knowing Christ truly, to such the Father doth not remain an unknown GOD. But as "The god of this world hath "blinded the minds of them, which believe not, lest the "light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image "of God, should shine unto them," 2 Cor. iv. 4. So saith the Saviour, "O righteous Father, the world hath "not known thee," John, xvii. 25. Chap. viii. 54, 55.

§ 86.

THE most exalted character we can give of the Father is, that he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. xi. 31. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3. "Blessed be God, even "*the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, the Father of Mer-"cies, and the God of all comfort," says Paul, 2 Cor. i. 3.

God has indeed made a glorious display of himself, in that he, by the Son, made the world, Heb. i. 2. He also approves himself as the Father of Mercy by his loving kindness towards all creatures. For, "He maketh his Sun "to rise on the evil, and on the good, and sendeth rain on "the just and on the unjust," Matt. v. 45. He also "feedeth the fowls of the air, which neither sow nor reap, "nor gather into barns," Matt. vi. 26. Nay, he takes such

ſuch care of each creature, that without him not a ſparrow falls on the ground, Matt. x. 29. But his love towards us is eſpecially manifeſted, in that "he ſent his only-begot-"ten Son into the world, that we might live through him," 1 John, iv. 9. John, iii. 16. His Son, his only, the beloved, who was dearer and more precious to him than heaven and earth, and every thing that is in heaven and earth,——Him hath he delivered up for us men, who had revolted from him, and were in bondage and ſlavery to ſin, that he might become a man, and enter into death for us.

"God ſpared not his *own* Son, but delivered him up for "us all," Rom. viii. 32.

Oh how great muſt his love for men be, when we conſider, how much he has beſtowed upon them!

§ 87.

PAUL ſays, "Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord "Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſ-"ings in heavenly places in Chriſt: *according as he hath* "*choſen us in him*, before the foundation of the world," &c. Eph. i. 3, 4.

It belongs to our deſign, to ſay ſomething on this very weighty ſubject, the Election. God made a covenant with Abraham and his poſterity, and had choſen the people of Iſrael from amongſt all the other nations of the earth, to be his quite peculiar people; an holy people, that is, a people entirely ſeparated from all others. This election did not ariſe from thence, that this people were better, or greater, than all other nations; but he adopted them and choſe them, becauſe he had a love for them for their father's ſake, See Gen. xvii. 2, &c. Exod. xix. 5, &c. Deut. vii. 6, &c. By this election they enjoyed uncommonly great privileges, beyond all other nations upon the earth; which Paul briefly recites, Rom. ix. 4, &c.; and they were the prieſtly kingdom of God, who himſelf governed them as their

their king. The condition of this covenant, which God made with them, was, that they ſhould hearken to his voice, and keep his commandments. This covenant extended to all the bodily poſterity of Abraham, which he had by his ſon Iſaac, and by his grandſon Jacob. See § 4. § 11, &c. In the New Teſtament God did not confine himſelf to the people of Iſrael, but the Lord our Saviour ſent his Apoſtles out into all the world, cauſing the Goſpel to be preached unto all nations; which Goſpel was briefly and roundly this: "He that believeth and is baptized, "ſhall be ſaved." Now they, who heard the word of the Goſpel, received it in Faith, and were baptized according to his Word, became by faith in Chriſt Jeſus, children of God, and heirs of Eternal Life; they received forgiveneſs of their ſins, were ſealed by the Holy Ghoſt, and had the grace and favour to ſerve God in holineſs and righteouſneſs all the days of their life. All theſe whether they were Iſraelites, or Heathens, by deſcent, are in the Scriptures of the New Teſtament from that time denominated, The Saints, and beloved, and Elect of God. As, for inſtance, Col. i. 2. Tit. i. 1. This Election had not principally for its object, the wiſe, according to the fleſh, nor the mighty and noble; but, as Paul ſays, "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; 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 which are; that no fleſh ſhould glory in "his preſence," 1 Cor. i. 26, &c.

§ 88.

THIS was a great ſtumbling block to the Jews in the days of the Apoſtles, that God made, in the New Teſtament, no difference between the Jews and Gentiles. They ſaid,

ſaid, Did not God chuſe the people of Iſrael for his inheritance? Did he not make a covenant with them, and ordain circumciſion as a ſeal of this covenant? Did he not ſay, Ye ſhall be my people, and I will be your God? Did he not entruſt them with his law, and his holy word? Can he then repent him of his Call and Election? Will he caſt away his people, to whom he hath given ſuch great promiſes? &c.

Now when the Apoſtles reply to theſe and ſuch like objections, they firſt premiſe, that the ſpecial covenant which God made with the people of Iſrael, and which is deſcribed in the Books of Moſes, is not to be looked upon as intended to continue without end, in the very ſame form and manner as it had been eſtabliſhed by means of Moſes. For God made known unto them beforehand, plainly by his prophets, that he would make an end of this covenant, as to the form and manner of it, and enter upon a new and a much more glorious covenant with them. Of this it is ſaid in the Epiſtle to the Hebrews, "Behold the days come, ſaith the "LORD, (Jerem. xxxi. 31, &c.) that I will make a "new covenant with the Houſe of Iſrael, and with the "Houſe of Judah: not according to the covenant that I "made with their fathers, in the day that I took them, by "the hand, to lead them out of the land of Egypt; be-"cauſe they continued not in my covenant, and I re-"garded them not, ſaith the Lord. For this is the cove-"nant that I will make with the Houſe of Iſrael, after "thoſe days, ſaith the LORD, I will put my laws in their "minds, and write them in their hearts; and I will be "to them a God, and they ſhall be to me a people. And "they ſhall not teach every man his neighbour, and every "man his brother, ſaying, know the LORD, for all ſhall "know me from the leaſt to the greateſt, ſaith the LORD: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteouſneſs, and their "ſins and their iniquities will I remember no more," Heb. viii. 8, &c.

Hence

Hence it is quite evident, that with the commencement of the new, the old covenant ends. See § 18.

Secondly, The Apostles, in answering these objections of the Jews, premise, that the faith in Jesus Christ is indispensably necessary in every man that would have an interest in this new covenant. For wherever faith in Christ is, there is also the forgiveness of sins, then we become children of God; then God becomes our God; we become new creatures; we know God; the love of God takes place in the heart; then we also love our neighbour; and this is to have the law written in our mind and in our heart. But when a man hears the Gospel concerning Christ, and doth not receive him as his Saviour and Redeemer, the wrath of God abides upon him; he hath not the forgiveness of sins; he is no child of God; he neither knoweth nor loveth God; he is also defective in his love towards his neighbour; and, according to the word of Jesus, Mark, xvi. 16. he is damned.

Upon this the Apostles ground the position, that a man doth not, because of his descent from Abraham according to the flesh, of course belong to the New Covenant; but he then enters first into it, when he believes on Christ. Nay, Paul goes so far as to assert, that those are not the genuine children of Abraham, who are descended from him according to the flesh; but all those who believe in Christ, are the genuine children of Abraham, and Abraham is their father, whether they are descended from the people of Israel, or from the Gentiles, according to the flesh. See Rom. ix. 6, &c. Gal. iii. 6, 7. This our Lord Jesus Christ declared to the Jews some time before, John, viii. 39, &c.

Thirdly, the Apostles previously lay this down, that God has not at all excluded the Houses of Israel and of Juda from the New Covenant, because he would shew mercy also to the Gentiles, and by faith in Jesus Christ adopt them for his children. God may surely have mercy upon whom he will have mercy; and no poor creature has any right to remonstrate

remonſtrate with him. He had, long before, made known to the people of Iſrael and of Juda, that he would call the Gentiles by the Goſpel; and number them with his own people. See Rom. ix. 24, &c. And now he makes no difference between Jews and Greeks (Heathens). He is Lord over all, and rich unto all, that call upon him. For whoſoever calleth upon the name of the Lord——that is, Jeſus Chriſt, (See 1 Cor. viii. 6.)——ſhall be ſaved, Rom. x. 12, 13.

§ 89.

THESE points being premiſed, Paul puts the queſtion, "Hath God then caſt away his people?" He replies, "God forbid!" Rom. xi. 1. But to underſtand this aright, we are to obſerve:

(1.) The Goſpel was every where firſt preached to the Jews. In Judea it was firſt preached by John, the forerunner of Chriſt, and then by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf; and at laſt by the Apoſtles, who had the firſt-fruits of the Spirit. Whenever the Apoſtles came to other places, out of Judea, they firſt of all viſited the ſynagogues of the Jews, and preached firſt the Goſpel to them; as we ſee in the Acts of the Apoſtles.

(2.) The preaching of the Goſpel was not without fruit among the Jews. For, before our Lord Jeſus Chriſt aſcended up to Heaven, after his Reſurrection, he appeared at once to five hundred brethren——that is, to people who believed on him. See § 231. Upon the pouring out of the Holy Ghoſt, by means of Peter's firſt ſermon, about three thouſand ſouls were converted. Above twenty years afterwards, the elders at Jeruſalem ſaid to Paul, "Thou "ſeeſt, brother, how many thouſands of Jews there are, "which believe," Acts, xxi. 20. All theſe Jews, who were become believers in Jeſus Chriſt, are called the Election, or the choſen of God from among the Jewiſh people: and there is no doubt, but that many out of the ten tribes of

Israel, who had been carried away captive into Assyria, and dispersed into all countries, were of that number. For James writes to the "*twelve tribes*, which were scattered "abroad," James, i. 1. Peter calls them the "*strangers*, "scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, "and Bithynia, *elect, according to the fore-knowledge of God* "*the Father*," 1 Pet. i. 1, 2. Therefore also Paul expresses himself thus, Rom. xi. 2. "God hath not cast away "his people, *which he foreknew*; or those who belong to "the Elect." And this was the proper answer to the objections of the Jews mentioned above.

(3.) Yet numberless were the Jews and Israelites, who were not obedient to the Gospel of Christ. Therefore did our Saviour weep over Jerusalem, Luke, xix. 41. and said afterwards in the audience of all the people, "O Jeru-"salem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and "stonest them, which are sent unto thee, how often would "I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen ga-"thereth her chickens under her wings, *and ye would not*," Matt. xxiii. 37. For which very reason Stephen said to them, Acts, vii. 51. "Ye *stiff-necked*, and uncircum-"cised in heart and ears, *ye do always resist the Holy Ghost*; "as your fathers did, so do ye." Moreover, Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, saying to the Jews at Antioch publickly, "It was necessary, that the word of God should "first have been spoken to you: *But seeing ye put it from* "*you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting Life*; lo, "we turn to the Gentiles," Acts, xiii. 46.

(4.) Now because the Jews, although Christ would have gathered them under his wings, *would not*, because they *were stiff-necked, and resisted the Holy Ghost*; because they *put the Gospel from them, and judged themselves unworthy of everlasting Life*; they therefore destroyed themselves, according to Hosea, xiii. 19. The King, by his servants, had bidden them to the marriage of his Son; but *they would not come*, Matt. xxii. 3. They belong to those people, whom

whom Paul ſays, " If our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them, " *that are loſt*," 2 Cor. iv. 3. Upon this followed thoſe judgments, concerning which Paul ſpeaketh, " The reſt (who do not belong to the Election, or to the choſen of God) " *are blinded*; according as it is written: God hath " given them the ſpirit of ſlumber," (or an unfeeling ſpirit) " Eyes, that they ſhould not ſee, and ears, that they " ſhould not hear unto this day," Rom. xi. 7, &c.

(5.) Paul, who in the ixth, xth, and xith chapters of the Epiſtle to the Romans, treats at large upon this ſubject of the reprobation of the Jews, who put the Goſpel from them, and would not receive it; and of the election of the Gentiles, who embracing it with joy, became believers in Jeſus;—mentions likewiſe the reaſons, which he by this occaſion had taken notice of. He ſays, " The " Gentiles, which followed not after righteouſneſs, attained " to righteouſneſs; even the righteouſneſs which is of " faith. But Iſrael, which followed after the law of right- " eouſneſs, hath not attained to the law of righteouſneſs. " Wherefore? Becauſe they ſought it not by faith, but, " as it were, by the works of the law. For they ſtumbled " at that ſtumbling-ſtone," Rom. ix. 30, &c.

The meaning of the Apoſtle is to this effect: The people of Iſrael would help themſelves. They thought, we will keep the law, which God gave us by Moſes; by doing which, we ſhall obtain forgiveneſs of ſins, life, and ſalvation. But whereas they are diſobedient to the Goſpel, not conſidering, that it is the commandment of God, that we ſhould believe on Jeſus Chriſt; therefore they remain ſtill under the wrath of God, and have no forgiveneſs of ſins; they miſs of the way to ſalvation. But the Gentiles, who could find nothing good in themſelves to produce, came to Chriſt, as men thoroughly ſinful and forlorn, received him as their Lord and Redeemer, and thus their ſins were forgiven; as is the caſe of all, who come in faith to Jeſus; they are adopted as children of God, ſealed with the Holy

Ghost; and, without any merit or worthiness of their own, partake of all that grace and blessing which is contained in the New Covenant.

§ 90.

HITHERTO have we been speaking of those persons, who in the Scripture are called Elect, or the Chosen. If we are to utter our thoughts about election, considered in itself, and so far as is thereby meant, that GOD has formed a gracious resolution in regard to one or more persons, by which some special prerogatives are vouchsafed to him or them in preference to others; it is very easy to err: if we do not keep punctually to the Scripture. Therefore we will only make the following observations:

(1.) It is very manifest, that God causes the Gospel to be preached to one people, to one place, to one family, to a single person, and doth not cause it to be preached to other people, at another place, to another family, to another single person. The reason of this is known only to himself; all we know is, that he doth not proceed according to the merits of works; for "Who hath first given to him, "and it shall be recompensed to him again?" Rom. xi. 35. That many make a bad use of this distinguishing grace, appears particularly by the parable of Jesus concerning the sower, Matt. xiii. 3, &c. For how much of this seed fell upon the way side, and was trodden under foot? How much of it fell upon stony places, where it had not much earth, forthwith sprang up, and soon withered away again? How much was choaked by the thorns amongst which it fell? Do we not moreover see before our eyes, that many thousands hear the Gospel, and do not become obedient to it? But how will such be able to stand once in the judgment? For to whom much is given, of him will much be required.

(2.) This is also to be called an election of grace, when God selects certain persons for some particular purpose. Thus,

Thus, for instance, was David, among all his brethren, chosen by the Lord to be king of Israel, 1 Sam. xvi. 1, &c. Thus it is said of Jeremiah: "Before I formed thee in the "belly, I knew thee; and before thou cameſt forth out of "the womb, I ſanctified thee, and," (in my eternal decree) "ordained thee a prophet unto the nations," Jer. i. 5. See Rom. i. 1.

Unto his diſciples ſays our Lord and Saviour, "Ye have "not choſen me, but *I have choſen you*, and ordained you, "that you ſhould go and bring forth fruit, and that your "fruit ſhould remain," John, xv. 16.

It muſt however be obſerved here, that a perſon may attain to ſuch prerogatives, and yet notwithſtanding be loſt. This is clear in the caſe of Judas; for of him the Lord ſpeaketh, John, vi. 70. "Have not I *choſen you twelve*, and "one of you is a devil?" See verſe 71.

To this purpoſe are alſo the words of our Saviour, Matt. vii. 22, &c. "Many will ſay to me in that day, Lord, "Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name? and in thy "name caſt out devils? and in thy name done many won-"derful works? And then will I profeſs unto them, I "never knew you,"—(as mine); "depart from me, ye "that work iniquity."

This is a ſubject worthy of the moſt ſerious conſideration of all thoſe whom the Lord hath honoured by calling them to ſerve in the Goſpel, "leſt they having preached to others, "ſhould be themſelves caſtaways."

§ 91.

CONCERNING the election of grace unto ſalvation, we read, Eph. i. 3, 4. "The God and *Father* of our Lord Je-"ſus Chriſt *hath choſen us in him before the foundation of the* "*world*." And verſe 11. "In Chriſt we have obtained "an inheritance, *being predeſtinated according to the purpoſe of*

" *him*, who worketh all things according to the counsel of " his own will."

We will still add the words, " We know that all things " work together for good to them that love God, to them " who are called, *according to his purpose*," Rom. viii. 28. And, " He hath saved us, and called us with an holy call- " ing, *not according to our works, but according to his own* " *purpose and grace*, which was given us in Christ Jesus be- " fore the world began," 2 Tim. i. 9. " The manifold " wisdom of God is made known to the principalities and " powers in heavenly places by the church; *according to* " *the eternal purpose*, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our " Lord," Eph. iii. 10, 11. " Whom he did *fore-know*, " he also did *predestinate*, to be conformed to the image " of his Son," Rom. viii. 29. " God hath from the be- " ginning *chosen* you *to salvation*, through sanctification of " the Spirit, and belief of the truth," 2 Thess. ii. 13.

§ 92.

FROM these, and other texts of Scripture mentioned before, the following positions are deduced; namely,

(1.) That God, who before the beginning of the world, saw that mankind, created after his own image, would fall, had from eternity formed the purpose of helping them by his own beloved Son. This purpose of his is also called, the *counsel of God concerning our salvation*; and, by our Lord and Saviour is, after his appearance in the flesh, thus expressed: " God so loved the world, that he gave his only " begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should " not perish, but have everlasting life," John, iii. 16. See Acts, ii. 23. Luke, xxii. 22. Acts, iv. 28. 1 Pet. i. 20.

(2.) That God, to whom all things are known before they come to pass, did, before the beginning of the world, see

ſee beforehand all thoſe who would receive his grace in Chriſt; and did, according to his juſt-mentioned purpoſe, in and through Chriſt, chooſe, appoint, and ordain them to be his children, and the heirs of everlaſting life.

(3.) He alſo determined to work all that was neceſſary, in them all, and in each, for the attainment of this purpoſe: that is, he determined to call them by the Goſpel; to enlighten them by his grace, to reveal his Son in them, to ſanctiſy them in the faith, and to keep and preſerve them unto their end; and all this through Chriſt.

(4.) This his purpoſe, this his fore-knowledge, and this his election of grace, we indeed repreſent unto ourſelves in ſuch a manner, as if the one followed of courſe upon the other; neither doth the Holy Scripture ſpeak otherwiſe of it, for it hath pleaſed God, in grace, to treat with us in an human way. When we make uſe of our underſtanding, one thought follows another, and one thought grounds itſelf upon another: conſequently it requires time, if we are to think upon a ſubject, and to take it under our conſideration. But God has the whole together at once. The ſource of a matter, the ſtate of it, together with every thing connected with and conſequent upon it, are all, in the very firſt moment of his turning his eye to it, clear to him at once. Therefore, it is in no wiſe good to diſpute with others about what the firſt, ſecond, and third thought of God might have been, when the ſalvation and redemption of fallen man became the object of his attention.

§ 93.

GOD, at the period which he in his wiſdom had foreordained, according to his purpoſe before the beginning of the world, ſent his Son into the world, and by him accompliſhed every thing that was requiſite for the reconciliation of the world unto himſelf. He hath moreover teſtified in the Goſpel, his own counſel and will concerning our ſalva-

tion; that we, for instance, should obtain forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation, alone through Jesus Christ, and by faith in him. And now he commandeth all men to whom the Gospel cometh, every where, to repent, and to believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, according to Acts, xvii. 30. and 1 John, iii. 23. Neither doth he cease to reprove or convince every person who hears or reads the Gospel, by his Holy Spirit, and give such a portion of his grace to him as is necessary for his conversion. But here the difference among men is discovered, that some receive the love of the truth, and are saved, whereas others do not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved; according to 2 Thess. ii. 10.

As to those who do not receive the love of the truth, that they may be saved, they do, by rejecting it, bring upon themselves the judgment of God. For, "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abun-" dantly; but *whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken* " *away, even that he hath,*" Math. xiii. 12.

The meaning of these words is clear, from Matt. xxv. 14, &c. *Every one that hath,* is one who makes a due use and improvement of the grace and gift bestowed upon him by God, he receives more. But *he that hath not,* is one who doth not value, nor improve the grace and gift he receives of the Lord, and for that very reason forfeits it. These are they, "who love darkness rather than light;" nay, who hate the light, according to John, iii. 19, 20.

This being premised, namely, that such persons draw down the judgments of God upon themselves, then the following words are not incomprehensible: "*God hath blinded* " *their eyes, and hardened their heart,* that they should not " see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and " be converted, and I should heal them," John, xii. 40.

In like manner, what our Saviour says, "I thank thee, " O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because *thou hast* " *hid these things from the wise and prudent,* and hast re-" vealed them unto babes," Matt. xi. 25.

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The words of Paul are plain: "*Because* they received not "the love of the truth, that they might be saved; and *for* "*this cause* God shall send them strong delusion, that they "should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who "believed not the truth," 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11. See Rom. i. 21, &c.

These perish according to the purpose of God, which our Saviour hath thus expressed: "All that believe on the Son "of God, shall not perish, but have everlasting life; but "*he that believeth not shall be damned.*" But it is their own fault; they will not; neither, at that day, will they be able to say, We would gladly have been converted, but God refused us.

But although these are the cause of their own destruction, yet we cannot say, on the other hand, of those who are saved, that the good which they have experienced sprung from, or that they can ascribe it to themselves. But it is the grace of God in Christ Jesus to which alone they are indebted for their salvation. By grace are they saved. It is by the grace of God that they believe in Jesus Christ, and through faith obtain forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. It is by grace that the Father hath drawn them to the Son; and that our Lord Jesus Christ has drawn them to him; and that the Holy Ghost hath enkindled and maintained in them the love of God, and of their neighbour. That they come to a right knowledge of themselves, and of Jesus Christ, and of the Father in heaven, and of the Holy Ghost, also of the works of God, and of his will, all this hath been given unto them; merely by grace are they become children of God, members of the body of Christ, and temples of the Holy Ghost. Moreover, when they put off the old man, and put on the new man, and are filled with the fruits of the Spirit, (Gal. v. 22.) What is all this but grace? Their abiding stedfast in the truth, and their perseverance unto the end, is not of themselves, but of Christ, in whom every thing is richly bestowed upon them.

§ 94.

§ 94.

Now all this is a comfortable and heart-reviving doctrine; especially if hereunto we further take the words of Christ, John, x. 27, &c. "My sheep hear my voice, and "I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto "them eternal life, and *they shall never perish, neither shall* "*any pluck them out of my hand.* The Father, who gave "them me, is greater than all; *and no man is able to pluck* "*them out of my Father's hand.* I and my Father are one."

Likewise the confession of Paul: "*I am persuaded, that* "*neither death nor life*, nor angels, nor principalities, nor "powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor "height, nor depth, nor any other creature, *shall be able to* "*separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus* "*our Lord*," Rom. viii. 38, 39. "The gifts and *calling* "*of God are without repentance*," Rom. xi. 29.

Comfortable as this is for the souls who believe on Christ, and submit to the government of his Spirit, yet the abuse of this holy doctrine has been wisely guarded against in the holy Scripture. For if a man would think, I am once for all a sheep of Christ, therefore it cannot fail, but I shall certainly be saved; and at the same time he should be light and trifling, allowing himself in such things as are not agreeable to the mind of Christ; such a one would deceive himself. For whoever belongs to the sheep which the Father hath given to his Son, that is, such as are chosen in Christ, *they also hear the good shepherd's voice, and follow him*, John, x. 27. Wherefore Paul writes, 2 Tim. ii. 19. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having "this seal, *The Lord knoweth them that are his*;" and *let every one that nameth the name of Christ* (or whoever has his Christian name from Christ), *depart from iniquity*.

Whoever therefore will apply these words, which stand on one side of the seal of God, to himself, and whoever believes, My name is written in heaven; let him also consi-

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der what ſtands upon the reverſe of the ſeal of God, and "*Let every one that nameth the name of Chriſt depart from* "*iniquity.*" Wherefore alſo it is ſaid in the Scripture, "*He that endureth to the end* ſhall be ſaved," Matt. x. 22. "*Be thou faithful unto death*, and I will give thee a crown "of life," Rev. ii. 10. See Heb. iii. 14. Rev. ii. 25, 26. iii. 11.

§ 95.

FURTHERMORE, the Scripture teſtifies, that "for the "elect's ſake, whom he hath choſen, the days of affliction "ſhall be ſhortened," Mark, xiii. 20. That "they cry "day and night to God;" and that "they are delivered "by him," Luke, xviii. 7. Moreover, that "they, when "the Son of Man ſhall be ſeen coming in the clouds of "heaven with great power and glory, ſhall by the holy "angels be gathered together from the four winds," (or quarters of the world) "and from one end of heaven unto "the other," Matt. xxiv. 30, 31. Paul ſays, "Who "ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is "God that juſtifieth; who is he that condemneth (them)?" "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," Rom. viii. 33, 34.

Peter teſtifies to the believers in general, "*Ye are a* "*choſen generation*, a royal prieſthood, a holy nation, a pe-"culiar people; that ye ſhould ſhew forth the praiſes of "him who called you out of darkneſs into his marvel-"lous light," 1 Epiſt. ii. 9.

What ſhall we now ſay further on this head? We will conclude the ſubject with the words of Paul, Rom. xi. 33, &c. "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!—To him be "glory for ever. Amen."

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We will moreover take notice of that which Peter ſays, 2 Epiſt. i. 10. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give dili-"gence, to make your calling and election ſure;" that, according to 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. ye may be ſure of your point.

§ 96.

OUR Saviour ſays to his diſciples, "In this rejoice not, "that the ſpirits are ſubject unto you; but rather rejoice, "because your names are written in heaven," Luke, x. 20. And Paul ſays the ſame concerning other brethren, Philip. iv. 3. That theſe names were written in the book of life of the Lamb, ſlain from the beginning of the world, ſtands plainly in Rev. xiii. 8. compared with chap. xvii. 8. where this is aſſerted in expreſs words. Alſo chap. xx. 12. the book of life is opened, and the dead then ſtanding before God are judged, according to what is written in that book, and according to their works. From hence we infer, that God from the beginning of the world knoweth and hath written down the names of all the Lamb's property. O how dear to the Father muſt the ſouls be, who belong to his beloved Son, and are members of his body; ſeeing that he hath already, even from eternity, thought of, and taken cognizance of them!

Yea, he adopts them as his children, and heirs of everlaſting life, even here in this world, for the ſake of his beloved Son, and he is their dear Father, John, i. 12. Gal. iii. 26. 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. Rom. viii. 16, 17. Who can help being aſtoniſhed at the thought, when he reflects who we are, and who he is that adopts us for his children, and heirs of everlaſting life? We are poor neceſſitous creatures, and moreover, throughout ſpoiled in body and ſoul by ſin. He is the Moſt High Majeſty, the Lord of heaven and earth: "Thouſand thouſands miniſter unto him, and ten "thouſand times ten thouſand ſtand before him;" and theſe are all holy and bleſſed angels. Were a great king to adopt

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ſome poor beggar, without any merit or worthineſs of his own, for his ſon and heir, this would be looked upon as unprecedented. But what is the greateſt king in compariſon with God? If all the nations of the earth are as nothing, as a drop of a bucket before him, then the greateſt monarch muſt, in compariſon with God, be leſs than the ſmalleſt particle of duſt. Therefore ſays John, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we "ſhould be called *the ſons of God!*" 1 Epiſt. iii. 1.

But the Lord our Saviour teſtifies to his diſciples before his aſcenſion, "I aſcend unto my Father and *your Father*, "and unto my God and your God," John, xx. 17.

§ 97.

A PERSON who doth not cloſely attend to the Scripture, may on this occaſion eaſily think, I will then believe, that God will adopt me for his child, when I am firſt of all ſanctified throughout; when, firſt of all, every kind of evil that dwelleth in ſoul and body ſhall be mortified in me, and the image of Chriſt be quite reſtored to me. But the Scripture ſaith, "*As many as received him,*" (the Saviour) "*to* "*them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them* "*that believe on his name,*" John, i. 12. And, "*Ye are all* "*the children of God by faith in Chriſt Jeſus,*" Gal. iii. 26.

Thus, if the moſt depraved heathen, who has lived in all the ſins that, according to Rom. i. 18, &c. reigned amongſt the Gentiles; if the moſt obdurate Jew, who in his blindneſs has blaſphemed Chriſt, and paſſed his days in ſins and abominations; if the moſt haughty Turk, who plumes himſelf with the imagined rectitude of his faith, and yet, at the very ſame time, remains a poor ſlave of ſin and of the devil, and withal the moſt cruel tyrant towards his fellow-creatures; if a man who has been baptiſed into the name of Jeſus, but who has afterwards, proving unfaithful towards his Saviour, devoted himſelf to the ſervice of ſin and

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of the devil, and sunk into the most horrible abominations; —if (I say) such a heathen, Jew, or Turk, or so called Christian, is conscious of his deep corruption and sin, is grieved and distressed for it, looks upon himself as a lost and condemned man, trembles at the judgment of God, and cries out, under all this, from the very bottom of his heart, Who shall deliver me from the punishment I have many thousand times deserved? Who shall set me free from the cruel bondage and tyranny of sin and the devil? there is ground to hope that he will be soon relieved. For if Jesus Christ be preached to a person in this condition, as the salvation of the world, who submitted to a most torturing death, and now lives again, and reigns to eternity, and who for this very reason came into the world, to save sinners, and to destroy the works of the devil, viz. sin and death, through whom all such as believe on him obtain forgiveness of sins; and he, hearing this Gospel, through the grace of God, given him for that purpose, lays, by faith, hold of it, falls down at his Saviour's feet, cleaves with all his heart to him, and implores his grace, and mercy, and deliverance from his sins;—such a one certainly finds grace, his sins are forgiven him, and through faith in Christ Jesus he becomes a child of God. Thus the murderer, who was crucified at the same time with Christ, but who turned in faith to him, was made a child of God and an heir of salvation that very day. Paul, who was one of the most cruel and bloodthirsty persecutors of Christ and of his disciples, became, after three days and three nights which he spent in prayer, and weeping over his sins, a child of God, and a witness for Christ. See § 21.

Under this head we are further to observe, that a man may be certain that he is a child of God, and an heir of everlasting life; and who would not wish to be sure of a matter of such great consequence? But where do we find this written? Answer, "*The Spirit itself*," (that is, the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, for of him doth the context

ſpeak) "*beareth witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God:* and, if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt," Rom. viii. 16, 17.

§ 98.

SEEING then that the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt adopts as his children even the moſt wretched and depraved ſinners, when they come as ſuch to his beloved Son Jeſus Chriſt, receive him in faith as their Lord and Saviour, willing to be delivered by him from the curſe and power of ſin, and that he becomes their dear Father;—it can therefore not poſſibly be otherwiſe, but that he ſhould love them preferably to other men, and faithfully care for them. See John, xvi. 27. xii. 26. xiv. 21. Luke xxi. 18. Rom. viii. 38, 39. Yea, this love of the heavenly Father towards his children is ſo tender, that he numbers the very hairs of their head, Matt. x. 30. Luke, xii. 7.

If any one thinks, doth the Father, who is ſo rich, love his children ſo much, certainly he will then give them an abundance of every thing in this world, he is greatly miſtaken. The love of God acts with wiſdom; and the kingdom of Chriſt is not of this world; therefore hath God ſomething better for his children than the goods, the honours, and the enjoyments of this world. See § 38. He bleſſes them with ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places, Eph. i. 3. and gives them, for example, an inward cheerfulneſs of heart, which is, without all doubt, more to be prized than all the goods, honours, and joys of this world. Thus then it happens, that the children of God ſuffer hunger and thirſt; that they are in want of raiment; that they have no dwelling-place; that they are ſick, and in priſon. All this ſays our Saviour of his brethren, Matt. xxv. 35, &c. But under theſe circumſtances, "the Father of mercies, and the "God of all comfort," (2 Cor. i. 3.) "comforts them." "He comforteth them in all their tribulation, that they "may

"may be able to comfort them that are in any trouble, by "the comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted of "God," verse 4. "For as the sufferings of Christ "abound in them, so their consolation also aboundeth by "Christ," ver. 5; they are directed to be "contented "with food and raiment," 1 Tim. vi. 8. They have, in such a case, the word of our Saviour: "Take no thought, "saying: What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? "or wherewithal shall we be cloathed? (for after all these "things do the Gentiles seek) for your Heavenly Father "knoweth that ye have need of all these things," Matt. vi. 31, 32. They also know, that God "having not spared "his own Son, but delivered him for us all, will assuredly "*with him also freely give us all things*?" Rom. viii. 32.

They therefore, as is fitting, accept of Paul's exhortation, Eph. vi. 18. "Pray always with all prayer and "supplication in the Spirit." And their Heavenly Father hears, and helps them assuredly, Mark, ii. 24.

Of JESUS CHRIST *the* SON *of* GOD.

§ 99.

THE Son of God is also called in the Scripture the WORD, John, i. 1, &c.; the WORD of GOD, Rev. xix. 13.; and the WORD of LIFE, 1 John, i. 1.

God has himself given our Lord Jesus Christ the testimony, of his being his "beloved Son, in whom he is well "pleased," Matt. iii. 17. xvii. 5.; and he is the Only, the Only-begotten, his Own, the Beloved, Mark, xii. 6. John, iii. 16. Rom. viii. 32. Eph. i. 6. See § 66. Indeed our Saviour himself, in the days when he walked upon earth, commonly calls himself the Son of Man; for instance, Luke,

Luke, v. 24. Nevertheless, he also plainly, and with particular emphasis, declared himself, in the audience of all the people, to be the Son of GOD, John, v. 17, &c. For when the Jews, because of his having made a poor man (who had been lying under a malady for eight and thirty years) whole on the Sabbath day, sought to kill him, he gave them this answer, "My Father worketh hitherto, and "I work." By which he would say thus much, As God is ever working for the benefit of his creatures, even on the Sabbath, and does what is right by so doing, so do I nothing wrong by making such a wretched man whole on the Sabbath day. The Jews understood the meaning of what he said, viz. that our Lord Jesus Christ made himself thereby equal with God. Neither doth Christ refute their thought; so far from it, that he goes farther, and declares, that he, as the Son of God, has power both to raise the dead, and to hold the last judgment; for his Father "hath "committed all judgment unto the Son, *that all men might* "*honour the Son as they honour the Father.*"

John, the forerunner of Christ, had already testified of him, and said: "The Father loveth the Son, and hath "given all things into his hand," John, iii. 35.

John says of himself, that he "being of the earth, speak-"eth of the earth;" but of Christ he says, that "coming "from heaven he is above all; so that he who believeth on "the Son hath everlasting life," chap. iii. 31. 36. The disciples of Jesus, particularly after the pouring out of the Holy Ghost, continued to bear, in a most excellent manner, this testimony of Christ the Son of God; their writings are full of it, even as the Scriptures of the Old Testament also testify of him, John, v. 39.

§ 100.

But our Lord Jesus Christ hath clearly explained himself: "No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Fa-

"ther," Luke, x. 22. "As the Father knoweth me, "even so know I the Father," John, x. 15. "No man "knoweth the Son but the Father," Matt. xi. 27. And, as the apostles testify of the Holy Ghost, that "the Spi-"rit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God; for "the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of "God," 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. Thus also saith the Lord our Saviour, "The Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from "the Father, he shall testify of me," John, xv. 26. And, "The Spirit of Truth, he shall glorify me," John, xvi. 13, 14.

To this subject belong also the words of Jesus: "He "that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I "will love him, and will manifest myself unto him," John, xiv. 21.

From hence it is clear, that it is a work of the grace of God, when we obtain the knowledge of the Son of God. And thus had the Father who is in heaven revealed his Son to Peter and Paul, Matt. xvi. 16, 17. Gal. i. 15, 16. Thus had the Holy Ghost so effectually revealed Jesus Christ to his disciples, that they could testify of him with great joy and confidence, although they were unlearned and laymen (Acts, iv. 13.), as is evident from the Acts of the Apostles, and from the rest of their writings. Thus also did Jesus Christ reveal himself to Thomas, John, xv. 27, &c. and unto Paul, who counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ his Lord, Phil. iii. 8.

Seeing then that the Holy Scripture testifieth, that in the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. ii. 2, 3, and, by the grace of God, we have the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, which testify of Christ the Son of God, in our hands, we should press boldly, with Paul, toward this mark, Phil. iii. 13, &c.

§ 101.

§ 101.

Now it has been already obſerved, that the Son of God was particularly active in the work of creation; that "by him were "created all things that are in heaven and that are in earth, "viſible and inviſible," &c. according to Col. i. 16. See § 28. It hath been moreover ſhewn from Scripture, that by him all things ſubſiſt and conſiſt; and that he, by his powerful word, upholdeth all things, § 32.; that "Chriſt "cometh of the fathers according to the fleſh, who is over "all God bleſſed for ever," according to Rom. ix. 5.; or, that "God," (that is, the Son of God) "was manifeſted "in the fleſh," according to 1 Tim. iii. 16. has likewiſe been treated of, § 63. &c.; how that the Son of God, as the Creator of men, did begin and carry on the work of their redemption, and by his death finiſh every thing that was neceſſary for their deliverance from ſin, death, the devil, and hell; and how that he, on the other hand, purchaſed for them, that through faith in him they might become children of God, temples of the Holy Ghoſt, and heirs of everlaſting ſalvation; all this hath likewiſe been fully ſet forth out of the Holy Scripture, § 67, &c. At the ſame time it hath likewiſe been ſhewn, how Jeſus Chriſt humbled himſelf, and ſtooped ſo low, as to become obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs; and how after his reſurrection he aſcended up into heaven, and ſat at the right hand of the Majeſty of God, § 70, &c.

Now the queſtion ariſes here, How was it with reſpect to the Son of God, before the creation of this world? We ground all we know of the Son of God upon the Scripture; for whatſoever is not revealed to us there concerning him, that we do not know. Paul was in Spirit taken up into Paradiſe, where he ſaw and heard things which he durſt not utter, 2 Cor. xii. 4. and yet he ſays, "I know in part, "but then," (when I ſee him) "face to face, I ſhall

" know, even as I also am known;" that is, perfectly, for so are we known unto God, 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

What then doth the Scripture say of the Son of God? " Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among " the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come " forth unto me, that is to be the Ruler in Israel," (Jesus Christ, Matt. ii. 5, &c.) " *whose goings forth have* " *been from of old, from everlasting*," Mich. v. 2. See Isa. xliii. 13. " Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given," (Jesus) " and the government shall be upon his shoulder; " and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The " mighty God, *the everlasting Father*, the Prince of Peace," Isa. ix. 6. Of the Son it is said, *Thy throne, O GOD! is* " *for ever and ever*," Heb. i. 8. Christ says to John, " Fear " not, *I am the First and the Last*," Rev. i. 17. and, " I am " *the Beginning and the Ending*, which is, and which was, " and which is to come, *the Almighty*," Rev. i. 8. xxii 13.

" Therefore John says, " *In the beginning*," (that is, before any thing had been created) " *was the WORD*, and the " WORD was with God, and *the WORD was GOD*," John, i. 1. And Paul, " All things were created by him " and for him; and *HE is before all things*," Col. i. 16, 17. HE was, as HE is, " *the Brightness of the Glory of GOD*, " and the express *image of his Person*," Heb. i. 3. " *In* " *Him was Life*," John, i. 4.; and, " *He was the true* " *Light*," John, i. 9. " HE was in the form of GOD, " *equal with GOD*," Phil. ii. 6. and was, *in brightness, or glory*, " *with the Father before the world was*," John, xvii. 5. " HE was *the only-begotten Son, who is in the bo-* " *som of the Father*," John, i. 18. " *HE was the First-* " *born*," (*the First Producer*) " *of every creature*; for by " Him were all things created, that are in heaven and that " are in earth," Col. i. 15, 16.

From these Scripture passages it is very evident, that the Son of God, as the Mighty God and Everlasting Father, has been from eternity in the most close union with his Father,

ther, and in the very ſame glory as his Father; and this too in ſuch a manner as to authorize our ſaying, that the Son was as the Father, and the Father as the Son; and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt could, in the deepeſt humiliation ſay, "He that ſeeth me, ſeeth Him that ſent me," John, xii. 45. xiv. 9, 10.; and, "If ye had known me, ye ſhould have "known my Father alſo," John, xiv. 7. "Believe me "that I am in the Father, and the Father in me," John, xiv. 11.

And ſince Paul teſtifies, "In Chriſt dwelleth all the "fulneſs of the Godhead bodily," Coloſſ. ii. 9. we muſt therefore ſay the ſame of him, he being before the foundation of the world, in the boſom of the Father.

§ 102.

As the Son of God was active in a particular manner at the creation of all things, ſo he alſo has always made man the ſpecial object of his care, from that time till his appearance in the fleſh. The Scripture ſpeaks plainly concerning the Father. "*No man hath ſeen God at any time*," John, i. 18. 1 John, iv. 12. "HE dwelleth in the Light, "which no man can approach unto, *whom no man hath ſeen*, "*or can ſee*," 1 Tim. vi. 16. "*Not that any man hath* "*ſeen the Father*, ſave he, that is of God (Chriſt), He hath "ſeen the Father," John, vi. 46.

Therefore, whenſoever God hath appeared unto men, whenſoever he hath ſpoken with men (which has however been often the caſe), it was always the Son of God. See § 85.

But how is it at preſent, ſince the accompliſhment of thoſe words, which David uttered in ſpirit, "The Lord "ſaid unto my LORD, ſit thou on my right hand until "I make thine enemies thy footſtool?" Matt. xxii. 44. Pſal. cx. 1. Jeſus Chriſt has, as the Mediator between God and man, ſeated himſelf at the right hand of God;

which mediatorial office of his will continue until all his enemies have been by his Father laid under his feet: and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death, 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26. Now though the words of Christ stand firm, "I "and my Father are one," John, x. 30; "and he is over "all, God blessed for evermore," Rom. ix. 5. Yet is it equally certain also, that *GOD is the Head* of the Mediator *Christ*, according to 1 Cor. xi. 3. In which sense Paul says also to the Corinthians, "Ye are Christ's, and *Christ* "*is GOD's*," 1 Cor. iii. 23. Therefore says Paul, "*GOD* "*hath highly exalted him*, and given him a name, which is "above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee "should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, "and things under the earth: and that every tongue should "confess, that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the "Father," Phil. ii. 9——11. And Peter, "The God of "our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on "a tree. *Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a* "*Prince and a Saviour*," Acts, v. 30, 31.

By this exaltation nothing else can be here understood, but the sitting at God's right hand: and hence it is very evident, that Jesus, who was slain upon the cross, the Mediator between God and man, hath sat down at the right hand of God. So that when the Lord our Saviour says, "All power is given unto me in Heaven and on earth," Matt. xxviii. 18. He then also speaks there of himself, as the Mediator between God and man. "He *raised Christ* "*from the dead, and set him at his own right hand*, in the "heavenly places," says Paul, Eph. i. 20. Here we also see, that He, who set himself at the right hand of God, is the very same Jesus, the Mediator between God and man, who died for us, and whom he raised up again from the dead. Therefore the Father is called, "*The GOD of our* "*Lord Jesus Christ*," Eph. i. 17. And our Saviour says to Mary, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I "ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and *to my God*,

"and

"and your God," John, xx. 17. And if we add to this the words of Christ, "The Father hath given the Son "authority to execute judgment also, *because he is the Son of* "*Man*," John, v. 26, 27. it will be clearer still. For is it not here expresly asserted, that the Son of God holds the judgment for this very reason, because HE is the Son of Man, who was the Mediator between God and man. From all this it is plain, that the words of the Lord, "My "Father is greater than I," John, xiv. 28. are to be understood of Jesus Christ in the quality of *Mediator* between God and man. "All enemies must be put under "his feet, yet is he excepted, that did put all things under "him," 1 Cor. xv. 27. But when all that which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began, shall be restored and effected, concerning the times of restitution of all things, (according to Acts, iii. 21.) then Jesus the Mediator will lay down his office, and "God will be all in all," 1 Cor. xv. 28.

§ 103.

THIS being premised, we may also understand, what the Scripture testifies, that he is our advocate or intercessor with the Father. That his blood, which speaketh better things than that of Abel (for that cried for vengeance, Gen. iv. 10.) is our plea, (Heb. xii. 24.) is a point of unspeakably great importance to us. For it shews that the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus, which he offered for us, when with his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption, (Heb. ix. 12.) remains in perpetual remembrance before God, and incessantly pleads for mercy with a voice which cannot but be heard. But this is not all implied here; but also, that, according to Rom. viii. 34. he is even at the right hand of God; and "maketh intercession for us."

Thus, although our Lord Jesus Christ be ascended up to Heaven, and has sat down at the right hand of God; yet he has not therefore ceased to be the Head of his Church. In this view doth he interest himself in all and each of its affairs, whether they respect his church in general, or a part, or only an individual member belonging to it. He looks upon both the good and the evil that befals his church, in the very same point of view, as if it were done unto himself. When Saul persecuted the churches which were in Judea, the Lord our Saviour called unto him, "Saul, "Saul, *Why persecutest thou me?*" Acts, ix. 4. Also, to those who have fed, or given drink, or cloathed, or lodged, or visited, either under sickness, or in prison, a poor child of God, he saith, Matt. xxv. 40. "Inasmuch as ye have "done it to one of the least of these my brethren, *ye have* "*done it unto me.*"

Thus he takes immediate and hearty care of every poor man in whom the work of conversion to God is but begun, through his grace; according to the words of Scripture, Heb. vii. 25. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to "the uttermost, *that come unto God by him, seeing he ever* "*liveth to make intercession for them.*"

And if any person belonging to his people contracts guilt, so as to incur the displeasure of his Heavenly Father, our Saviour is then at hand, and ceases not to intercede in his behalf. Thus John writes, "If any man sin," (that is, if a person believing on Christ should be so unhappy as to transgress, which however he ought most faithfully to guard against) "*we have an advocate with the Father*, Jesus "Christ the righteous," 1 John, ii. 1. By John, chap. xvii. We see how our Saviour is our advocate, and intercedes for us with the Father. "He can be touched with "the feeling of our infirmities, having been in all points "tempted like as we are, yet without sin," Heb. iv. 15. And, "He is entered into Heaven itself, *now to appear in*

"the

"*the presence of God for us*," Heb. ix. 24. And yet is he ever nigh unto us; according to the Word, "Lo, I am "with you alway, even unto the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20. and, "Where two or three are gathered together "in my name, there am I in the midst of them," Matt. xviii. 20.

None can feel so sensibly for our weal and woe as our kind Saviour. And whose intercession could be so powerful and effectual, and have such blessed consequences as his? "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of "Grace," (that is to Christ) "that we may obtain "mercy, and find Grace to help in time of need," Heb. iv. 16.

We may also converse with him with such openness of heart and confidence, that we can pour into his bosom such things, as we would not venture to tell to any one else. There is nothing so great and important, nor any thing so little and mean, about which we may not speak freely and fully with him; and with childlike confidence expect that he will make it a matter of his own; provided only that there be nothing in the nature of it, that would prove hurtful to ourselves or to others, or be a dishonour of the Lord.

§ 104.

Being then the work of the hands of Jesus Christ, (§ 28.) and he having redeemed us forlorn and condemned sinners from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with his own holy precious blood, and with his innocent sufferings and death, (§ 80.); therefore is he in all points of view *our LORD*, and we are his property. Indeed he is in general "the "Lord of Glory," 1 Cor. ii. 8. Yea, "the LORD of "of all," Acts, x. 36. Yet he is in an especial manner the Lord of men. "*To us* there is *one LORD* Jesus "Christ,

"Chrift, by whom are all things, and we by him," 1 Cor. viii. 6. And, "To this end, Chrift both died and "rofe and revived, that *He might be the LORD both of the* "*dead and living*," Rom. xiv. 9. And when the holy Scripture further fays, "That at the name of Jefus every "knee fhould bow, of things in Heaven, and things on "earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue "fhould confefs, that *Jefus Chrift is LORD*, to the glory "of GOD the Father," Phil. ii. 10, 11. This certainly refers in the firft place to men; and it will be chiefly accomplifhed when they fhall ftand before his judgment-feat, Rom. xiv. 10, 11. But all the angels are likewife enjoined "to worfhip him," Heb. i. 6. For "God fet "him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far "above all principality, and power, and might, and do-"minion, and every name that is named, not only in this "world, but alfo in that which is to come; and hath put "all things under his feet," Eph. i. 20, 21.

When thus he is called, "King of Kings, and Lord of "Lords," Rev. xvii. 14. chap. xix. 16. this he is, not only with refpect to mankind, but alfo to the heavenly Hofts. What we read in Ifaiah, "Thus faith the Lord, "that created the heavens, God himfelf, that formed the "earth and made it—I am the LORD and there is none "befide me.—Look unto me, and be ye faved, all the "ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none elfe. I "have fworn by myfelf, the word is gone out of my mouth "in righteoufnefs, and fhall not return, that unto ME fhall "every knee bow, every tongue fhall fwear, and fay, In "the Lord have I righteoufnefs and ftrength," chap. xlv. 18——24. This is in the New Teftament exprefsly applied to Chrift, and explained concerning him, Rom. xiv. 10, 11. We alfo obtain in him alone the true righteoufnefs and forgivenefs of fins, together with the peace of God, and the power of the Holy Ghoft. Now, if "fer-"vants ought in all fear to be fubject to their mafters,

"whofe

"whose property they are," not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward," 1 Pet. ii. 18; if "they "ought to please them well in all things, shewing all good "fidelity," Tit. ii. 9, 10; if "they ought to be obedient "unto them from the heart," Eph. vi. 5, &c. O how much more ought we to be thus minded towards our so friendly, so kind Lord, who is gracious beyond measure; who hath bought us, not with silver and gold, but with his own blood, to be his property; and in very deed to demean ourselves thus towards him, and that not from a principle of fear, but of love, Rom. xiv. 7. 9. 2 Cor. v. 15.

§ 105.

WE shall be deficient in nothing of all this, if we have but the image of our Lord Jesus Christ, which has been treated of, § 49. before our eyes. And this should be our care according to the word of God. For "He left us an "example, that we should follow his steps," 1 Pet. ii. 21.

If we follow this admonition from the heart, our ways are then full of blessing. But such persons are spoken of, who are in Christ Jesus, and who abide in him; they ought themselves so to walk even as he walked, 1 John, ii. 6, and they also can, for he gives them the necessary strength.

Yet it is very plain, that here those things are not intended, which Christ the Lord hath done in the days in which he walked upon earth, in consequence of his mediatorial office, and as the great prophet sent by God into the world. For if a man thought he ought to make the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk, because he would imitate Christ, such a man would be as much mistaken, as if another would, in imitation of Christ, make a cord, and whip such people out of the church, who have as little right to be there, as the sheep and oxen had to be in the outer court of the temple.

Thus

Thus the imitation of Jesus Christ, enjoined in the Holy Scripture upon all believers, turns only upon that which we find in the Scripture concerning Christ Jesus, in as much as he was a man, like other men, yet without sin: For instance, that he humbled himself, rather choosing to be mean, than great in the world. In which case the Scripture saith, "Let *every man*," who believes on him—"have in him "the same mind which was in Christ Jesus," Phil. ii. 5, &c. "HE did not please himself," so neither ought we to please ourselves, Rom. xv. 1—3. "He denied him-"self, and took up his cross," which those who would be his followers, ought to do likewise, Mark, viii. 34. That which, (§ 68.) has been said upon this subject will elucidate it still more.

In brief, it is the will of God, that "we should be con-"formed to the image of his Son," Rom. viii. 29. For instance, "we ought to love one another, as Christ hath loved "us," John, viii. 34. "We ought to forgive one ano-"ther, as Christ hath forgiven us," Col. iii. 13, &c. Here it is however to be observed, that though this conformity to Christ begins in all respects, as soon as we, through faith in him, become new creatures; yet it always increases. "We grow up into him in all things, which is "the Head, even Christ," Eph. iv. 15. And thus it was of great importance to Paul, that Christ might be formed in the Galatians; that is, that they might become more like unto Christ, Gal. iv. 19. And 2 Cor. iii. 18. he says, "We all behold the glory of the Lord," (or the splendor of the Lord is manifest in us) and *we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory*. Thus there is a constant progression, we become continually more like our Saviour, and through grace grow more beautiful.

Of

Of the Holy Ghost.

§ 106.

THE Holy Ghost appeared very active in relation to Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all men, and especially of those that believe. Before the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, the Holy Ghost plainly predicted, by the prophets, the circumstances of his nativity, of his life, sufferings, death, and resurrection. When the time appointed for the birth of Christ approached, the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, chosen of God, "was with child of the Holy Ghost," Matt. i. 18. 20. Soon afterwards, she made a visit to her cousin Elizabeth, who being also "filled with the Holy "Ghost, blessed Mary, and the fruit of her womb," Luke, i. 39, &c. John, the forerunner of Christ, "was filled with "the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb," chap. i. 15.; and his father Zacharias, "being filled with the Holy "Ghost," spoke with energy of the Lord our Saviour, chap. i. 67, &c. To Simeon "it was revealed by the "Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had "seen the Lord's Christ," (the Messiah); "and he came "by the Spirit into the Temple, when the child Jesus was "presented unto the Lord; he took him up into his arms, "and blessed God," with joy, Luke, ii. 22, &c. When Jesus was baptized by John, "the Holy Ghost descended "from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him," John, i. 32, 33. "Jesus was led by the Spirit," immediately hereupon, "into the wilderness, to be tempted of the "devil," Matt. iv. 1, &c. Christ "cast out devils by the "Spirit of God," Matt. xii. 28. From hence it is to be concluded, that the Holy Ghost was also with him in all the other miracles which he wrought. Christ "offered him-"self to God without spot, through the eternal Spirit," Heb. ix. 14. And thus was the Holy Ghost in and with Christ

Christ during the whole of his life and conversation upon earth. See § 69.

§ 107.

IT occurs sometimes in the Holy Scripture, that spirit and power stand together; for instance, "God anointed "Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power," Acts, x. 38. And what the Lord our Saviour said to his disciples, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost," Acts, i. 5. this, in another place, he expresses thus: "Ye "shall be endued with power from on high," Luke, xxiv. 49. Hence it is manifest, that wheresoever the Holy Ghost is, there is also power, the power of God. See 1 Cor. ii. 4.

Yet is he not a property of God, but he is God with the Father and the Son; which is quite evident from the words of Jesus: "Baptize in the name of the Father, and "of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii. 19.

Here the Holy Ghost is named in the very same manner as the Father and the Son; and such poor sinners as become obedient to the Gospel are to be baptized in his name, even as in the name of the Father and of the Son; and thereby to obtain the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. See also 2 Cor. xiii. 14. John, xv. 26.

The words of Peter, "Ananias, why hath Satan filled "thine heart, to lie to the Holy Ghost? Thou hast not "lied unto men but unto God," Acts, v. 3, 4. confirm this: For to whom did Ananias lie? To the Holy Ghost, who had revealed unto Peter that which had passed between Ananias and Sapphira; by whose impulse also Peter put the question to him, and received a lie in answer; and upon this Peter says, "Thou hast lied unto God," and ascribes it to a seduction of Satan, whom Ananias had admitted into his heart. To this also belong the words of Paul to the Corinthians, "Know ye not, that ye are the "temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in "you," 1 Cor. iii. 16. Who dwelt in them? The Holy Ghost.

Ghoſt. What were they in conſequence thereof? A temple of God.

Here the words of Chriſt are not to be forgotten: "All "manner of ſin and blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven unto men; "but the blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt ſhall not be "forgiven unto men. And whoſoever ſpeaketh a word "againſt the Son of Man it ſhall be forgiven him; but who-"ſoever ſpeaketh againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it ſhall not be "forgiven him," Matt. xii. 31, 32. And, in the Goſpel of Mark it is ſaid, "He that ſhall blaſpheme againſt the "Holy Ghoſt, hath never forgiveneſs, but is in danger of "eternal damnation," chap. iii. 28, 29.

The occaſion of this warning given to the Scribes and Phariſees was this: A perſon poſſeſſed was brought to Jeſus; he was blind and dumb; and he healed him, ſo that the blind and dumb both ſpake and ſaw. Upon which they ſaid, "He only caſteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince "of devils." This they ſaid contrary to their better knowledge and conſcience, according to the teſtimony of Nicodemus, who was a ruler of the Jews, and who owned to our Saviour, "Rabbi, *we know* that thou art a teacher come from "God, for no man can do theſe miracles which thou doſt ex-"cept God be with him," John, iii. 2. Now, our Saviour ſeeing that the Scribes and Phariſees, and the people which adhered to them, would plunge themſelves into temporal and eternal perdition, if they obſtinately perſiſted in this wicked diſpoſition, or grew worſe in it, he therefore ſhewed them the danger in which they were. But, alas! it helped little; for although they were afterwards, through the preaching of the reſurrection of Chriſt convinced, that Jeſus of Nazareth was the Meſſiah, or the Anointed of God; although they were by the apoſtles, and eſpecially by Paul, through the Scriptures of the prophets, which treat of the Meſſiah, ſo puſhed, that they were forced to ſee that Jeſus of Nazareth was the Meſſiah; and although the apoſtles confirmed their doctrine with as many, and even as great,

yea, greater miracles and signs than our Lord Jesus Christ himself had done; nay, although they saw before their own eyes, how many thousand poor sinners were turned by the Gospel from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God;—yet they remained obdurate, blaspheming the Holy Ghost, who was in the apostles, and persecuting the disciples of Jesus, as if they were the most abominable miscreants. This sin was therefore not forgiven them; but the judgments of God came upon them; Jerusalem, and the whole country of Judea, were lamentably laid waste, and the most horrible punishments overtook them.

§ 108.

CONCERNING the gifts of the Holy Ghost, that is, concerning the gifts which the Holy Ghost distributeth, we have an excellent account, 1 Cor. xii. 4, &c. The Holy Ghost distributes them with profound wisdom, in such a manner as the circumstances of the church at all times require. Because the people of the Jews did not believe except they saw signs and wonders, according to the words of Christ, John iv. 48. compared with John, ii. 18. therefore the disciples of Jesus were endowed with many miraculous gifts for the planting of the first church. The gift of healing was so great, that even the shadow of Peter, as he only passed through the streets, healed the sick, Acts, v. 15. And when they took the handkerchiefs or aprons from the body of Paul, and held them over the sick, the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them, Acts, xix. 12. This gift of healing and restoring the sick was not peculiar to the apostles only, but many other believers likewise possessed it. Moreover, the gift of speaking foreign languages was bestowed upon many, who were no scholars, and did not understand foreign languages, as soon as they were converted; and others had the gift of understanding the languages, to them otherwise unknown, and

and of expounding that to others which had been uttered in ſuch languages, 1 Cor. xiv. 27, &c. The apoſtles of the Lord had alſo the gift of puniſhing ſuch, as were a reproach to the name of Chriſt, and dangerous to others. Thus did Peter detect the ſecret agreement made by Ananias and Sapphira, in order to deceive the apoſtles, and puniſhed them both with a ſudden death, Acts, v. 1, &c. Paul delivered a perſon over to Satan, who had taken his mother-in-law to wife (a ſin eſteemed abominable by the very Gentiles themſelves), "for the deſtruction of the fleſh, that the "ſpirit might be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus," 1 Cor. v. 5. It was alſo given to the apoſtles to do other great wonders; as we read not only of Peter, but alſo of Paul, that they raiſed the dead, Acts, ix. 36, &c. xx. 9, &c.

But we ſee by the Epiſtles of the apoſtles, that even in the firſt period of the church, an abuſe of theſe extraordinary gifts began to take place. From St. Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. xii. 11, &c. we may conclude, that one reflected upon the other's gift, comparing it with his own, whether the former was not better than the latter, or the latter better than the former. Upon which account Paul ſhews them, that each ought to be contented with his own, for the Holy Ghoſt had diſtributed them wiſely. For as in the body there were many members, each of which had its uſe, though one differed from the other, the ſame was alſo the caſe with the members of the church, and their different gifts. Beſides, ſome ſpoke in the aſſemblies of the congregation in ſuch languages as none elſe underſtood; which was always, at beſt, very inconſiderate; and others, as appears very probable, ſought to obtain of God by prayer, rather ſuch gifts as were ſtriking, and produced aſtoniſhment in others, than thoſe which, though uſeful to the church, had leſs of the extraordinary in them. Therefore Paul exhorts them to covet the beſt, that is, the moſt uſeful gifts, and rather that they might prophesy. But by prophecy he doth not mean here, the foretelling of what is to

come, but rather experimental and consolitory doctrines and exhortations, addressed to the congregations, which might go to the heart, and edify others, chap. xiv. 3. After he has proved this in a copious manner, he adds, "In "the church, I had rather speak five words with my un-"derstanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, "than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue;" and tells them, that the gift of speaking in foreign languages was not for the sake of believers, but of unbelievers. (O that the preachers, who frequently deliver such sermons, that the greatest part of their hearers must think that they speak in an unknown tongue, because they understand little or nothing of what is said, would take notice of this!) If this be duly considered, we shall soon understand why it pleased the Lord to withdraw, by degrees, such extraordinary gifts from the church. In the mean time, the apostles made use of them with advantage and blessing in the beginning, and also among the heathen, for the propagation of the gospel.

But for us it may be sufficient, that we have, or may have, all the gifts of the Spirit in our times (for God heareth prayer) which are necessary for us, to obtain our own salvation, and also the salvation of others. And let him to whom God gives gifts see to it how he employs them; for he must one day give the Lord an account of them.

§ 109.

WHEN in the Holy Scripture, the Spirit of Life, the Spirit of Grace, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Faith, the Spirit of Prayer, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Might, the Spirit of Knowledge and of the Fear of the Lord, the Spirit of Revelation, the Spirit of Prophesy, &c. occur, these are either names of the Holy Ghost, or they indicate some one or other gift of the Holy Spirit. To him alone thanks are due for life, grace, truth, &c. And the

words of Paul are here applicable: "All these worketh *that* "*one and the self-same Spirit*," 1 Cor. xii. 11. *That one and the self-same only Spirit*, is called *the Spirit of the Father*, because he proceedeth from the Father; and *the Spirit of Christ*, or of the Son of GOD, because Christ sendeth him.

"*This* Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of "God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save "the Spirit of man, which is in him? So the things of "God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God," 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. Who then can search all things, even the deep things of God? Who can know what is in God, if he was not God himself?

Yet we can say no more of the work of the Holy Ghost, than what we read of it in the Scripture. All that is wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, our hearts must experience, in conformity to what stands in the Scripture.

Before our Saviour withdrew from the sight of his disciples, amongst other great promises, he told them:

"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another "Comforter," (Guardian and Advocate), "that he may "abide with you for ever: Even the Spirit of Truth, "whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, "neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth "with you, and shall be in you," John, xiv. 16, 17.

Whence we see, first, That the Holy Ghost dwelleth in believers: and, secondly, That he doth not dwell in unbelievers. Yea, our Saviour says, that the world (by which he means all those men in whose heart dwell the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, and who do not love our Saviour and his dear Father, according to 1 John, ii. 15, 16.) cannot receive the Spirit of Truth. He cannot dwell in their hearts; for as little as they see him with their eyes, so little do they know him. The reason is this; the Spirit of God is holy, and men, as long as they live in sin, submitting to the government of the evil spirit,

are unholy; thus there can be no fellowship between them and the Holy Ghost.

§ 110.

HOWEVER, from the words of Christ, "When the Comforter," (the Holy Ghost) "is come, he will reprove "the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: "of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, "because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of "judgment, because the prince of this world is judged," John, xvi. 7—11. We see, that the Holy Ghost doth not cease to labour, even upon such men who do not as yet know our Saviour; who have not yet received him in faith; who do not yet cleave unto him with their heart; but are of the world. This came to pass from that day, when he was poured out upon the disciples. For when they were filled with the Holy Ghost, they began to preach, just as the Spirit gave them utterance, Acts, ii. 4. What was it then that they preached? They first shewed the people of Israel their sin, that they had not received, and believed in Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among them by miracles and wonders, and signs, as his own dear Son, and the promised Messiah; they had, on the contrary, by wicked hands, that is, by those of the Gentiles, crucified and slain him, Acts, ii. 22, 23. In the same manner doth the Holy Ghost convince the Jewish people of their unbelief, Acts, iii. 13—15. by the mouth of Peter, "*Jesus*, "*the Son of God, ye delivered up and denied in the presence of* "*Pilate*, when he was determined to let him go. But *ye* "*denied the Holy One and the Just*, and desired a murderer "to be granted unto you, and *killed the Prince of Life*. "Had ye believed on him, ye would not have done this."

Of righteousness, and that Jesus was gone to the Father, the Holy Ghost, who spoke by the disciples of Jesus, did also convince the world. Immediately, in their very first sermon,

mon, it is ſaid, "*This Jeſus hath God raiſed up*, whereof we "all are witneſſes.—Therefore let all the houſe of Iſrael "know aſſuredly, that *God hath made that ſame Jeſus, whom* "*ye have crucified, both Lord and Chriſt.* Repent and be "baptized every one of you, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, "for the remiſſion of ſins," &c. Acts, ii. 32, &c. Again, "The God of our fathers raiſed up Jeſus, whom ye ſlew "and hanged on a tree: *Him hath God exalted with his* "*right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour*, for to give re-"pentance to Iſrael, and forgiveneſs of ſins," Acts, v. 30. 31.

This is the righteouſneſs, or the forgiveneſs of ſins, which, ſince Chriſt went to the Father, is graciouſly granted unto all thoſe who turn unto Chriſt. And thus did the Holy Ghoſt reprove or convince the world of righteouſneſs.

But how of judgment; and that the prince of this world is judged, or has loſt his ſuit? By this very means; that Chriſt was raiſed up again by God, becauſe he exalted him by his right hand; becauſe he made him both Lord and Chriſt; becauſe, through him, every one that believeth on him obtains forgiveneſs of ſins, life and ſalvation. Had Chriſt loſt his ſuit, nothing of all this would have enſued; but, "through death he deſtroyed him that had the power "of death, that is the devil." (§ 80.)

But the Holy Ghoſt did not only convince or reprove the world of ſin, of righteouſneſs, and of judgment, by the mouth of the apoſtles; but he likewiſe gave his ſeal to this teſtimony of the apoſtles in the hearts of men. For when they heard the ſermon, it pricked the heart of the hearers, ſo that they ſaid to Peter, and to the reſt of the apoſtles, "Men and brethren, what ſhall we do?" And thus were three thouſand ſouls converted that very day, receiving Jeſus in faith for their Lord and Saviour. Who wrought this in them? The Holy Ghoſt. For, "No man can ſay, that "Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt," 1 Cor. xii. 3.

And thus the work of the Holy Ghoſt was carried on, until the number of the Jews, who were converted to Chriſt, increaſed to many thouſands. From that time forward, the Holy Ghoſt has conſtantly carried on his work in the hearts of the poor world; and how many thouſands are there, who have received the faith through his operation, and are now ſtanding before the throne of the Lamb!

Moreover, the Holy Ghoſt proceedeth, to this very hour, to convince or reprove the men of the world of ſin, of righteouſneſs, and of judgment. When they read, or hear the Goſpel, he then moves their hearts, convincing them, for example, of ſin, becauſe they do not believe in Jeſus. For as he reproved the Jews of their unbelief, becauſe they had crucified our Saviour, ſo he continually ſtill reproves men, that they do not believe in Chriſt, becauſe they are conſtantly ſtill crucifying him afreſh by their ſins. The Holy Ghoſt doth alſo ſtill ſtir up men to call aloud to the poor ſlaves of ſin, to turn to Chriſt, who ſits at the Father's right hand in heaven, where they would find the forgiveneſs of ſins, and the righteouſneſs which availeth before God. They ſhould gladly caſt from them the bonds of Satan, the prince of this world, through faith in Chriſt, and the grace offered unto them: for the enemy is certainly judged; he has loſt his right, and can no longer keep any man, who would gladly be delivered through Chriſt. To this teſtimony doth the Holy Ghoſt alſo bear witneſs in the hearts of men: and how happy is that man who is attentive and obedient to it; for life eternal depends upon it. He alſo continually approves himſelf to be the Spirit of Truth, who proceedeth from the Father, and teſtifieth of Jeſus, John, xv. 26.

§ 111.

Now we ſhall further prove, that the Holy Ghoſt dwelleth in believers, according to the word of our Saviour. The words of Paul, "Know ye not that ye are the temple

"of

" of God, and that *the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*" 1 Cor. iii. 16. and, " Know ye not that your body *is the* " *temple of the Holy Ghoſt, which is in you?*" 1 Cor. vi. 19. See 2 Cor. i. 22. Eph. i. 13, 14. put this beyond all doubt. That we " receive the promiſe of the Spirit through " faith," we plainly ſee from Gal. iii. 14. Thus, when we become " children of God by faith in Chriſt Jeſus," Gal. iii. 26. the Holy Ghoſt makes his abode in us, and the unclean ſpirit muſt depart; with which the words of Paul harmonize: " Becauſe ye are ſons, God hath ſent forth " the Spirit of his Son *into your hearts*," Gal. iv. 6. Ezek. xxxvi. 27. This is ſuch a prerogative of the children of God, that Paul ſays, " If any man have not the Spirit of " Chriſt," (or in whomſoever the Spirit of God doth not " dwell), he is none of his;" that is, he is not yet a ſheep of his fold, he is not as yet a member of the body of Chriſt, Rom. viii. 9. The communion of the Holy Ghoſt, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. thus commences with us, from the time when we receive Chriſt, and believe in his name.

For the reſt, it is an important exhortation which Paul hath grounded upon the poſition, that we are temples of God; namely, " If any man defile," (or deſtroy) " the " temple of God, him ſhall God deſtroy; for the temple " of God is holy, which temple are ye," 1 Cor. iii. 17.

§ 112.

INDEED the Holy Ghoſt has never at any time ceaſed to attend to the welfare of mankind: that this was done before the deluge, is for this reaſon not to be doubted of; otherwiſe the Lord could not have ſaid, " Men will *no more* en- " dure reproofs of my Spirit, for they are fleſh *," Gen. vi. 3. He muſt then have reproved them, and have directed them

* This is according to the verſion of Luther: the Engliſh verſion has it, " My Spirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man."

aright, but they would not listen to his voice. "Enoch "the seventh from Adam, has also prophesied that the Lord "would come with ten thousands of his saints to execute "judgment," &c. Jud. 14. By whom did he speak this? By the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. i. 21.; and God having afterwards established an especial covenant with Abraham and with his posterity, he, according to Neh. ix. 20. "gave "them his good Spirit to instruct them." But Isaiah testifies of them, chap. lxiii. 10. that "they rebelled, and "vexed his Holy Spirit." And Stephen says, Acts, vii. 2—51. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and "ears, *ye do always resist the Holy Ghost*; as your fathers "did, so do ye." Which he also evinces by their whole history. The number with whom the Holy Ghost found entrance was at that time very inconsiderable. Indeed Moses wished, that "all the Lord's people were prophets, and "that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them," Numb. xi. 29. Yet we cannot say that this was the case at any time. That those who cleaved with their hearts to the Lord, and especially the prophets, have been partakers of his Spirit; or, acccording to the words of Peter, "Holy "men of God spake, as they were moved by the Holy "Ghost," is undoubted.

But the promise of God has been however given to the times of the New Testament: "I will pour out my Spi-"rit upon all flesh," Joel, ii. 28. This promise, which was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, and afterwards, implies, according to the analogy and meaning given of it by the writings of the apostles, thus much; He that, by faith, receiveth Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour, becomes a child of God, and a temple of the Holy Ghost, whether by birth a Jew or a Gentile, a man or a woman, a youth or a maiden, bond or free, poor or rich, young or old. Herein is the promise, Isa. liv. 13. fulfilled, "They "shall be taught of God," which our Lord Jesus Christ himself alledges, John, vi. 45.

Thus

Thus then the Holy Ghoſt was *poured out* in the time of the New Teſtament, and according to the promiſe of God, Iſaiah, xliv. 3; that is, he came ſo plentifully, ſo powerfully, and ſo fruitfully, upon poor and miſerable ſinners, as a mighty rain, which in a ſtream penetrates a thirſty ſoil, and renders it fertile. As John led the Jews, who came to him confeſſing their ſins, unto Jordan, and dipped them under the water, and poured it upon them (this was baptiſm in thoſe days), he then declared unto them, "I baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that "cometh after me," (viz. Chriſt) "is mightier than I, "whoſe ſhoes I am not worthy to bear," (that is, to be his menial ſervant), "*He ſhall baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt*, "and with fire," Matt. iii. 11. In brief, the Holy Ghoſt, in the time of the New Teſtament, communicates himſelf in ſuch a manner, and to ſo many men, and manifeſts himſelf in ſo many and great gifts, powers, wonders, and glorious operations, that the diſciples of Jeſus may, in compariſon of former times, ſay, that "the Holy Ghoſt was "not yet, (or had not yet been) given." Thus it is expreſſed, John, vii. 37, &c. "In the laſt day, that great "day of the feaſt," (which was the moſt glorious one) "Jeſus ſtood and cried, ſaying, If any man thirſt, let him "come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me," (as the Scripture hath ſaid), "out of his belly ſhall flow "rivers of living water." Here our Saviour applies to his own perſon the words, "With joy ſhall ye draw water "out of the wells of ſalvation," Iſa. xii. 3, &c. And it implies as much as if he had ſaid, I am the well of ſalvation, from me flow the ſtreams of living water, of that water in which there is life, and which imparts life; of this each who believeth can and will drink. That is, he will partake of it, if he thirſts after, and pants for it. And that this is the genuine meaning of the words of Jeſus, is apparent from the explanation given to them by the evangeliſt,

evangelist, John, vii. 39. "But this spake he of the Spirit, "*which they, that believe on him, should receive; for the Holy* "*Ghost was not yet given,*" (namely, in this manner, and as he afterwards came upon them that believed in Jesus) "because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

§ 113.

THUS then the disciples of Jesus, and all those who through their word believe in Him, partake of that promise of Jesus, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you "another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever," John, xiv. 16. If we take a right view of these words, we shall find this meaning to be couched under them: I have been with you hitherto; I have taken care of you; I have taught, warned, reproved, led, guided, comforted, and strengthened you.—Now ye shall receive the Holy Ghost, he shall and will do all that for you, which I have done hitherto. For, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, "whom the Father will send in my name, *HE shall teach* "*you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance,* "*whatsoever I have said unto you,*" John, xiv. 26. "But "when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you "from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceed-"eth from the Father, *HE shall testify of me,*" John, xv. 26. And, "When HE, the Spirit of Truth is come, *HE* "*will guide you into all truth - and he will shew you things to* "*come,*" John, xvi. 13.

Thus the Holy Ghost in the New Testament, since our Lord Jesus Christ has seated himself at the right hand of the Majesty on high, takes the whole church, or congregation of Christ, under his peculiar care. He dwelleth in every one, who by faith cometh to Christ, teaching, leading, reproving, warning, comforting, admonishing, and strengthening him in that which is good. See 1 Cor. vi. 11. Gal. v. 18.

v. 18. 22. Eph. i. 13, 14. 1 Cor. ii. 12. He keeps all Chriſtendom here on earth in one mind *; it is not poſſible that the multitude at large, who are called by the name of Chriſt, can be meant by this: thoſe are meant, who ſtand in the faith of Chriſt, who by faith are children of God, and temples of the Holy Ghoſt; and who in the ſtricteſt ſenſe conſtitute Chriſtendom, the church of Chriſt, the congregation of God. Of theſe it can be ſaid, that they are brought into and preſerved in one mind by the Holy Ghoſt, in thoſe points which are indiſpenſably neceſſary for every child of God, and without which no one can be and remain a child of God. The ſervants of Chriſt, and the miniſters of the church, who bear this name with right, are alſo prepared and ordained by the Holy Ghoſt. For thus ſaith Paul to the elders and biſhops of the church of Epheſus, "Take heed unto yourſelves, and to all "the flock, *over the which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you* "*overſeers*, to feed the church of God, which he hath "purchaſed with his own blood," Acts, xx. 28. See alſo 1 Pet. i. 12.

Who doth not ſee, that all this, which the Holy, the One-only uncreated Spirit, who himſelf is God, tranſacts with men, ſuch depraved and ſinful creatures, is incomprehenſible condeſcenſion? As in all, which he has taken upon himſelf to tranſact, he ſhews evidently that he is the Comforter, who proceedeth from the Father, *and whom the Lord our Saviour ſendeth.* This we ſee by the words of Chriſt, John, xvi. 13, &c. "He ſhall *not* ſpeak of *him*-"*ſelf*, but *whatſoever he ſhall hear*, that ſhall he ſpeak.—— "He ſhall glorify me; for *he ſhall receive of mine*, and ſhall "ſhew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are "mine: therefore ſaid I, that *he ſhall take of mine* and ſhall "ſhew it unto you."

* Theſe words are out of an antient German church hymn, and therefore the meaning is explained.

§ 114.

§ 114.

FROM the words of our Saviour, just quoted, "The "Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, shall teach you all "things, and bring all things to your remembrance, what-"soever I have said unto you," John, xiv. 26. And, "When the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you "into all truth—and he will shew you things to come," John, xvi. 13.

The question arises, How then did the Holy Ghost teach the Apostles? They had, (1.) the Scripture of the Old Testament. Then opened he their understanding, as Christ had done already, that they might understand it, and know how to make a right use of it; as is evident by their discourses and writings. (2.) They had also heard the discourses of our Saviour, both in his public sermons, and in his familiar conversation with themselves, when he not only reminded them of what he had said, but explained to them what at first they had not understood: For example, John, ii. 19, &c. (3.) Besides this, he gave them an insight into the whole council of God concerning our salvation, taught them the connexion of all the truths of God; and bestowed upon them the gift of expressing it rightly. Moreover HE revealed to them, how it would go with the church of Christ; what Satan and his party would undertake against it; and how at length he would be confounded and destroyed; whereas the kingdom of Christ would stand fast to Eternity. Thus, for instance, Paul says, "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: but *God hath re-* "*vealed them unto us by his Spirit*," 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.

But how then are believers to this very day taught of the Holy Ghost? They have the Holy Scripture both of the Old and New Testament; and in the latter they find the doctrine of Christ and of his disciples. Upon this doctrine the

the Apoſtles ſtood immoveably, having received it of Chriſt, the Lord, and of his Spirit. "Though we" (ſays Paul, Gal. i. 8.) "or an Angel from Heaven preach any other "Goſpel unto you than that which we have preached unto "you, let him be accurſed." See 2 John, ver. 9, &c.

Thus if we abide in the faith, and in the way appointed, read or hear the Holy Scripture, which, through the Holy Ghoſt, we have received from theſe men of God; then doth the Holy Ghoſt teach us by means of them. But the work of the Holy Ghoſt is no leſs real in us than it was in the Apoſtles of Jeſus Chriſt, as far as relates to the enlightening our eyes, and opening our underſtanding to underſtand the Holy Scripture, with a view partly to that, which is neceſſary to our ſalvation in general, and partly to that which is neceſſary for us to underſtand, according to the circumſtances, in which we are for the time being. And as HE brought all things faithfully to the remembrance of the Apoſtles, which the Lord had ſaid unto them; in the ſame manner doth he alſo bring to our remembrance the words of Jeſus, and of his Apoſtles and prophets, which we have either read or heard. The Holy Ghoſt doth alſo lead us to the experience of that which the Holy Scripture informs us of; and this produces living and efficacious conceptions, impreſſions, and ſenſations. As the diſciples going to Emmaus ſaid, "Did not our heart burn within "us, while He (the Saviour) talked with us by the way, and "while he opened to us the Scriptures;" thus may we alſo ſpeak to the praiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, that our heart burns while he is opening the Scripture to us, and ſpeaks with us, by means of the Scripture. We want no new revelations, as we find all that is neceſſary for our ſalvation in the Holy Scripture. But as to the prophecies which refer to future times, not only in the Old but alſo in the New Teſtament; we may confidently believe, that God will through the Holy Ghoſt, give his children, for whoſe uſe they were written, the grace to underſtand them, at the right time,

and to make the right use of them. "He that hath ears "to hear, let him hear *what the Spirit saith to the Churches*," Revel. ii. 11.

§ 115.

THE condition of a person who hath not the Spirit of Christ, and is as yet none of his, is in itself always deplorable; for he fulfilleth the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and is, at the same time, by nature a child of wrath; that is, he hath not as yet the forgiveness of sins. Eph. ii. 3. Whereas he, who through faith in Christ Jesus, is become a child of God, and is made a partaker of the Holy Ghost, "Walketh after the Spirit, and is led "by him;" according to Rom. viii. 14. Concerning this guidance of the Holy Ghost Paul speaks, Rom. ch. viii. and Gal. ch. v. very emphatically. In what doth it then consist? In this; he takes us under his care, and trains us with infinitely more love, pains, fidelity, labour, and patience, than any mother doth or can shew towards her child. For when we receive Christ in faith, we are born anew of the Holy Ghost, according to the word of Christ, John, iii. 5, 6. 8; and thus become new creatures. For to be a new creature, and to be possessed of that faith which worketh by love, is in the Scripture the same. When in one place it is said, "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision "availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, *but a new* "*creature*," Gal. vi. 15. It is also said in another, "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any "thing, nor uncircumcision, but *Faith, which work-* "*eth by Love*," Gal. v. 6. Are we led by the Holy Ghost, then are we not under the Law, Gal. v. 18. but under Grace. If then we would joyfully run our race of grace, free from the curse and constraint of the law, out of principle of love and gratitude towards God; in this case the Spirit of Grace, (Heb. x. 29.) helps us, and reaches out a friendly hand to us for this end. Are we weary and

faint

faint in our race? then He is the Spirit of Power, (2 Tim. i. 7.) which ſtrengthens and comforts us anew. Have we the goal in view? but yet often ſtumble and fall, whilſt we are running towards it; and are, on that account, grieved and diſtreſſed; then is the Holy Ghoſt our Comforter, (John, xvi. 7.) who kindly encourages us, and is always raiſing us up. Do we frequently take offence, as others are with us on the ſame road, and they either are in our, or we in their way; then is the Spirit of Love, (2 Tim. i. 7.) and he faithfully aſſiſts, that Love may always have the aſcendency, and flouriſh. When our ſenſes are often ſtunned at the contemplation of the love of God in Chriſt, ſeeing it ever remains incomprehenſible to us, that he ſhould intereſt himſelf ſo much in ſuch poor, wretched, and ſinful men; then is HE, the Spirit of Faith, (2 Cor. iv. 13.) who is ever enlightening our eyes, fixing them upon the torments and ſufferings of God our Saviour, and upon the word of the Goſpel, and thereby alſo repleniſhing our hearts with the peace of God. Do we obtain by experience more and more knowledge of our defect in wiſdom and underſtanding, and find at the ſame time, that we are ſtill in a wicked world, in which both are ſo neceſſary; then doth the ſpirit of wiſdom and of underſtanding, (Iſaiah, xi. 12.) come to our aſſiſtance, and brings us however to the goal, notwithſtanding all our own childiſh weakneſs and ignorance. When we feel, that we are without counſel, in heavy and perplexing circumſtances, and without ſtrength to follow and execute good counſel that is given unto us; HE is alſo, to our great benefit, and for our uſe, the Spirit of counſel and might, (Iſa. xi. 2.). Our ignorance and raſhneſs, both of which are ſo peculiar to us by nature, even though we are in truth already on the way of Life, is certainly redreſſed by him, if we attend to his voice; ſeeng he is the Spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord. (Iſa. xi. 2.) When we alſo know not what to pray for as we ought; then is HE the Spirit of Prayer, (Zach.

(Zach. xii. 10.) making interceſſion for us, in the moſt effectual manner with groanings, which cannot be uttered; (Rom. viii. 26.) Yea, he is the Spirit of the Son of God, whom God ſendeth into our hearts, and who, in us, crieth Abba, Father. (Gal. iv. 6.)

§ 116.

O how happy then are poor ſinners, who through Faith cleave to Jeſus, ſince the Good Spirit dwelleth in their hearts! Whereas, on the other hand, the wicked Spirit, the prince who ruleth in the air, has, during this time, his work in the children of unbelief, or in thoſe who do not believe in Jeſus Chriſt, Eph. ii. 2.

Whereas now the Holy Spirit, out of love to us, poor men, and for Chriſt's ſake, condeſcends ſo amazingly, and takes ſuch conſtant and great pains with us, O! how greatly ſhould we take heed not to grieve him in anywiſe! "*Grieve* "*not the Holy Spirit of God*," (ſays Paul, not to the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, but to the church in Epheſus) "whereby ye are ſealed unto the day of redemption," Eph. iv. 30. But he is grieved, if we do not pay attention to his admonitions; for inſtance, if we let corrupt communication proceed out of our mouths. See ver. 29.

Thus doth the Holy Ghoſt carry on his government in thoſe poor ſinners, who through faith are embodied in Chriſt. And the experience of the children of God makes all this ſtill more plain and inconteſtible; although it remains continually incomprehenſible to a natural and unconverted perſon: For "The natural man *receiveth not the things of* "*the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him; neither* "*can he know them*, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14. See alſo Matt. xi. 25.

Of

Of the WILL *of* GOD *concerning our* SALVATION.

§ 117.

IF we ſum up that which hath been deduced from the Scripture concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, we may anſwer the queſtion, Whether God would have all men to be ſaved? with a confident, Yes. There is in him the moſt fervent deſire, and the moſt earneſt will that we all ſhould be ſaved. Whence do we know this? Becauſe he gave ſo much, that is, his own and only Son, to endure the greateſt diſtreſs, and death itſelf, that we all might live through him, John, iii. 17. Rom. viii. 32. That it is the ardent deſire of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt to ſave us all, is evident from 1 Tim. ii. 6; and 1 John, ii. 2. In that he left the throne of his glory, and cloathed himſelf in our poor fleſh and blood: In that he, upwards of thirty years, bore vexations and torments from ungodly men, and the temptations of the wicked enemy: In that he ſunk into ſuch deep anxiety, that bloody ſweat was preſſed out of his pores, and thereby he felt the agonies of death: In that he ſubmitted to be condemned as an ungodly wretch, to be abuſed moſt ſhamefully, and to be executed in the moſt cruel manner: And all this purely and alone, that he might redeem us from our miſery, and open the way of Life unto us.—Therefore it is impoſſible to think any otherwiſe, but that he wiſhes for and ſeeks after our ſalvation, with an earneſtneſs incomprehenſible to us, and with a divine zeal: for all this is ſupernatural. The Holy Ghoſt prepared the Saviour of the world in the womb of the Virgin Mary; and was afterwards, throughout his whole life and doctrine, his ſufferings and death, always with and in him. Moreover, he teaches, leads, guides, nurſes, comforts, and reproves, not the believers only, in whoſe heart he dwells,

ſeeking to form them to the joy and honour of their Saviour; but he alſo reproves the world,—in whoſe hearts he neither doth nor can dwell, as long as they are devoted to ſin and the devil,—of ſin, of righteouſneſs, and of judgment, and is unwearied herein. Should we not believe of him, who takes ſuch amazing pains with men, to bring them to ſalvation and happineſs, that he earneſtly deſires the ſalvation of all men.

But to this is added the expreſs teſtimonies of the Holy Scripture, which declare it in plain and clear terms; "GOD will have *all men* to be ſaved, and to come unto the "knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 4. "*God*," ſays Peter, "*is not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all* "*ſhould come to repentance*," 2 Pet. iii. 9. Matt. xviii. 14. "As I live, ſaith the Lord God, *I have no pleaſure in the* "*death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his ways,* "*and live*," Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Again, chap. xviii. 23. "*Have I any pleaſure at all, that the wicked ſhould die*, ſaith "the Lord God, *and not, that he ſhould return from his ways* "*and live?*"

We may add to this the words of Paul, Acts, xvii. 30. "The times of this ignorance (hitherto) God winked at, "*but now, commandeth all men every where to repent.*"

Would God command all men every where to repent, and yet would not, that all men ſhould be ſaved? Who can form ſuch a thought of the God of Holineſs and Truth?

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Of Faith.

§ 118.

ALTHOUGH it is an indubitable truth, that God will have all men to be saved, yet it must be at the same time observed, that God deals with men, according to his wisdom, as with men. Indeed we cannot say how an unhappy man becomes a happy man, if we do not first show what is, according to the Scripture, an unhappy, and what is an happy man. If a man has no cheerful heart; if he is unable to attain any true internal rest; if he lives in fear and anxiety; if his own heart condemns him; if sin has the dominion over him; if he is under the power of Satan; if he is devoid of the peace of God; if he is unacquainted with joy in the Holy Ghost; if he has no hope of eternal Life;—then is he an unhappy man. But does a man know Jesus Christ, as his Saviour and Redeemer; are all his sins through faith in Him forgiven him; has he, through him, peace with God; can sin, because he is under Grace, have no more dominion over him; is he delivered from the fear of death, of the Devil, and of Hell; can his body and soul, through the Holy Ghost rejoice in the Living God; doth he stand in a confident hope of everlasting Life; does he know that he is a member of the body of Christ; has he a free access through Christ to God, so as to be able to bring all his requests to him, without any reason to doubt of their being heard; has he a heart replenished with the love of God, and of his neighbour; does the Holy Ghost dwell in his heart, bearing him witness that he is a child of God;—then is he even here in this world a happy man; and when he dies, his happiness will have no end, but it will increase more and more, and he will be an heir of all

that glory which God hath prepared for his children in Heaven.

From the description here given, wherein the happiness of a man properly consisteth, it follows of course, that no man can be compelled to it; but that the poor slave of sin and of the Devil must become *willing* to receive the Grace of God in Christ, that is offered to him; that is, to believe in Christ. This is the one-only way to salvation and happiness, which hath been appointed by, and is therefore acceptable to, him.

Whilst our Lord Jesus Christ walked still here upon earth, he testified to every man, "This is the will of Him that "sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and be-"lieveth on him, may have everlasting Life," John, vi. 40. chap. iii. 16.

And having finished every thing which, according to the Scripture, he was to do and to suffer, when he, after his Resurrection, would ascend up into Heaven, and sit down at the right hand of his Father; he sent his disciples into all the world, to preach the Gospel. Wherein then did the sum of their preaching consist? "*HE that be-"lieveth – shall be saved*; but he that believeth not, shall be "damned," Mark, xvi. 16.

This is therefore *the commandment of God, that we should be-"lieve on the name of his Son Jesus Christ*," 1 John, iii. 23.

§ 119.

FROM hence it is evident, that the sin, on account of which men are damned, consists in this, that they will not believe the divine and salutary truth; that God hath so loved them, as even to give his only-begotten Son to be the Saviour of the world;——that this Son of God, Jesus Christ, became a sacrifice for them, and hath shed his blood for the forgiveness of their sins;——that he is now risen again,

again, and ſits at the right hand of God, and will come again once to judge the quick and the dead;——that now it is incumbent upon them to believe in him, and to receive him as their Lord and Saviour, whereby they would receive forgiveneſs of ſins, become God's children by adoption, be ſealed with the Holy Ghoſt, and be enabled to ſerve God all the days of their life, in that holineſs and righteouſneſs which are acceptable to him, and to inherit everlaſting life.—But they deſpiſe this counſel of God concerning their ſalvation, rather chooſing to remain the ſlaves of ſin and of the Devil, as the Scripture teſtifies concerning the Jews. See § 89. The ground of this lies in the words, John, iii. 19. "This is the condemnation, that light (Jeſus Chriſt) "is come into the world, *and men loved darkneſs*, (their "ſin, ſhame, and folly) *rather than light*."

But are there not yet, to this very day, many thouſands who do not chuſe this way of ſalvation through faith in Chriſt; and who either will help and ſave themſelves by their own works; or, who have no deſire to be freed from ſin through Chriſt? They look upon it as their happineſs, if they can live according to the will of the fleſh and of the mind.

§ 120.

WE muſt however ſay ſomething more of Faith: and the firſt queſtion is, on this head, what that faith is, whereby we are ſaved? If a poor wretch ſhould be infected with ſin, as once the Iſraelites were with the venom of the ſerpents, which, burning like fire in their bodies, killed them; and ſuch a one were to be as earneſtly deſirous of being, through the Grace of God, delivered from ſin, as ſuch an Iſraelite, bitten by the ſerpents, was to be cured of his ſickneſs; and he were to look with as firm a confidence and hope of ſalvation upon Jeſus Chriſt, who became a curſe for us on the croſs, as the Iſraelites, ſick unto death, looked unto the

ſerpent liſted up by Moſes, for the preſervation of their life; by what other name could we call this, than Faith? Or, if a perſon were to diſcover (and ſuch diſcovery is alſo grace) that he is blind to divine matters, and cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God; and he is as deſirous of them, as Bartimeus was to recover his ſight; (Mark, x. 46, &c.) and, having the ſame confidence towards Jeſus Chriſt, as Bartimeus had, that he could, was willing, and would help him; and he crieth to Jeſus in the ſame manner that Bartimeus did, Thou Son of David, thou Saviour of the world, Have mercy on me! have mercy on me!—This is Faith. Or, if a man painfully feels, that ſin defileth him throughout, and ſpreads, as did formerly the leproſy, and he is as eagerly deſirous (which deſire is the effect of the grace of God in us) of being delivered from the curſe and dominion of ſin, as the leper ſought to be made clean, and he falls down at the feet of the Lord our Saviour in that hope, that he alone could and would help him, as the leper did (Matt. viii. 2, &c.) telling him his diſtreſs;—This is Faith.

In brief, we are ſpeaking of ſuch poor men, whoſe eyes have been opened, to ſee and feel that they are ſinful and depraved, being conſcious that they are greatly guilty, not only on account of the omiſſion of the good, which God hath commanded, but alſo by the commiſſion of the evil, which he hath forbidden; and eſpecially of having neither believed in, or loved their Saviour; and that they deſerved nothing but puniſhment:——when theſe hear, or read, (or reflect, if formerly they have heard and read it) that Jeſus Chriſt is the Saviour of all men, eſpecially of thoſe that believe; and that he came into the world for this very end, having been made a ſacrifice for us, to ſave ſinners; and they lay hold of it (which can be done only by the Grace of God), not "conferring with fleſh and blood," as we read concerning Paul; and cleaving to Jeſus, in the confidence that he alone can and will help them out of their

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woe and misery; that he can and will forgive them, and deliver them from the slavery of sin, and the power of Satan; this is that Faith of which we are here treating, and through which we obtain forgiveness of sins, Life, and Salvation. This is the meaning of the words of Jesus, John, iii. 14, 15. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in "the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up "(on the cross), *that whosoever believeth in Him, should not "perish, but have eternal Life.*"

The words of Paul, Rom. iii. 25, belong likewise here. "GOD hath set forth Jesus Christ, to be a propitiation (a Throne of Grace, Heb. iv. 16.), *through Faith in his "blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins "that are past.*" And John says, chap. xx. 31. "These "are written, that ye might believe, that Jesus is the Christ, "(the Messiah) the Son of God; *and that believing, ye "might have Life through his Name.*"

§ 121.

FROM the above description, just now given, it is evident, that Faith is not so universal as is commonly supposed. Therefore Paul says, not to worldly men, but to the members of the church of God in Corinth, "Examine your-"selves, whether ye be in the Faith, prove your own "selves, &c." 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

Wherever Faith in Jesus Christ is found, there is also found the knowledge of sin. This follows clearly from the description of Faith. A man, who knows himself to be a poor sinner, cleaves by Faith to Jesus Christ, through him, not only to be freed from the guilt and punishment, but also from the dominion of sin. But how could this come to pass, unless he knew that he had deserved punishment by his sins, and that he was under the dominion of sin? Hence it is, that the preaching of the Gospel leads men, both to the knowledge

of their sins, and to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, who saveth us from our sins. When Peter, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, preached his first evangelical sermon (for he was sent by Christ to preach the Gospel), he shewed the Jews with energy, that they were murderers, having slain Christ, the Holy and Chosen One of God, Acts, ii. 22, &c. He does the same also, in Acts, iii. 13, &c. iv. 10, 11. And Stephen treats the same more extensively, Acts, vii. 2, &c. See § 110. When Christ preached to Saul from heaven, he first points out to him his sin, Acts, ix. 3, &c.; he called unto him, "Saul, Saul! why "persecutest thou me?" And indeed this was our Saviour's meaning, when he preached the Gospel, and proclaimed to men, "*Repent ye*, and believe the Gospel," Mark, i. 15. See Acts, xx. 21.

And here the word *repent* can have no other meaning than this; Acknowledge and bewail your sins, and desist from them. Thus, for example, did the people at Nineveh repent, after the preaching of Jonas, as Christ testifies, Matt. xii. 41. And in what did that properly consist? They became sensible of their sin; they confessed their sin; they bewailed their sin; they cried to God for grace; they turned from their evil way, Jonah, iii. 7—10. Therefore also repentance and conversion to God are combined together, Acts, iii. 19. xxvi. 20.; and sometimes the word *conversion*, or *turning*, is made use of as of like signification with *repentance*. For example, our Lord Jesus Christ says to Paul, Acts, xxvi. 17, 18. "I send thee unto the Gen-"tiles, to open their eyes, and to *turn* them from darkness "unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that "they may receive forgiveness of sins—through the faith "that is in me."

But the word *repentance* is sometimes taken in an enlarged sense, so as not only to imply, that men ought to own and be sorry for their sins; but it also includes faith. For instance, Peter says to the men, whose hearts were pricked by

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his words, and who thereupon asked, "Men and brethren, "what shall we do? *Repent* and be baptized every one of "you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of "sins," Acts, ii. 37, 38.

And thus is the word also used, Matt. iv. 17.; as may also be seen in Mark, i. 14, 15. For when it is said in the former passage, "From that time Jesus began to "preach, and to say, *Repent*, for the kingdom of heaven is "at hand;" it stands in this place, "Jesus preached the "Gospel of the kingdom of God, saying, The time is ful-"filled, and the kingdom of God is at hand, *repent ye, and* "*believe the Gospel.*"

The words of Christ, Luke, xxiv. 46, 47. are to be taken in the same way. For when our Saviour there says, "Thus "it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to "rise from the dead the third day, and *that repentance* "*and remission of sins* should be preached in his name," this cannot be understood in any other sense, than that men should be conscious of, and mourn over their sins, and believe on Christ; that is, should be converted, that they might receive the forgiveness of sins.

§ 122.

I will only make the following observations upon this head:

(1.) A poor heathen, who has never yet heard or read, either the law of Moses or the Gospel of Christ, may however be conscious of many sins; because in this case his own heart and conscience condemn him. He that has read or heard the law of Moses, may easily find still more in himself, on account of which he has reason to be afraid. For from thence he not only sees plainly what is right or wrong, because his heart accuses him of innumerable transgressions; but he may also, from the dreadful curses which God hath laid upon sin, discover the detestable and abomi-

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mable nature of it. But he who hears and reads the Gospel, and by the grace of God duly reflects, will infallibly become the greatest sinner in his own eyes. For the Gospel teaches him, that the sins of all men, which the Lord hath laid upon Christ, and which he took upon himself, weighed him down under such an anguish and distress, as to press forth bloody sweat from him; and that for our sakes, divine consolation being withdrawn from him, he was nailed to the cross, as the greatest malefactor, and made a curse. Then such a poor sinner thinks, "Why was thy soul with hellish "pain surrounded?—Alas! my sins have thee my Sa-"viour wounded." I have distressed, grieved, scourged, crowned with thorns, nailed to the cross, and slain the Lord of Glory, by my sins. He thinks farther, O what an abomination must these sins be in the sight of God! how dreadful are those his judgments, which for our sins sake passed upon the innocent and holy Lamb of God, who had taken them upon himself! If we even allow, that the heart of man, which is like a flint, might be broken to pieces by the hammer of the law; yet it is however certain, the Gospel does more; for that melts it like wax before the fire.

(2.) Though indeed a man who turns with his heart to God, by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, at the knowledge of his sinful state, repents of, weeps over, and confesses it, and on this account, falls down at the feet of the Lord, and obtains forgiveness of sins, yet we must not imagine that he discovers all at once his total corruption. O no!—for after he has received grace and pardon, more and more light is given unto him from time to time, in order to make him better acquainted with himself, both as to his soul and body: and this is the reason that a person is, after being fifty years faithful in our Saviour's ways, a much greater sinner in his own eyes, than he was at the beginning of his conversion.

(3.) The degree of sorrow and contrition, which a heart that turns to God is to feel, on account of its misery arising

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from sin, cannot be exactly ascertained. Shall it be well-pleasing to God, it must not be a work of nature, but of grace. For that which a man produces in himself, by his own activity, tends always, in that respect, more to his hurt than to his benefit. But this must, however, be truth in every one that he feels his depravity, his sins, and his guilt, repents, and is from his heart ashamed of it in the sight of God. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; "a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not "despise," Psal. li. 17. See also Isa. lvii. 15. lxvi. 2.

(4.) Whenever we meet with a person, whose eyes God has opened to see himself in his sinful state; and who is, through grace, moved to be heartily sorry for it; we ought to direct such a one immediately to Jesus, and to encourage him to believe on him. The method of keeping such persons back, and of advising them to take care, not to think too soon on faith, may be well meant, but it is not according to the Scripture. No sooner did David say to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord," but Nathan said unto David, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt "not die," 2 Sam. xii. 13. To the jailer, who at first drew out his sword, and would have killed himself,—and who immediately after "came trembling, and fell down "before Paul and Silas, brought them out of prison, and "said unto them, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? they "answered, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou "shalt be saved, and thy house." They gave him thereupon still farther instruction, "and he believed, with his "house, and was even in that night baptized, he and all "his, straightway," Acts, xvi. 27, &c.

Should any one say to this, But David was obliged to spend three quarters of a year in agonizing distress about his sin. For from the time of his having committed sin, until the time when the wife of Uriah bore him a son, he had no rest; the answer is, Why was he so long without rest? He tells us himself, "*When I kept silence*, my bones waxed old, "through

"through my roaring all the day long. For day and night "thy hand was heavy upon me, my moisture is turned into "the drought of summer. Selah." Psal. xxxii. 3, 4.

But how was it afterwards, when he was of another mind? Verse 5. "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and "mine iniquity have I not hid: I said, *I will confess my* "*transgression unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of* "*my sin.* Selah." Psal. xxxii. 5.

§ 123.

THAT faith cometh from hearing of the Gospel (for it is of this Paul speaks), stands in express words, Rom. x. 17. But we may not only hear, but also read the word; and when we, through the word of the disciples of Jesus, which they have left us in writing, become believers in Jesus, we then enjoy the blessing of his intercession, John, xvii. 20. For the disciples (as John says of himself in particular, chap. xx. 31.) have written, "that we might believe, that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, "we might have life through his name."

But can a man, that reads, hears, or meditates upon the word of the Gospel, by his own reason and power, believe in Jesus Christ?—No. Paul writes to the Ephesians, "*By* "*grace are ye saved, through faith*; *and that not of yourselves,* "*it is the gift of God,*" chap. ii. 8.; to the Philippians, "*Unto you it is given* to believe on Christ," chap. i. 29.; and to the Colossians, "You are risen with him *through the* "*faith of the operation of God,* who hath raised him from the "dead," chap. ii. 12.

When our Lord Jesus Christ says, amongst other things, concerning the Holy Ghost, who is also called a Spirit of Faith, "He shall glorify me," John, xvi. 14. it is easy to be understood, that he does this in an especial manner, when he sets Jesus as the propitiation for the sin of the whole world, who is come to seek and to save that which

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is loſt, before the afflicted hearts; who mourn on account of their ſin; and he worketh in them the faith in him.

This being eſtabliſhed, that faith is wrought by God through the Goſpel, "which is the power of God unto "ſalvation, to every one that believeth it," Rom. i. 16. how is it then with children, who can neither read, or hear the Goſpel? God, who filled John, the forerunner of Chriſt, "with the Holy Ghoſt, even in his mother's "womb," Luke, i. 15. will do all that is neceſſary for the children, although we do not underſtand it. Luther looked upon all ſuch children, who depart out of time in their infancy, no otherwiſe than as the property of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which he has purchaſed, earned, and gained with his own blood; which the wicked enemy hath neither right to, nor power over, and which our Saviour takes beforehand, from among the whole race of men, for himſelf. Should any one think this is ſaying too much, he will do well, however, if he only abides by this, that God is the righteous Judge; he has to deal with his creatures, who by Adam's fall are involved in ſin, and who are ſinful becauſe Adam ſinned; but who are alſo atoned for through Chriſt, and his offering for us. He will therefore deal with the children in ſuch a manner, as will be perfectly conſiſtent with his goodneſs and truth, with his holineſs and righteouſneſs.

§ 124.

WHAT Paul ſays, "To him that worketh not, but be-"lieveth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, *his faith is* "*counted for righteouſneſs*," Rom. iv. 5. is in other paſſages of Scripture thus expreſſed, "To him" (to Jeſus, who died for us on the croſs, and was by God raiſed again the third day), "give all the prophets witneſs, *that through his name*, "*whoſoever believeth in him, ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins*," Acts, x. 43. and, "I ſend thee unto the Gentiles, to open

"their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and "from the power of Satan unto God, *that they may re-* "*ceive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which* "*are sanctified by faith that is in me*," Acts, xxvi. 18.

We will yet add something upon this subject.

When a man, by the grace of God, is awakened from the sleep of sin, and his eyes are opened, so as not only truly to discover his sin and guilt, but also the very source of them, that is, his deep depravity in soul and body, then his own heart tells him, that he has deserved God's wrath, and the just punishment consequent thereunto. Has he, in this situation, no evangelical instruction, directing him immediately, with all his sin and misery, to Jesus? or does he slight such instructions, seeing it does not agree with his reason? then he endeavours to procure himself rest by his own works. He thinks, Well, I have, alas! hitherto omitted the good which God has commanded, and, on the other hand, given myself up to the evil which he hath forbidden; but from this day forward I will make it my endeavour to do good, and to cease to do evil, with my utmost power; nay, I will take God to my assistance. He lays the commandments of God before him; he forms good resolutions, to regulate his life by them, and he even renews these resolutions; hoping in this manner to appease his conscience, to become well-pleasing to God, and to inherit everlasting life. This Paul expresses by *working*, proving, in his Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians, against the Jews, who were in this way, and sought by this method the forgiveness of sin, and everlasting life, that by this means it was impossible to obtain it. For, if any one had a mind to become righteous before God, and to be saved by the works of the law, he must then keep, and perfectly fulfil the whole law, according to its deepest meaning, never acting against any one single commandment. For whoso-ever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all, and is under the curse. But as it is absolutely

solutely impossible for man, who is by nature so corrupt and sinful in soul and body, to fulfil the law, and to act in such a manner, as to be guilty of the breach of no one commandment, therefore it is not possible, by the works of the law to obtain the grace of God, forgiveness of sins, the righteousness which is of avail before God, and eternal life. See Rom. iii. 20. Gal. ii. 16. Eph. ii. 8, 9. See § 89.

§ 125.

But does a man find nothing but sin in and about him; is he concerned and distressed about it; does he look upon himself as a hell-deserving creature; doth he not know where to turn for counsel and comfort, and yet wishes earnestly for it; and he then hears the gospel concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us upon the cross, and rose again the third day, that we might live through him—and he comes to Jesus Christ, and through the grace of God receives him in faith—in this case he will be helped and relieved. For Christ took our sin upon himself, and bore the punishment deserved by us; as he suffered and died for us, and for our justification was raised up again, having been obedient unto death;—so now, before the judgment-seat of God, every thing that Christ hath done and suffered is imputed or appropriated to the man who lays hold upon Christ in faith. Then it is, as if this very poor sinner, who now believeth in Christ, had himself been crucified, had died, and been buried, on account of his own sin, and undergone the penalty, which he deserved by his sins. For, through this offering, through the death and blood of Jesus the Lamb of God, without blemish and without spot, he hath forgiveness of his sins; and through the obedience of Christ unto death, even the death of the cross, he is made righteous in the sight of God, according to Rom. v. 19.; that is, he is acquitted of all his sin and guilt, and his sins are cast into the bottom of the sea. God is likewise so gracious,

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as to bestow upon the poor creature, that has now an interest in the sufferings, the death, and the blood of Christ, and whom the obedience of Christ maketh righteous before God, a firm conviction, an internal consciousness, and a feeling of his grace, of his complacency in him, of the forgiveness of his sin, and of his being now accepted in his beloved Son; which sensation renders the heart calm and quiet.

On this occasion it must be, however, observed, that this sensation, or feeling, which groundeth itself upon the Gospel, hath its degrees, and may be stronger in one person, who finds grace in the blood of Jesus, than in another: yet it is no imagination, but a real operation of the Holy Ghost.

§ 126.

To make it clear, how all this is partly elucidated, and partly confirmed, by the following passages of holy writ, we are only to observe previously, that Paul himself explains the words above cited: "He that believeth on him that "justifieth the ungodly, his faith is accounted for right-"eousness," Rom. ii. 5. For immediately thereupon he says, "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of "the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without "works, saying, *Blessed are they whose iniquities are for-"given, and whose sins are covered: Blessed is the man, to "whom the Lord will not impute sin,*" Ver. 6—8.

According to this, the words of Paul are to be taken, as if he said, He that believeth in Christ, who by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, maketh ungodly men righteous; seeing that thereby he hath purchased for them forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation, to such a one is his faith imputed for righteousness; that is, he hath forgiveness of sin, and has an interest in the sufferings, the sacrifice, the death, and blood of Christ; insomuch that he appears before God in Christ as a righteous person. A special

cial instance, of which we find in the Corinthians. Paul writes to them, "Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor "idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of "themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor "drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit "the kingdom of God. And such were some of you," 1 Cor. vi. 9, &c. But what was their case, when they laid hold of Christ in faith, and came to him as such ungodly wretches? Paul says, ver. 11. "*But ye are washed, but ye* "*are sanctified, but ye are justified* in the name of the Lord "Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

It is consequently certain, that "God hath set forth "Christ, to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, "to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that "are past," Rom. iii. 25. Thus then, we conclude, that a "man is justified by faith (*alone*), without the deeds of the "law," ver. 28.

When Paul speaks of two ways of becoming righteous before God, and one of them, which is, that a man can be made righteous by his works, is an absolute impossibility since the fall; it follows, faith is the only way by which we can be made righteous and saved. But how can any words express this point plainer than those we read, Gal. ii. 16. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of "the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have "believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the "faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by "the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." See Heb. iv. 16, John, xx. 31.

And none must think that Paul is only speaking of those works which appertained to the Jewish worship, or to the ceremonial law: No, he is speaking of all the works which the law required, as is very evident from the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. And it is clear, as well from other passages, as also from these words: "We know that "the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin,"

Rom. vii. 14. That is, I am ſo corrupted by nature, that I am not able to keep the law according to its whole meaning. Paul alſo ſays, "For what the law could not do," (namely, make us righteous, and ſave us) "in that it was "weak through the fleſh," (that is, becauſe we are ſo corrupted after the fall, as not to be able to fulfil it) "that "doth God," Rom. viii. 3.

§ 127.

THE forgiveneſs of ſins is always accompanied by peace with God, according to Rom. v. 1. "Therefore being "juſtified by faith, *we have peace with God*, through our "Lord Jeſus Chriſt."

When through faith in Him we obtain the forgiveneſs of ſins, and through the Holy Ghoſt have the aſſurance of it in our hearts, it then likewiſe becomes clear to us in his light, that God takes pleaſure in us, reconciled ſinners; and is, as our Father, attached to us with a love and grace unſpeakably great: the anxious and tormenting fear is removed, by which the poor man is diſquieted and tormented, being conſcious that he has a load of guilt and ſin upon him, and on that account expects nothing elſe but puniſhment, from the Lord, the righteous One. The enmity againſt God, and againſt his commandment, which oppoſes and condemns the will of the fleſh and of the mind, which a man, while unconverted, obeys with pleaſure, eſteeming himſelf fortunate if he can but follow and accompliſh it; this enmity (I ſay), then ceaſes in him. He is alſo delivered by grace from diffidence and diſtruſt towards God, to whom he could not hitherto have ventured, nor have been willing to come, becauſe he thought continually that God was wrathful towards him. The deep ſhame, on account of the miſery and corruption he finds in himſelf, is not indeed removed from the man whoſe ſins are forgiven him; it not only ſtill remains, but increaſes in proportion to the mercy ſhewn

ſhewn unto him: yet it does not hinder him to draw nigh to God, but rather drives him ſo much the nearer to God, who is now more indiſpenſably neceſſary to him, than the air to a living man. The child-like love towards God, which by the Holy Ghoſt is enkindled in the heart of a man as ſoon as his many ſins are forgiven him, hath then, amongſt others, this effect, that his ſoul rejoices in God, has his delight in him, likes to commune with him, walks before him, and his commandments become pleaſant to him.

This is the ſtate, and theſe the circumſtances, of the man who is reconciled to God, according to the words of Paul: "We pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God," 2 Cor. v. 20.

This is the peace of God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which flows from the forgiveneſs of ſins, which we obtain through the faith in Chriſt. See Matt. xi. 28, 29. Are not theſe, then, matters of pure experience, which the children of God poſſeſs through faith, according to the Scripture. Whoever is without the knowledge of this, has much more reaſon to be grieved on that account, than to become an ignorant oppoſer thereof. Yet it is impoſſible to expreſs by words all that which the peace of God implies. Wherefore Paul ſays, Phil. iv. 7. "The peace of God *paſſeth all un-* "*derſtanding*."

Therefore neither angels, nor men, are capable, with all their ſtudy, to comprehend the importance of this, that the ſupremely holy God could condeſcend to enter into ſuch a covenant of love and peace with his ſinful and wretched creatures. Our wiſh is, that the words of Jeſus, which he ſpake to his diſciples, John, xiv. 27. may be reſounded in the hearts of all readers: "*Peace* I leave with you, *my* "*peace* I give unto you."

§ 128.

THAT through faith we become children of God, has been treated of already, § 97, &c. But with this is undoubtedly connected, that through faith we become heirs also of everlasting life. This is quite evident from the words of Paul: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our "Spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, "*then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*," Rom. viii. 16, 17.

If, in other cases, a man inherits, it generally does not take place before he after whom he is to inherit be dead. Now, because God cannot die, therefore believers are only, for this reason, called heirs of God; because the kingdom of God, and everlasting life, are given without any merit of theirs, and purely for this reason, because through faith they are become children of God. Seeing that God hath made that same Jesus, whom the Jews did crucify, both Lord and Christ, and said to him, "Sit thou at my right hand," Acts, ii. 34, &c. therefore did he also "make him heir of all "things," Heb. i. 2. And he who by faith is a child of God, the same becomes a joint heir with Christ, or "an "heir of God through Christ," Gal. iv. 7. Peter calls it "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth "not away, reserved in heaven," 1 Pet. i. 4. And Paul says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have en-"tered into the heart of man, the things which God hath "prepared for them that love him," 1 Cor. ii. 9. Yet he adds, ver. 10. "But God hath revealed them unto us by his "Spirit." And to the Ephesians, he wishes, that "the "eyes of their understanding being enlightened, they may "know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches "of the glory of his inheritance in the saints," Ephes. i. 18. The Holy Ghost, with whom, after we have believed, we are sealed, is called "the earnest of our inheritance," Ephes. i. 14; for HE is also given unto us for an assurance

of

of the future and promised glory. Thus the hope of everlasting life issues like a spring from the faith in Jesus Christ; and when that is truly alive in us, O what a rich consolation doth it afford unto us, both in death and in life! The holy Scriptures will assure us of this; and therefore, amongst other things, it is said, "He that believeth on the "Son, *hath everlasting life*," John, iii. 36.

It is as certain to him, as if he possessed it already: and indeed he has a foretaste of it here.

§ 129.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ said to the woman of Canaan, who, in her distress, ran and cried unto him, persisting in her supplication and prayer, until he turned himself in grace unto her, "O woman, *great is thy faith*, be it unto thee "even as thou wilt," Matt. xv. 22, &c. To his disciples, who were with him on the sea, and during the storm, thought, in despair, that they should perish, he said, "Why "are ye fearful, *O ye of little faith?*" Matt. viii. 23, &c. His disciples besought him "*to increase their faith*," Luke, xvii. 5. And Paul writes to the Thessalonians, 2 Epist. i. 3. "We are bound to thank God always for you—because "that *your faith groweth exceedingly*."

From these and other passages of Scripture it is evident, that faith, even in such as belong to our Saviour, may be little and weak; but yet it is not the mind of our Lord Jesus Christ, that it remain so, but that it should grow and increase. For if we "grow in grace, and in the know-"ledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," which, according to 2 Pet. iii. 18. is necessary, it cannot be otherwise, but that we must at the same time grow in faith.

"Watch ye, *stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be* "*strong*," are the words, 1 Cor. xvi. 13. For although the Lord "will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the "smoaking flax," (that is, a weak faith, which does but

burn and ſhine a very little), according to Matt. xii. 20. Iſa. xlii. 3. it however is not his will that it ſhould continue ſo.

Of Abraham it is ſaid, "He ſtaggered not at the promiſe "of God through unbelief, but *was ſtrong in faith, giving* "*glory to God: And being fully perſuaded, that what he had* "*promiſed he was able alſo to perform,*" Rom, iv. 20, 21. And therefore he is alſo called "the Father of all them that "believe," Rom. iv. 11, 12. See § 88.; and we, as his children, ſhould follow his footſteps.

§ 130.

WE do not ſpeak here of the extraordinary gift of the Spirit, of which our Saviour ſpeaks to his diſciples, Luke, xvii. 6, &c. "*If ye had faith* as a grain of muſtard ſeed, "ye might ſay unto this ſycamine tree, Be thou plucked "up by the root, and be thou planted in the ſea; and "it ſhould obey you." And, "*If ye have faith*, and doubt "not, ye ſhall ſay unto this mountain, Be thou removed, "and be thou caſt into the ſea, it ſhall be done," Matt. xxi. 21.

This faith, which was mighty in many and great wonders and ſigns, was at that time neceſſary; and our Saviour enjoined it upon his diſciples in theſe words: "*Have faith* "*in God*," Mark, xi. 22.

But God would not ſuffer this gift, which he had given to the believers at that time, on account of the Jews, who would not believe unleſs they ſaw ſigns and wonders, to continue in his church, no more than he would continue the gift of ſpeaking in foreign languages, and other gifts of the ſame kind, and withdrew them for wiſe reaſons. See § 108. However, the meaning is not, that he could no longer impart ſuch gifts, or that he would not, if even it ſhould be neceſſary now, as it was then; but all we ſay, is, the ordinary courſe in the church of Chriſt in our days

days doth not require it; and there is no neceſſity for any proof of this.

We therefore do not ſpeak of the miraculous faith, but of that faith which the children of God poſſeſs; and which our Saviour means in theſe words: "Whoſoever believeth "on him," (the Son of Man lifted up on the croſs) "ſhall "not periſh, but have eternal life," John, iii. 15.

§ 131.

ALTHOUGH this faith, which is ſo peculiar to all the children of God, that whoever has it not, is no child of God, does no outward wonders and ſigns, raiſe none from the dead, removes no mountains, yet it does and performs other things, which are of much greater importance. What are thoſe things? Anſwer, We through faith attain to the enjoyment of that, which Chriſt hath by his ſacrifice purchaſed for us. See § 80. We are, (1.) Through faith in Jeſus Chriſt made free from the dominion of ſin. Paul ſays, "Sin ſhall not have dominion over you, for ye are not "under the law, but under grace," Rom. vi. 14.

All thoſe who believe in Jeſus Chriſt, are freed from the curſe and compulſion of the law; they obtain forgiveneſs of ſins, become the adopted children of God, and are ſealed with the Holy Ghoſt. Theſe are they, then, who are made free from the dominion of ſin, becauſe they are under grace. Now when they are thus exhorted, "Let not ſin reign in "your mortal body, that ye ſhould obey it in the luſts there-"of; neither yield ye your members as inſtruments of un-"righteouſneſs unto ſin," &c. Rom. vi. 12, 13. they cannot ſay, O! that is impoſſible for us—we are but ſinful men—the fleſh is weak, and the like. For they have Jeſus Chriſt, who ſaveth his people from their ſins; they have a Father in heaven, who heareth their prayer and ſupplication. The Holy Ghoſt dwells in their hearts, and ſtrengthens them in all that is good. If they therefore do

but rightly make use of the grace wherein through faith they stand, then sin can have no dominion over them. This is exactly what John says, 1 Epist. iii. 9. "Whosoever is "born of God, *doth not commit sin*," (he doth not let sin reign, or have the dominion in his mortal body, that he should obey it in the lusts thereof), "for his seed remaineth "in him, and *he cannot sin*, because he is born of God." That is, his heart will comply with no such thing; for he loves our Saviour, being a child of God, and a partaker of the Holy Ghost.

(2.) Our faith is the victory, says John, which overcometh the world. "*Who is he that overcometh the world*, "*but he that believeth* that Jesus is the Son of God?" 1 John, v. 4, 5.

All mankind, be they who they will, as long as they are without Christ, and do not believe on him, love the world (that is, every thing that is out of, and contrary to God), and all that is in the world, namely, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, and are governed by the world. Whereas he who through faith is become a child of God, and a new creature, is set free from this slavery, and delivered from this wretched condition, in which he serves, and is forced to serve the world, and its will (because he has neither will nor power to rend himself from it), and is set at liberty. When, agreeable to this, it is said to such as believe in Christ, "*Love not the world*, "*neither the things that are in the world.* If any man love "the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all "that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of "the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but "is of the world: and the world passeth away, and the lust "thereof," &c. 1 John, ii. 15, &c.

Nothing impossible is here demanded of such persons; for they, through faith in Christ, have power to overcome the world; and, at the time when they forsook it, and its wicked nature and ways, and were converted to Christ, they obtained

obtained the victory over it, and through faith overcame the world.

(3.) Faith in Christ sets us free from the power of the devil, and is able to resist manfully his attacks and temptations. When our eyes are opened, so as to get a true knowledge of ourselves and our wretched condition, and at the same time by faith to see Jesus Christ, who can and will deliver us; we then are "turned from darkness to light, and "from the power of Satan unto God," Acts, xxvi. 18. Thus Satan must retreat, and give us up, as soon as we believe in Christ, and fly in all our distress to him. But as afterwards "he walketh about, as our adversary, and as a "roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," 1 Pet. v. 8. What are believers to do in this case? Peter says, "*Whom* "*resist stedfast in the faith*, knowing that the same afflic-"tions are accomplished in your brethren that are in "the world," 1 Pet. v. 9. And Paul exhorts the Ephesians, "Above all, take ye the *shield of faith, where-"with ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the "wicked*," Ephes. vi. 16. So all this hath been proved in § 58. and § 59.

Oh! of how great importance is it, to be delivered from the cruel tyranny of the devil, who now worketh in the children of disobedience, that is, in all unbelievers (Ephes. ii. 2.) and to be put into a state of security against his craft, wrath, rage, and power! This is done by faith, or more properly by our Lord Jesus Christ, who is apprehended by faith.

§ 132.

To this we add, (4.) what Paul says, "Do we then "make void the law through faith? God forbid! yea, we "establish the law," Rom. iii. 31.

There have been always men, who have laboured at the reformation of mankind; and we justly entertain a respect for their good-meaning and design. But if they pass over faith

faith in Jesus Christ, they can however, with all their labour, effect nothing further, than that one or another demean themselves outwardly more rationally than the rest of mankind are generally used to do. But how does it stand with the heart? Is that cured of its self-love, of its avarice, of its pride, of its fleshly lusts, and such things? Is it filled with the love of God, with confidence in, and obedience to God, with love to its neighbour, and even to its enemies? Here is always a defect. And if a man, who has not before experienced Jesus Christ to be his Saviour, becomes rightly acquainted with himself, he, by the grace of God, is as much ashamed of his former state, as the most profligate are before the eyes of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But when we, by faith, receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, then, for the sake of his death, which he endured for us, our sins are cast into the depth of the sea. Hence springs up in us an ardent love towards him: "For "to *whomsoever much is forgiven, the same loveth much*," according to Christ's own words, Luke, vii. 37, &c. particularly when it has been made clear to his heart by the Holy Ghost, what pain it cost our Saviour to bear the chastisement due to us, that we might have peace. And if we love him, we wish to be a joy to him. And this agrees with the words of our Saviour, "*If a man love me, he will keep my* "*words*," John, xiv. 23.

The Holy Ghost, who through faith dwelleth in the heart, imparts also a delight in, and power to do whatsoever God hath commanded; and renders, on the other hand, sin odious to us, and assists us against it. Thus is the law of God established through faith in Christ; to believers it is no longer a burden, but a pleasure; they meditate thereupon day and night, desirous to be obedient to it; they weep, and pray to God for the assistance of his grace; and they are "able to do all things through Christ, who "strengthens them;" if they only do like Paul, cleave to, and hold fast by him in faith," Phil. iv. 12, 13. Hence the

the Scripture ſpeaks of a "faith that worketh by love," Gal. v. 6. Where this is wanting, there no faith is. Which John thus roundly expreſſes: "He that ſaith, I "know him," (which is as much as to ſay, I believe on him), "and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, "and the truth is not in him." And, "He that ſaith he "abideth in him," (*through faith we put on Chriſt, and perſevering in faith, we abide in him*) "ought himſelf alſo ſo "to walk, even as he walked," 1 John, ii. 4. 6.

§ 133.

UPON this head the queſtion ariſes, How can we aſcribe all the before-mentioned properties to Faith? Ought we not rather to ſay, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the cauſe of our ſalvation; and that through Him we are not only freed and delivered from all miſery and wretchedneſs, but alſo brought unto everlaſting life, and to a conſummate joy? Undoubtedly: But the caſe is this: The Lord our Saviour giveth, and Faith receiveth. But the laſt, viz. Faith, which accepteth Grace, is ſo very well-pleaſing to the Lord, who is ever more ready to give, than poor men are to deſire and receive, that he aſcribes every thing unto it. When, for example, that poor woman, who for twelve years ſucceſſively had been afflicted with ſuch a painful diſorder, which rendered her unclean, and could be cured by no man, touched the hem of his garment in Faith, "*Virtue went out of him* (the Lord), and *cured her* upon "the ſpot." But what did he ſay to her upon this? "*Thy* "*Faith hath ſaved thee.*" And the very ſame was his way of ſpeaking towards all and each, whom he helped in their calamitous ſituation. Now, as we cannot ſay, that a poor man (eſpecially, if he is ſo ſick that he muſt be helped and brought to a place where he can receive the gift that is reached out to him) that by the very act of receiving the gift,

gift, he has deſerved it; ſo we cannot ſpeak of any merit in faith. For man is ſo corrupted, as to be without even willingneſs to be helped by Chriſt; and whenſoever he is willing to receive the help offered him by the hand of the Lord, that is, when he believes; then is this very Faith the gift of God, and he has it not of himſelf. See § 123.

§ 134.

FAITH lays hold of the word of God, or the Goſpel, "for it is the power of God unto ſalvation, to every one "that believeth," Rom. i. 16. This, for inſtance, is ſaid concerning Abraham's faith—"He ſtaggered not at the "promiſe of God through unbelief, but was ſtrong in "faith, giving glory to God; and *being fully perſuaded*, "*that what he had promiſed he was able alſo to perform*," Rom. iv. 20, 21. Thus he held faſt the promiſe of God, that Goſpel, which he had heard of the Lord.

But as Faith holds faſt the word of God, ſo do we alſo grow in Faith; if we become converſant with that word and feed upon it. "As new born babes deſire the "ſincere milk of the Word (the ſpiritual food of the Go-"ſpel) *that ye may grow thereby*," 1 Pet. ii. 2.

The Goſpel is in the Scripture called a glorious Light, by means whereof God enlightens men, to ſee the glory of Jeſus Chriſt, who is the image of God, 2 Cor. iv. 4. For "all the promiſes of God, in him are yea, and in him, "Amen;" that is, in Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, 2 Cor. i. 20. Although the glorious words which are ſpoken by Jeſus Chriſt are very many; yet, the mind of a man, whoſe miſery and corruption have been ſo diſcovered to him by the Holy Ghoſt, as to cauſe in him an anxious and earneſt deſire to be redeemed and delivered from them, is firſt of all intent upon that which is by Paul expreſſed in the following words, "This is a faithful ſaying, "and

" and worthy of all acceptation, *that Christ Jesus came into* " *the world to save sinners*," (which includes also those who have committed gross sins), 1 Tim. i. 15.

Likewise what the angel of the Lord says to Joseph: " She (Mary) shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call " his name JESUS; for *HE shall save* (rescue and redeem) " *his people from their sins*," Matt. i. 21.

In this case the poor man, who, in the light of the Spirit sees that he is lost, falls down at the feet of Jesus Christ; and even this the Holy Ghost works in him. For " no man can (with truth) say, that Jesus is the Lord, but " by the Holy Ghost," 1 Cor. xii. 3. He tells our Saviour his distress, and God gives him the grace of believing stedfastly, that Jesus Christ can and will save him from his sins. Thus then " is the power given him to " become a child of God," according to John, i. 12. And of such a poor sinner, who lies in Faith at the feet of our Lord and Saviour, John says: " Whosoever believeth " that Jesus is the Christ," (that he is his, as he is also the Saviour of the whole world) " is born of God." (He is a new creature, a child of God.) 1 John, v. 1.

What Paul writes to the church at Ephesus, " Ye " through Christ, after that ye believed, were sealed with " that Holy Spirit of Promise," (that is, the Spirit which was promised), Ephes. i. 13. takes place particularly in him, who being come unto Jesus by faith, has received him as his Lord and Saviour. See Gal. iii. 14.

From that hour, when faith in Jesus has been enkindled by God in the heart of a poor sinner, who deemed himself to be lost, the Holy Ghost never ceases glorifying Christ in him through the Gospel. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who said to Peter, " I have " prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not," attends still, as he did when he walked upon earth, to the faith of his people, Luke, xxii. 32.

§ 135.

§ 135.

IF we consider attentively the ways of the Lord with the souls that belong to him (as we ought to do), we shall find in general, that he strengthens, exercises, and tries their faith; and when it is weak, and as it were sick, gladly makes and keeps it sound. Many of his commandments in the Old Testament aimed at this. The people of Israel were, for instance, in the seventh year, "neither to sow "their seed, nor prune their vineyard," Levit. xxv. 4. They should believe, that, if they kept this commandment, God would in the sixth year give them such plentiful crops, as should be sufficient for their use in the seventh and eighth, until the harvest in the ninth year. In general, the bringing the people out of Egypt, through the wilderness, and in the land of Canaan, from first to last, were attended with trials of their faith. His servants and prophets, for instance, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, David, &c. experienced in particular, on their own parts, still more trials of their faith, and their faith was by that means more and more strengthened. For a confirmation of this, we may read the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, though the whole Bible is full of it. With the church in the New Testament, and with the servants of God in the New Covenant, the case has continued the same; and the trials have increased.

But if we take a view of that faith, by which we become happy men, and which is the subject of our discourse here, we shall find, that the way and manner in which it is nourished, strengthened, and preserved, is not the same in all and every person who are members of the body of Jesus. Very great and manifold is the difference between man and man, in respect of their education, religion, knowledge, and other circumstances; and the Holy Ghost, who is the source of all wisdom (for HE is God) deals with each in such a manner, as to attain his aim with him.

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In the mean time, experience teaches us, that the Holy Ghost labours incessantly upon the following points; namely,

(1.) To shew the souls who are come to Christ, more and more, how much they stand in need of a Saviour; and that the element in which a creature lives and subsists, is not so indispensably necessary for it, as the Lord our Saviour is for a poor sinner: To him who rightly considers *this*, it will not be so incomprehensible; why, even after our conversion to Christ, God permits us to be still surrounded with so many infirmities.

(2.) The Holy Ghost directs the souls, who have been, through faith, embodied into Christ, continually anew to that point, that Christ has died for the ungodly; that he has given himself for our sins, and offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears to God; that he became a curse for us; that he shed his precious blood for us; and all this out of pure love to us lost men. He preserves us from the indifference towards the merits and death of Jesus, and reminds us faithfully of the anguish of his soul, which pressed out of his pores a bloody sweat; of the reproach of them, who, by reproaching God, broke his heart; of his cruel torments; of the crown of thorns violently forced upon his brows; of his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross; how he, upon the cross, cried out, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" and how from his pierced side blood and water issued forth, &c. O! how mightily is faith strengthened thereby! What proofs are they of his love towards us, which enkindle in us love in return towards him! especially if we can say with Paul, "Christ hath loved *me*, and given himself for "*me*," Gal. ii. 20.

(3.) The Holy Ghost also, through the Gospel, makes it continually more clear to us, what treasures of grace and salvation are laid up for us in the offering, the blood, the death, and the obedience of Christ. Thereby "hath he

" redeemed us from the curse of the law." " All things " are reconciled by him unto himself." " He hath deli- " vered us from the wrath to come." " By his stripes are " we healed." " He gave himself for our sins, *that he* " *might deliver us from this present evil world*," Gal. i. 4. " He gave himself for us, *that he might redeem us from all* " *iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous* " *of good works*," Tit. ii. 14. In Christ " we have *re-* " *demption* through his blood; even the *forgiveness of sins*," Ephes. i. 7. Coloss. i. 14. " He died for us, *that whether* " *we wake or sleep, we should live together with him*," 1 Thess. v. 10. " Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the " unjust, *that he might bring us to God*, that is, that he might make us an offering or living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to God, 1 Pet. iii. 18. " *Through death he hath* " *destroyed him that hath the power of death, that is the devil*," Heb. ii. 14. " As by one man's" (Adam's) " disobedi- " ence, *many were made sinners*; so *by the obedience of one*" (of Christ, who was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross) *many are made righteous*," Rom. v. 9. " The " blood of Christ—*purges our conscience from dead works, to* " *serve the living God*," Heb. ix. 14.

When the Holy Ghost leads us to all this, and effectually instructs us concerning the treasure which we have in the offering of Jesus, then faith becomes, according to Luther's description, living, active, practical, mighty; so that it is impossible but that it should constantly work good in us. Faith doth likewise not ask, Are good works to be done? but, before the question is asked, they are done already, and are always doing:—so that it is impossible to separate works from faith; yea, as impossible as to separate heat and light from fire.

(4.) Accordingly, it is a principal work of the Holy Ghost, to fix steadily the poor sinner's eye of faith upon the offering of Jesus for us. As, in the Old Testament, by God's having commanded a lamb to be offered up twice

every day, that is, morning and evening, the offering of Jesus, which should afterwards be made, was brought continually into remembrance; so the Holy Ghost never ceases to bring this sacrifice of Jesus, made once for all, for us, continually to the remembrance of the hearts of believers. For the love of God, who gave his only-begotten Son for us, and that of our Lord Jesus Christ, who himself became a sacrifice for our sins, is thereby made manifest in the most glorious manner.

In the mean time, we are not to think that the Holy Ghost ceases, more and more, to explain to those who become believers in Christ, all that which, beside the above, is contained in the Gospel concerning Christ. For faith in Christ lays hold of all that which is said about him in the Gospel, adhering firmly to it. For instance, when the Gospel testifies, that God hath spoken to us by his Son, and hath taught us through him; in this case, faith lays hold of it, accepts him, and that with joy, for its teacher. It looks upon all that to be true which Christ has said. Why so? Because HE hath said it. It receives, with the simplicity of a child, all that which HE has commanded, as profitable, as needful, as good and wholesome. Why so? Because HE has commanded it. What he has forbidden, that it looks upon as pernicious, as foolish, as wicked and destructive. Why so? Because HE has forbidden it. This is likewise the case in other points. For example, it is said in the Gospel, "Let all the angels of God worship him;" "Grace and peace be on all them who call upon the name "of Christ;" "Whosoever shall call upon the name of "the Lord shall be saved, he shall be delivered," &c. Now faith receives these words, and it is very pleasing to faith, that it may approach unto Christ, lie at his feet, and pour out the heart before him. When Christ says concerning himself, "All power is given unto me in heaven and upon "earth;" when in the Gospel he is called the "King of "Kings, and the Lord of Lords;" such declarations are

to faith moſt joyous, and the ſoul depends upon them with the whole heart. The ſame is the caſe, when Chriſt is called, "the Head of the Church;" "the Biſhop of our "ſouls;" "the good Shepherd of his ſheep;" "our Advo-"cate with the Father;" "the Light enlightening every "man;" "the Maker of every creature;" "the Pre-"ſerver of all things;" "the Bridegroom of his church;" "the Reſurrection and the Life;" "the Judge of all the "world;" "our Shield and exceeding great Reward," &c. Theſe are all, without exception, names that are to faith more precious, than all the treaſures and glories of the earth.

(5.) Now as faith cleaves to Jeſus Chriſt, ſeeking to experience, and to enjoy all that which, in the words of the Goſpel, is teſtified concerning him; and as, through faith in Chriſt, we are brought into the moſt intimate fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt, ſo do we alſo, through faith, attain to the fellowſhip with the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. The Goſpel, or the doctrine of Jeſus and of his apoſtles, is full of the moſt glorious proofs of his love, which is, as well to angels as to men, incomprehenſible. This conſtrained him to give us his only-begotten Son, in and through whom we have the moſt precious promiſes, that he will deign to be our God and Father, and approve himſelf as ſuch unto us. All theſe promiſes doth faith lay hold upon, and attains to the enjoyment of them in Chriſt. From hence ariſes in us a child-like and confident acceſs to our dear Father, a tender love to him, a grateful bowing down before him, a comfortable and confident prayer unto him, a living hope, which is grounded upon his word, a hearty reſignation to his will, and a zealous endeavour to become a joy and honour to him. Concerning which points more ſhall be ſaid hereafter.

Of

Of Holy Baptism.

§ 136.

WHEN God entered into a covenant with Abraham, he gave him circumcision as the seal of it, Gen. xvii. 7, &c. Rom. iv. 11, &c. This ordinance, by which the male children were at eight days old to be circumcised on the foreskin of their flesh, God maintained so strenuously, as to declare, that the "uncircumcised man-child, "whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul "shall be cut off from his people," Gen. xvii. 14.; Yea, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself submtted to this ordinance of God, and, as our Mediator, was circumcised upon the eighth day, Luke, ii. 21.

According to the intention of God, the people of Israel were, in the first place, to have by means of circumcision, a continual memorial, that they were a covenant people, and that they should observe his commandments. If they did not do this, but turned aside from the commandments of God, and did not attend to his injunctions, then circumcision availed them nothing, nor were they better than the uncircumcised, as Paul expressly testifies, Rom. ii. 25, &c. But besides this, God would teach the people of Israel, by circumcision, a doctrine of a more profound nature, which was this, that they should put away from them all that which belonged to corruption, and was not according to his mind, even though this could not be effected without pain. Hence doth Moses himself speak concerning the foreskin of the heart, and concerning the circumcision of the heart, Deut. x. 16. xxx. 6. And this is frequently repeated in the Prophets: for example, Jer. iv. 4. But by the foreskin of the heart is meant all that which is opposite

to the word of God, to the love of God and our neighbour, all this must be put away.

Now, as circumcision was a seal of the covenant which God made with Abraham and his seed, so did our Lord Jesus Christ appoint and institute holy baptism as a seal of the New Covenant. "Go ye," (says he to his disciples after his resurrection, and before his ascension) "and teach "all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Fa-"ther, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii. 19.

In the Gospel according to St. Mark it is said, "Go ye "into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every crea-"ture." (that is, to all men, not to Jews only, but to the Gentiles also.) "He that believeth and is baptized "shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," Mark xvi. 15, 16.

We are therefore to speak about baptism, as that which Christ hath instituted for a seal of the New Covenant.

§ 137.

BEFORE our Lord Jesus Christ entered upon his public ministry, John the son of Zacharias began his preaching; the contents of which were, first, To set before the Jews their wicked ways, and to exhort them to repentance. At the same time he told the people to believe on him who was to come after him, that is, on Jesus, that HE was the Christ, or the Messiah, Acts, xix. 4. John, i. 6, 7. And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them for the forgiveness of sins, directing them to bring forth the genuine fruits of repentance, Matt. iii. 5, &c. And he testified at the same time to them, that they should be baptized by Jesus with the Holy Ghost, which also ensued accordingly.

What the baptism of Christ has in common with the baptism of John, and wherein it is distinguished from it, may be

be easily determined, if we give a more minute description of the baptism of Christ.

The preaching of the Gospel always preceded, and the disciples of Jesus, who were sent out by the Lord into all the world, could now, with an emboldened heart, testify of the salvation in Christ to every man. They spoke of the Father, who did not spare his only-begotten Son, but gave him up for us all; of the Son, who having taken our sin upon himself, became a sacrifice for us; of the Holy Ghost, who was to come upon those who receive Christ in faith. They declared, that Jesus was truly risen again from the dead, and had sat down at the right hand of God in heaven; and that now all that believe in him receive in his name forgiveness of sins, &c. Next to this, they took notice of such, in whom the Gospel found an entrance, and who received it in faith: and if these desired to be baptized, they received this answer, "If thou believest with all thine "heart, thou mayest," Acts, viii. 37. Then baptism first ensued, and thus it went in the following order: "He that "(1.) believeth;" and, (2.) "is baptized, shall be saved." According to the word of Christ, Mark, xvi. 16. Then they instructed them further, "teaching them to observe all "things, whatsoever Christ had commanded them," according to Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

§ 138.

BAPTISM with water was esteemed by the apostles to be so necessary, on account of the command of Christ, that even Cornelius, with his kinsmen and near friends, whom he had called together into his house, were baptized, after that the Holy Ghost had already, during Peter's discourse, been poured out upon them, Acts, x. 24, &c.

Thus was baptism an act instituted and enjoined by Christ himself; by means whereof a poor, sinful, and sin-burdened

man, but who knew, bewailed, and confeſſed his ſins, and believed with all his heart that Chriſt could forgive him, and cleanſe him from them, was made a partaker of the New Covenant, which was eſtabliſhed by Chriſt, and by his propitiatory offering. Externally, his body was, by the miniſtry of a ſervant of Chriſt, waſhed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, with pure water; nay, even dipped into it, and as it were buried. The blood of Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, cleanſed him at the ſame time from all ſins, and in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; and for the ſake of the offering made by Jeſus, every thing was forgiven him at once, 1 John, v. 6. Epheſ. v. 25, 26. Baptiſm was the ſeal and public confeſſion, that this newly-baptized perſon was now, through faith, actually become a property of Jeſus Chriſt, a child of God, and a temple of the Holy Ghoſt, and as ſuch, ſhould alſo, from the very time of his having been baptized, demean and approve himſelf. For juſt as a man was, by means of circumciſion, taken into the covenant, which God had made with Abraham and his ſeed, and from that day forward had an intereſt in all the treaſures of grace, and ſpecial privileges which were contained in the Old Teſtament, though he at the ſame time entered into an obligation to keep the entire law belonging to that covenant; ſo was alſo a man, who believed in Chriſt, received by baptiſm into the New Covenant eſtabliſhed by Chriſt, and confirmed with his own blood: and he thereby obtained an intereſt in all the bleſſings of ſalvation, which have been purchaſed for us poor ſinners by the life, ſufferings, and death of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: but he, on the other hand, bound himſelf to become obedient unto Jeſus Chriſt, as his Lord, and as a child, to follow his commandments.

Whether in all the ſeveral congregations of the primitive church, water was made uſe of in one and the ſame manner,

manner, we cannot say with certainty. It is probable, that the persons to be baptized were dipped under the water, where the water was deep enough; and that, where there was no sufficient depth of water, they poured it over them, and washed them with it. That in the ages succeeding, the Christian church did not every where keep to one and the same mode, with respect to the use of the water in baptism, needs no proof, being manifest.

§ 139.

The words of Paul, "Know ye not, that so many "of us, as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were bap-"tized into his death? Therefore we are buried with "him by baptism into death," Rom. vi. 3, 4. contain the reason of the efficacy of baptism. The dipping, or over-streaming with water, cannot in and of itself bring us salvation, see 1 Pet. iii. 21.; but the participation of the death of Jesus, which faith lays hold of, is that upon which all depends in baptism. This death hath atoned for us, and paid our debt; so that now, through faith in him, we find grace, and of this, baptism is a special assurance. And thus are the words of Peter to be taken, which he speaks to the Jews, "Be baptized every one of "you in the name of Jesus Christ, *for the remission of* "*sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*," Acts, ii. 38.

When Ananias says to Saul, "Arise, and *be baptized*, "*and wash away thy sins*," Acts, xxii. 16. and when Paul writes to the Ephesians, "Christ loved the church, and "gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and *cleanse it* "*with the washing of water by the word*," Eph. v. 25, 26. it must not then be understood as if this was to be ascribed to the water. Faith looks to Jesus, who shed his blood for the remission of our sins; HE it is, "who loveth us, "and washeth us from our sins in his own blood," Rev. i. 5.

"The blood of Christ doth also purge our conscience from "dead works," Heb. ix. 14. Unto this baptism is added, which is, "the washing of water by the word." It is connected with the word of God, sealing and ratifying to us the grace in the blood of Jesus, and the forgiveness by the blood and death of the Lord. The words of Paul, 1 Cor. vi. 9, &c. are from hence very plain: he is there speaking of fornicators and idolators, &c. and then says, "Such "were some of you; *but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified,* "*but ye are justified,*" &c. The meaning of this is, It has all been forgiven you. With what were they then washed? The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in whom they believed, cleansed them from all sin. But this was by washing of water by the word ratified and sealed to them. In this sense is baptism called, Tit. iii. 4. &c. (the laver) "*washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*" "After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour to-"wards man appeared, not by works of righteousness, "which we have done, but according to his mercy, *he* "*saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the* "*Holy Ghost,* which he shed on us abundantly through Je-"sus Christ our Saviour." Regeneration, which consists of this, that through faith in Jesus Christ we become the children of God, is a work of the Holy Ghost. The renewing, whereby, through the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, we become new creatures, is connected with it, and is also a work of the Holy Ghost. When therefore a man is, through faith in Christ, made a child of God, and a new creature, then is he also outwardly bathed and washed, baptism being the *bath*, or *washing* of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. It is our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom God richly, or abundantly, poureth out the Holy Ghost upon us. God saveth us by baptism, that is, he thereby sealeth the pardon or remission of sins, the adoption of God, and the inheritance of everlasting life; all which

which we attain through Jesus Christ, and through faith in him, without any merit or worthiness of our own. At the same time we see by this passage of Scripture, how active the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are at the baptism of a poor sinner, who believeth in Jesus.

§ 140.

SOMETHING farther is still to be mentioned in reference to the words of Paul and Peter concerning baptism. Paul writes, "*In Christ are ye circumcised with the circumcision* "*made without hands*, in putting off the body of the sins of "the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, *buried with him* "*in baptism*, wherein also you are risen with him through "the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him "from the dead," Col. ii. 11.

But in Peter it is thus expressed, 1 Epist. iii. 21. "We "are saved by water in baptism, (not by the putting "away of the filth of the flesh, but *the answer of a good* "*conscience towards God*), by the resurrection of Jesus "Christ."

For it is evident from these passages, (1.) That God requires the circumcision of the heart (see § 136), no less in the New Testament than he did in the Old; and the Colossians were, according to the words of Paul, as to their hearts, circumcised by baptism. (2.) That the meaning implied in baptism was this, Did Christ die, and was he buried for us; and have we, through faith, an interest in this offering for us and for our sin; then will we also die to sin, renouncing from the heart, and as it were drowning, all that for which he atoned with so much pain. (3.) That in baptism, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead was called to mind, with that resolution, We will also now rise again with Christ, and begin to live a new life with him, in righteousness and holiness, that is acceptable to him. This was the covenant

nant of a good conſcience with God. A man may ſay, in reſpect to this and the other matter, I have a good conſcience; that is, I am not conſcious that I have ſinned therein; but if he takes a view of his whole life, of all his propenſities, deſires, affections, and words, of all his commiſſions and omiſſions, and compares the whole with the word and will of God, then no man can ſay he has a good conſcience; but if we believe in Chriſt, and are baptized in his name, then are all ſins at once forgiven us, and we are received, or adopted to be children of God. In this ſituation is the conſcience appeaſed, and quieted, not condemning us any more; we thereby attain to a good conſcience. It is incumbent upon us to preſerve this good conſcience, from the time of our having attained it in baptiſm by faith: which is done thus, if, for inſtance, we abide in the faith of Jeſus, and keep his commandments, and faithfully conduct ourſelves agreeably to them; if we do not ſuffer ourſelves to be led away from the doctrine of Jeſus, if we follow the impulſes of his Holy Spirit, and are, child-like, obedient to him; and amidſt all our imperfection, manifold miſtakes, frequent backwardneſs, and many doubts, we hold faſt by Jeſus Chriſt, who, on account of his blood ſhed for us, richly and daily forgiveth us. For where remiſſion, or forgiveneſs of ſins is, there is alſo life and ſalvation, and a good conſcience. But he that does not this, but puts a good conſcience away from him, diſregarding the commandments of Jeſus, will not be governed by the Holy Ghoſt, abides not in the doctrines of Jeſus, and cleaves not to him, ſuch a one loſes the joyous confidence of his heart, his own heart condemns him, and he makes ſhipwreck of the faith; that is, he errs from the truth, the Holy Spirit withdraws from him, he falls from grace, and loſes the faith, according to 1 Tim. i. 19.

§ 141.

§ 141.

Infant baptiſm, univerſally practiſed in Chriſtendom (excepting thoſe who in general are known by the name of Baptiſts, but are divided into many parties), though the manner of adminiſtering it is various, is in the Holy Scripture neither expreſsly commanded nor forbidden. Now thoſe ſay, who are not of the opinion, that children ſhould be baptized: Chriſt commanded his diſciples, firſt of all, to preach the Goſpel, then to baptize only ſuch as believe in it. Therefore a man muſt firſt have faith, before he can be a proper ſubject of baptiſm. Paul ſays, "How ſhould they "believe in him, of whom they have not heard?" Now whereas children have not heard the Goſpel, ſo neither can they have faith; and becauſe they do not believe, they ought not to be baptized.

This objection is very plauſible; but if we take all circumſtances into conſideration, it is eaſy to explain why the practice of infant baptiſm became nevertheleſs ſo univerſal. At the time when our Lord and Saviour ſent his diſciples forth into all the world, the Chriſtian church was to be firſt formed. The Lord therefore told them how they ſhould proceed in collecting his church. They were not to preach the Goſpel to the Jews only, but to the Gentiles alſo; and then to baptize ſuch as believed the Goſpel, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt. The baptized kept afterwards together, and became congregations of Chriſt, and theſe congregations collectively formed the church of Chriſt. Thus then the preaching was firſt, afterwards faith, and then baptiſm.

But as thus congregations of Chriſt were formed, what then was to be done with the children? And how were they to be looked upon? Paul tells us, that the children are holy, if only the father or mother are believers, 1 Cor. vii. 14. How? are not the children of believers alſo ſinful

creatures by nature? And doth not the Lord our Saviour ſay, that "What is born of the fleſh is fleſh?" Certainly; and in this ſenſe they are not holy. How then? In this ſenſe, that from their very infancy they belong to the people of the New Covenant, whom the Lord has ſeparated unto himſelf from the reſt of the world, to be his property, which he has ſanctified for himſelf. Surely children are a property of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, he having bought them, not with gold or ſilver, but with his own holy blood. Children are alſo capable of receiving the Holy Ghoſt even in their mother's womb, as we read expreſsly in the caſe of John, the ſon of Zacharias. May not faith be in very little children? "Jeſus took a child, and ſet him in "the midſt of them (his diſciples), and when he had "taken him in his arms, he ſaid unto them, whoſoever ſhall receive one of ſuch children in my name, "receiveth me," Mark, ix. 36, 37. Doth he not add immediately: "Whoſo ſhall offend one of theſe little ones, "*which believe in me*, it were better for him that a millſtone "were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the "depth of the ſea," Matt. xviii. 6. Mark, ix. 42. Doth not Peter ſay to the Jews, when he is ſpeaking of baptiſm for the remiſſion of ſins, and concerning the promiſed gift of the Holy Ghoſt, "The promiſe is unto you and *to your* "*children?*" Acts, ii. 39. Were not the males circumciſed upon the eighth day, and thereby received into the covenant which God had made with Abraham and with his poſterity? Doth not our Saviour ſay "concerning the "young children whom they brought to him, that he "ſhould touch them, Suffer the little children to come unto "me, and forbid them not; for of ſuch is the kingdom of "God?" Mark, x. 13, 14.

Now if we take all this together, we may gather from thence, how it came to paſs that infant-baptiſm became ſo univerſal in the Chriſtian church. We may believe that the hand of God hath thus diſpoſed it, and that the Holy Ghoſt, who did not deſiſt from teaching the diſciples of Jeſus,

Jesus, led them to baptize their children also. And if a child be baptized, and the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost be laid upon him, should not that convey a blessing to him? If a church of Jesus presents such a child with prayer and supplication to the Lord, shall that be in vain? Shall not also a child put on Christ by baptism? Gal. iii. 27. And shall the Father not receive it for his child, and the Holy Ghost for his own habitation, and temple? Most certainly. A child can experience what Paul says, "*God saveth us by the washing of Regeneration* "*and the renewing of the Holy Ghost*, which he shed on us "abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour," Tit. iii. 5, 6.

§ 142.

But we have still farther to observe: (1.) That infant-baptism being a holy transaction, performed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost, ought to be administered in a way suitable to the importance of the thing.

(2.) That it is withal incumbent upon *us* to shew all fidelity therein; to train up the children for our Saviour from the very hour of their baptism, preserve them from all bad things, which might be hurtful to their hearts; to excite them to every good thing, which is well pleasing to God; to put them in mind of the covenant of God with us, into which they have been received by baptism; to encourage them to confidence towards their Father in Heaven, who has adopted them for his children; to paint Jesus Christ before their eyes, who, by his bitter sufferings and death, hath redeemed them, and to make them acquainted with that which Jesus Christ has commanded to his disciples; to lead them into a child-like and confident converse with Jesus Christ, especially in prayer; to accustom them to an attention to the voice of the Holy Spirit, who brings all things to our remembrance, whatsoever our Saviour hath said, &c.

(3.) That

(3.) That if children follow after the wicked one, and devote themſelves to ſin (which, alas! is but too often the caſe) we, by the grace of God lead them back again out of the error of their way. For when they are converted, they are always ſure to find, that God, on his part, keeps his covenant inviolably, and is very willing to renew it again with every one with whom he has once engaged himſelf in Holy Baptiſm.

As ſo many men have no regard for the covenant, which they have entered into with God, by baptiſm, (almoſt all thoſe who have been baptized in their infancy, devoting themſelves again to the ſervice of ſin and Satan;) this is the reaſon why a preacher in Chriſtendom, if he would obſerve rightly the duties of his function, dare not ceaſe to direct men to return to Chriſt, beſeeching them in Chriſt's ſtead, to be reconciled unto God. See § 121, &c.

Of the LORD'S SUPPER, *or* HOLY COMMUNION.

§ 143.

GOD, being moved by the cries of the people of Iſrael, who groaned under cruel bondage, and being about to bring them with a mighty hand out of Egypt, commanded them to ſlay and eat the Paſchal Lamb. Each family, before they went out of Egypt, were commanded to take a lamb without blemiſh; to kill it between the two evenings, (that is, after three o'clock in the afternoon) to ſtrike with its blood the door-poſts, to roaſt the lamb with fire, but not to break its bones; and then to eat it quite up; yet not with leavened but with unleavened bread. Now whereas, according to the word of the Lord, which he ſpoke unto Pharaoh by Moſes, the deſtroying angel paſſed at midnight through

through all Egypt, and slew all the first-born both of man and beast; thus all the Israelites, whose door posts had been marked with blood, were spared, so that no harm befel either man or beast amongst them. From that time they were obliged, once every year, to celebrate the passover, in commemoration of their departure out of the Egyptian bondage, and to kill the Paschal Lamb, as a memorial of their preservation, by the blood, from the destroying angel, to roast it with fire, and eat it with unleavened bread. Yet no uncircumcised person durst eat of it, Exod. xii. 3. &c.

If we consider all these circumstances, which should be observed touching the Paschal Lamb; it will appear at once probable to us, that our Lord Jesus Christ was thereby typified. But Paul puts it out of all manner of doubt, when he says, "Christ our Passover (or Paschal Lamb) is sacrificed "for us. 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," 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

But to return to the departure of the Israelites out of Egypt: It was certainly a great thing that God brought out and set at liberty a people consisting of six hundred thousand men, by his servant Moses; who, at that time, stood boldly before Pharaoh, a very mighty king, and told him in the name of God, that he should let them depart with their wives, children, cattle, and all they possessed. His truth, goodness, power, and righteousness, were all signally and conspicuously displayed by occasion of this work. His truth—for he had promised Abraham to deliver his seed, whom for four hundred years they should afflict and compel to servitude, Gen. xv. 13, 14. His goodness—for he said to Moses, "I have surely seen the affliction of "my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, "by reason of their task masters; for I know their sor-"rows," Exod. iii. 7. His righteousness—for the Egyptians had tyrannised horribly over the people of Israel, afflicting

afflicting and tormenting them in a dreadful manner, Exod. chap. i. and ii. His power—for who is not affrighted at the judgments which God, by the hand of Moses, caused to come upon the Egyptians, and at his unheard-of wonders.

§ 144.

BUT great as the deliverance of the people of Israel from the bondage of the Egyptians was to the believers of the Old Testament—for in their songs of praise they frequently commemorate it, as may be especially seen in the Psalms of David;—yet the work of redemption, which was wrought by Jesus Christ, is infinitely greater. The former referred to the people of Israel, but the latter extends itself to the whole human race. In the former the Israelites were set free from corporal bondage of the tyrannical King Pharaoh; but by this, those who will, are delivered and set free from the tyranny of Satan and of sin:—O what a hard and galling yoke is that! The person, used as the means of the deliverance of the Israelites was Moses, a faithful servant in the house of God: The Mediator, by whom this redemption was effected, is the Man Christ Jesus, the Lord of heaven and earth, and of every thing that is heaven and upon the earth. The deliverance of the Israelites was wrought by many and great signs and wonders, which cost many thousand men their lives. This redemption was procured by the death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In the first case many lambs were slaughtered, and their blood marked the door-posts, on account of which the destroying Angel passed by them: In the latter, the blood of Jesus Christ, the innocent and unblemished Lamb of God, secures us, if we believe, against the Devil, who hath the power of death, and against all his hosts.

As, in the deliverance of the people of Israel, the truth, the goodness, the power, and righteousness of God were eminently displayed; so, in the work of redemption, through

the death of Christ, the wisdom, the righteousness, the mercy, the truth, and power of God, were much more gloriously manifested. His wisdom discovers itself by God's having found out a method to deliver so many millions of men from the everlasting death they had deserved, and of procuring for them eternal life. His righteousness manifests itself, that he lays upon Jesus Christ, who took the sin of the world upon himself, all the chastisement which we should have suffered; which, because he was the Son of God, proved before the tribunal of God, of as much efficacy, as if judgment had been executed upon us all. His mercy in the work of redemption is thereby displayed; because he, out of pure love and compassion, opens the doors of Life to men, who have not deserved it, nay, who did not so much as ask it of him. His truth is gloriously justified in the work of redemption: For, in Christ he punctually fulfilled all the promises concerning the seed of the woman, who was to bruise the serpent's head; and the seed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed; of which promises all the prophets are full. His power demonstrates itself in a manner much more glorious by the work of redemption, than by that of the deliverance of the people of Israel from the Egyptian bondage. For "Christ "through death destroys him who had the power of death, "that is, the Devil; and delivers them, who through fear "of death were all their life-time subject to bondage," Heb. ii. 14, 15. And as through his death he has laid the foundation for our redemption from the power of darkness, so now, through his power, all the bond-slaves of sin and of the Devil, who are tired of their hard yoke, and wish to be freed from it, as soon as they turn to Jesus Christ, and pray him, that he would approve himself as the Saviour of the world to them likewise, are rescued and delivered from the enemy, and by the same power preserved and kept unto everlasting life.

Now as God found it necessary to institute in Egypt the Pascal Lamb as a memorial of the marvellous deliverance of the people of Israel; so has he, in deep wisdom and love to men, in remembrance of his death, which has atoned for, and restored life to us, appointed the Holy Supper of the Lord, which is now to be the subject of our discourse. In the Holy Scripture we have the following account of it:

"The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was be-
"trayed, took bread, blessed and brake it, and gave it to
"his disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body,
"which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me,
"After the same manner also he took the cup after sup-
"per, and when he had blessed it, he gave it unto them,
"and said, Drink ye all of this; this is my blood, the
"blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you,
"and for many, for the remission of sins; this do ye, as
"often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me," Matt. xxvi. 26—28. Mark, xiv. 22—24. Luke, xxii 19, 20. 1 Cor. xi. 23—25.

§ 145.

HENCE then it is clear in the first place, that our Lord and Saviour did himself institute this Holy Supper, and that he left and bequeathed it to his disciples. Also, that he has appointed it in remembrance of himself; wherefore Paul says, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this "cup, *ye do shew the Lord's Death till he come*," 1 Cor. xi. 26.

Even before the Lord our Saviour had instituted this Supper, he at Capernaum spoke concerning the eating of his flesh, and the drinking of his blood, John, vi. 51—57. The people with whom he was engaged, were partly his disciples, and partly a great multitude of the Jews, whom the day before he had taught in the wilderness, nigh unto

Tiberias,

Tiberias, healed their sick and fed them all, Matt. xiv. 13, &c. John, vi. 5. &c. Their number amounted to five thousand men, besides women and children, all of whom eat and were filled, with five barley loaves, and two small fishes; which the Lord took, blessed, and brake, and caused them to be distributed to the multitude, who were seated in rows, that none of them might be passed by. Now, after they had been all filled, and twelve baskets had been moreover filled with the fragments which were left; the multitude intended to make him a king; because they began now to believe he was the Messiah. This moved the Lord to depart; and returning to Capernaum, the same Jews sought him there. When he saw them, he sought to persuade them to come and believe in him, on account of the miracle which had been wrought by him before their eyes, and not to follow him merely for the sake of the bread with which he had filled them. Whereupon they were angry, and said, "What sign sheweſt thou then, that we "may see and believe thee? What dost thou work? Our "fathers did eat manna in the desert," John, vi. 30, 31. This gave our Saviour an occasion of speaking about himself as the bread of life, which came down from heaven, and we must eat of him, if we would live in eternity. And thereupon he explained himself further: "The bread that "I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of "the world," John, vi. 51; and added, "My flesh is "meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed," verse 55.

What doth our Lord say concerning the eating and drinking of his flesh and blood? "Whoso eateth my flesh and "drinketh my blood, *hath eternal Life, and I will raise him* "*up at the last day*," John, vi. 54. And, "He that "eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, *dwelleth in me,* "*and I in him*," verse, 56.

But even the same is said likewise concerning faith in Christ: for in this chapter it is said, "This is the will of

"him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and "believeth on him, *may have everlasting Life; and I will "raise him up at the last day*," John, vi. 40. See also John, iii. 15. 36. "Christ dwells in our hearts by faith," Eph. iii. 17; and, "by faith we put on Christ, and *are in "Him*," Gal. iii. 26, 27.

Hence there is no doubt, but that here, in this place, by the eating and drinking of the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, nothing else is meant, but the enjoyment of Jesus Christ by faith; who gave himself to be a sacrifice for us, in such a manner as to experience in our stead in his holy body the most dreadful punishment of death, and for us to shed all his blood for the remission of sins. When we, amidst our sin and misery, eagerly receive of this Paschal Lamb slain for us, and of his blood shed for our sins, just as an hungry and thirsty person takes meat and drink (and this is done by faith), then do we eat and drink the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. O how emphatically does our dear Lord and Saviour represent the actual participation of his expiatory offering to us! And cannot every one easily find by this, if he examines himself, whether he has experienced, and doth daily experience this? For our Lord Jesus Christ is the bread of God, that is come down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world, John, vi. 33. He says, "I "am the bread of life, *he that cometh to me* shall never "hunger; and *he that believeth in me* shall never thirst," John, vi. 35.

Is it not plain from hence, that the believing on him is an eating and drinking? Wherefore he says, "Verily, verily "I say unto you, he that believeth on me, hath everlasting "life," John, vi. 47.

We stand in need of this bread of life for our daily food; and it is necessary that we pray daily for it.

§ 146.

§ 146.

In the words of Jesus, upon which the doctrine of the Holy Communion is grounded, it is said, "Take, and eat, "this is my body;—take, and drink, this is my blood." And then it is also said, "As oft as ye eat of this bread,— "as oft at you drink of this cup."

It is therefore a mysterious enjoyment of the body and blood of Christ; that is, the enjoyment of the bread and wine is connected with the enjoyment of the body and blood of Jesus, in a manner incomprehensible to us, and therefore inexpressible, whenever the Holy Supper of the Lord is enjoyed according to the mind of Jesus Christ. This is Paul's meaning in the words, "The cup of blessing, which "we bless, is it not the Communion of the blood of "Christ? The bread which we break (in the Lord's Sup-"per) is it not the Communion of the body of Christ?" 1 Cor. x. 16; that is, it is certainly the communion of the body and blood of Christ. As certain as it is, that we eat the blessed bread, so certain is it that we partake of the body of Christ; and as certain as it is, that we drink of the cup of blessing, so certain is it that we partake of the blood of Christ; we eat and drink, we enjoy one as well as the other; for our Saviour says, "Take, eat, this "is my body; take, and drink, this is my blood."

We can, in the Holy Communion, if we do not receive it unworthily, certainly expect no less, than what our Lord Jesus Christ has, in the 6th chapter of John, promised to them who eat and drink his flesh and blood, though even when they do not partake of the Holy Communion; for our dear Lord would bestow, by means of the Holy Communion, a particular favour upon us, and provide a feast for his church.

But it should be observed, that he did not institute and ordain the Holy Communion for unbelievers, but for be-

lievers. For as no uncircumcised person durst eat of the Paschal Lamb, (§ 143.) so also no unbaptized person ought to come to the Holy Supper of the Lord. And if a man has been baptized, but has broken the covenant of a good conscience with God, and is become a slave of the devil and sin, he must first be converted with all his heart, before he presumes to partake of the Supper of the Lord. And even though he be converted, yet must he not approach to the Lord's Supper, without being washed anew, and cleansed by the blood of the Lamb.

§ 147.

To this end, says Paul, "Let a man examine himself, "and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup," 1 Cor. xi. 28.

Indeed self-examination ought not to be only at that time, when we intend to go to the Lord's Supper, but ought to be daily. For being sinful creatures, and remaining such to the end of our days, notwithstanding we are, through the power of Jesus Christ, freed from the dominion of sin; yet we daily discover faults and wants in ourselves, and we remain, alas! behind-hand in many things that are commanded. This we are bound daily to acknowledge before God our Lord, to implore him to forgive our debts, and to recommend ourselves anew to his grace. But this ought particularly to be done before the Lord's Supper; and because from self-love, which is to be found in all men more or less, we are too apt to think better of ourselves than we are in reality; we should pray to God to let his light shine upon us, that we may, by that light, know ourselves better. "Search me, O God," (says David) "and "know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts," Psal. cxxxix. 23.

Paul admonishes in particular the Corinthians to this self-examination; for they, not having reflected upon the great

great importance of this Communion, suffered many unbecoming things to find entrance among them on this occasion. Therefore some of them were chastised and punished by God with sickness, and others with death. And the Apostle says, "But when we are chastened of the Lord, "it is, that we should not be condemned with the world," 1 Cor. xi. 28, &c.

Had they judged themselves, that is, had they searched out that which was evil among them, acknowledged, and by the grace of God put it away from them; then would they not have been judged; that is, no such chastisement would have been inflicted upon them.

The first thing, which every one who would go to the Holy Communion has to examine himself about, is this, Whether his heart be converted to God? "Examine your-"selves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own "selves," 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

For if any one is defective in this, he is by no means fit to be a partaker of the Lord's Supper. See § 146.

But though we be converted, yet we are to examine, Whether we are sound in the faith? Whether we place our confidence and hope upon Christ alone? or whether, in one or another point we build upon our own doings and works? Then are we to examine ourselves, in regard to the doctrine of Jesus and his apostles, how we stand with God. Whether we walk in simplicity with Jesus Christ? Whether we have a child-like and confident heart towards our Father in heaven? Whether we submit ourselves to be taught, led, and directed by the Holy Ghost? Whether we crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts? Whether our Saviour is, with his sufferings and death, ever before our eyes; and whether our heart lives therein? Whether we are an entire property of our Saviour? (for we ought to love God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength) Whether we are contented with the ways of God, which he takes with us? Whether also we always,

and for every thing, give thanks to God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ? Whether we are faithful and believing in our prayers and intercession? Whether we employ our time aright, and attend to our calling according to our Saviour's mind? Whether, with our words, we are a joy to the Lord, and an edification to our neighbours? Whether, in general, we faithfully observe the commands of Christ, which we should not only know, but also keep? Whether we love our neighbour, yea our enemy, as ourselves? Whether we are glad to be serviceable and helpful to him? Whether to give is more pleasing to us than to receive, according to the word of our Saviour, "it is more blessed to give, than to receive." Whether the mind of Christ be in us, so that we are willingly poor and mean? Whether we care for that which is our neighbour's, as if it were our own? Whether we have a living hope of everlasting salvation, desiring to depart, and to be with Christ? These and other things are, what a Christian man should reflect upon, and by which he should examine himself. In doing this he will find a thousand reasons to blush before the Lord, and to humble himself at his feet. And, oh! how great is then the death and the blood of Jesus Christ, from whence we have nothing but grace and forgiveness to expect.

Thus we are, in our own selves, certainly not worthy of the Holy Communion. For what is man, and what is all he can do? Yet as soon as we, by faith, become children of God, and members of the body of Christ, we also purely, for Christ's sake, and for the sake of his blood shed for us, are counted worthy of partaking of the Holy Supper of the Lord, and may approach with confidence to the Table of the Lord. We obtain the Lord's Supper, as we obtain everlasting salvation, out of pure grace, without our own merits and worthiness.

§ 148.

§ 148.

Something farther remains yet to be said concerning the blessing we receive by means of the Lord's Supper. It is undoubtedly great: when a poor sinner, who cleaves to the Lord by faith, having thoroughly examined himself, and meditating upon the death which Jesus suffered for us, and upon the blood which he shed for us, receives it according to the word and command of Christ; though deeply sensible of his wretchedness and defects, yet in child-like confidence, that the Lord is willing to bless, and will bless him, with the participation of his flesh and blood. For if any one who still loves, and is a slave of sin, who will not be converted to God, or who, if he has been converted, gives way to evil, neither acknowledging, or repenting of, or desisting from his sin; if such a person ventures to approach to the Holy Communion, in this case he assuredly receives, instead of a blessing, hurt from it. Although we can believe that God, with much compassion and great long-suffering, bears with the ignorance of many thousands. But at the enjoyment of the Lord's Supper, a new seal of the forgiveness of his sins is impressed upon every believing communicant; for he enjoys the body, which is given for us, and the blood which is shed for us, for the remission of sins. It is evident and clear from our Lord's own words, that we, by means of this feast, if we make a right use of it, become most intimately united with our Lord and Saviour. "He that eateth my flesh, and "drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." John, vi. 56.

How the communion of the faithful is thereby maintained with each other, Paul shews in the words, "For we, "being many, are one bread and one body; for we all are "partakers of that one bread."

When, for instance, a man partakes of a wholesome and strengthening food, all the members of his body have the benefit

benefit and enjoyment of it, and are ſtrengthened in fellowſhip thereby. The very ſame is the caſe with a congregation of Jeſus. When they eat of that *one* bread, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, then do all the members, who in conjunction conſtitute but one body, enjoy it jointly one with another, and one as well as the other. For which reaſon, the Lord's Supper is called *the Holy Communion*; and it is a very proper name for it. The Holy Ghoſt teaches us thereby, how highly we ought to prize our brethren and ſiſters, and how much we ought to love them; for Chriſt has loved and valued every one of them ſo much, as to give himſelf unto death for them, and now to give them his fleſh for meat, and his blood for drink. If, at the Holy Supper of the Lord, we conſider that Jeſus gave himſelf up unto death *for our ſin*, and the Holy Ghoſt renews in us a living impreſſion of it, then ariſes a new zeal in us to be and to remain mortified to it. The real, as well as myſterious participation of his fleſh and blood in the Lord's Supper, ſtrengthens us to this end, that we mortify every thing in ourſelves which is againſt the mind of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and follow after that which is conformable to the mind and image of our Lord. Of this more will be ſoon hereafter ſaid.

When therefore our Saviour ſays, "Whoſo eateth my "fleſh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will "raiſe him up at the laſt day," John, vi. 54. we ſee from hence, that believers obtain, by the Lord's Supper, a renewed aſſurance of eternal life, and of a joyous reſurrection. And thus doth Chriſt, the ſecond Adam, who reſtoreth all that which was loſt by the ſin of the firſt man, evidence himſelf to be *that quickening Spirit* which Paul expreſsly calls him, 1 Cor. xv. 45. As the Holy Ghoſt, in the Lord's Supper, glorifies the death of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the expiation made for ſin by his blood, in ſuch a remarkable manner; and we, by eating of his fleſh, and drinking of his blood, obtain ſuch a ſpecial ſhare in it, ſo the ſoul is filled with a living hope. We think, did Jeſus give himſelf

up

up to death, that he might bring us to everlasting life; and after he has drawn us unto himself, does he now grant unto us, by the enjoyment of his body and blood, such a special share in the sacrifice of himself for us; how then should we doubt but that he will raise us up again unto eternal life, and graciously receive us into it.

Now, when a poor sinner, who through faith in Christ is become a child of God, partakes of so much good in the Holy Communion, he calls to his mind on this occasion the death of the Lord as the cause of all the grace, which so richly flows unto him. His heart melts in love, and is so filled with thankfulness, that his mouth also overflows with it. And this is the case, as often as he has the favour to partake of the Supper of the Lord. And this will continue always in the church of Christ until he cometh.

Of SANCTIFICATION.

§ 149.

THE unmeasurable love of Jesus Christ, by which he was constrained to give his life, and to shed his blood for us; and which is also, at every enjoyment of the Lord's Supper, in the most blessed manner renewed to our hearts, impels us to be abundantly thankful, and to put away every thing from us which is not well-pleasing to Him; and to endeavour to attain that which is according to his heart. This leads us to the subject of *Sanctification.*

The first observation upon this head is, that the Holy Scripture does not always use the word *Holy* in one and the same way, nor in one and the same meaning. In the Old Testament, all that is called holy which is devoted and consecrated unto the Lord; that which is separated from a common

common and customary use, and is appointed for him; all that belongs to him as his especial property, chosen from all the rest by him, and that which is brought to him as a gift and offering. Thus, for instance, doth Moses speak to the people of Israel: "Thou art an holy people unto the "LORD thy GOD; the LORD thy GOD hath chosen "thee to be a special people unto himself above all people "that are upon the face of the earth," Deut. vii. 6. And thus is the word taken in the command of God to Moses: "Sanctify unto me all the first-born, both of man and of "beast: it is mine," Exod. xiii. 2.

In this way did they sanctify to the Lord, houses (Levit. xxvii. 14.); money (2 Kings, xii. 4.); treasures (1 Chron. xxvi. 20.); oxen and sheep (2 Chron. xxix. 33.)

The words of Paul, "Every creature of God is good, "and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanks-"giving: for it is *sanctified* by the word of God and "prayer," 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5. refer to the difference between the clean and unclean food, which the Old Testament enjoined. This, after the Old Testament had attained its aim, ceases entirely; and now is a fish, or any other creature, which believers partake of with thanksgiving, made clean food by the word of God and by prayer, although it had been forbidden to the people of Israel, as unclean.

Secondly, The words *holy*, and *to sanctify*, or make holy, are, even in the New Testament, taken in so enlarged a sense, that all those who are united with the church of Jesus, are without difference comprehended under that name. Thus, for instance, Peter says to the strangers scattered abroad, "Elect of God, ye are an holy nation, a peculiar "people," 1 Pet. i. 1, 2. Paul calls the church at Corinth, "The sanctified in Christ Jesus," 1 Cor. i. 2.; the church at Rome, "Called to be saints," (holy ones), Rom. i. 7.; that at Ephesus, "The saints and faithful in Christ "Jesus," Eph. i. 1.; yea, what is more, Paul says of a man who is still a heathen, but is satisfied to dwell with his

wife,

wife, who believes in Christ; and a woman who is yet an heathen, but who does not scruple to remain with her husband, who is converted to Christ, also of their children, that "they are holy." "The ubelieving husband" (are the words) "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 Cor. vii. 14. See § 141.

Thirdly, All those who have by faith obtained the forgiveness of sins, in the sacrifice and in the blood of Jesus, are called saints, and sanctified. Concerning the Corinthians, who had before lived in manifest and flagrant works of the flesh, it is said, "Ye are washed, ye are "sanctified, ye are justified," 1 Cor. vi. 11. This means the same with what we read, Rev. i. 5. "Jesus Christ hath "loved, and washed us from our sins in his own blood;" and with what stands, Heb. ix. 14. "The blood of Christ, "who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without "spot to God, purges your conscience from dead works."

Fourthly, We find the following texts concerning sanctification in the Scripture; as for instance, "*Follow holi-* "*ness*, without which no man shall see the Lord," Heb. xii. 14.; also, "This is the will of God, even your *sancti-* "*fication*," 1 Thess. iv. 3. "May the Lord stablish your "hearts unblameable in *holiness before God*, even our Fa- "ther, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Thess. iii. 13. "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the "flesh and spirit, *perfecting holiness* in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1. "God hath not *called us* unto uncleanness, "but *unto holiness*," 1 Thess. iv. 7.

We treat here properly of this last idea of holiness or sanctification.

§ 150.

In all these texts, persons are addressed, who, through faith in Jesus Christ, were already children of God. Thus these

these belonged already to the church of Jesus Christ, which is called, "the chosen generation," "the royal priesthood," "the peculiar people," "the holy nation." They had been washed, cleansed, and sanctified with the blood of Jesus, and their sin and guilt had been pardoned; they had devoted themselves, body and soul, to the Lord our Saviour, and through him to the Father in heaven, and were become an holy offering unto God. They were sealed with the Holy Ghost, who dwelt within their hearts, and were therefore an holy house of God. Thus, when it was said to them, "Follow holiness—proceed in sanctification," what is meant by this?

It is certain, that the beginning of holiness is the conversion of the heart to God. "Our hearts are purified by "faith," Acts, xv. 9. We die to sin, as soon as we believe, and will no longer live unto it; and at the same time we put on Christ, Gal. iii. 27. For faith is, as Luther says, "A divine work in us, which changeth us, and by "which we are born of God," John, i. 13. and it slays the old man, makes us other men, in heart, mind, disposition, and in all our powers; and by it we receive the Holy Ghost, as Luther says in his Preface to Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Thus, as the Holy Scripture testifies, we, through faith, become new creatures.

But when we first receive life from God, we are like children that are new-born into the world: such a child has, it is true, a body and a soul, and brings with it all the faculties of the soul, and all the internal and external organs of the body; yet it must be nourished, nursed, and tended, that it may grow unto the fulness of its stature. Thus then the image of Christ, with every thing that belongs thereto, shews itself directly, at the beginning, in the new creature; that is, in a person who through faith is become a child of God. But, as long as he lives, he must grow up in all things into the head, Christ Jesus, resembling him more and more every day; as hath been already shewn, § 105. And

if this takes place, he then advances in sanctification, he "follows holiness."

God does not at once change a man, in such a manner that he ceases to be a sinful man: for, when he is converted, he is indeed made free from the dominion of sin (being under grace, sin has no dominion over him), neither can Satan any longer exercise the power which he had heretofore over him; for he is set free from his chains, with which he had been bound before, according to the will of Satan. Faith also overcomes the world, and enables him to shake off its yoke, and to leave its evil ways. Yet he must, as long as he lives, be, through the grace of God, always upon his guard, and stand firm against every thing that is not conformable to the mind of Christ. He must preserve himself against that which comes from the flesh, that is, from his corrupted nature, which is contrary to the mind of Christ, and purify himself from it. He must always withstand the allurements of Satan and of the world, and not meddle with him. Which if he does faithfully, he advances in sanctification, he follows holiness. Thus the following texts of Holy Writ become clear. "Put off "concerning the former conversation, the old man, which "is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed "in the spirit of your mind: and put on the new man, "which after God is created in righteousness and true ho-"liness," Eph. iv. 22, &c. And, "Put off the old man, "with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is re-"newed in knowledge, after the image of him that created "him," Col. iii. 9, 10.

By the old man is meant the depraved and sinful character which we have by nature, and bring with us into the world, with all its evil consequences and fruits, as is above described, § 53, &c. By the new man is meant the character which is conformable to the image of God, found in the Man Christ Jesus; of which we have treated, § 49. We should put off that, and put on this.

§ 151.

§ 151.

JUSTIFICATION (which consists in this, that a poor sinner, who by the grace of God feels his sin and misery, and comes in faith with it to Christ, has all his sins forgiven him, for the sake of the blood and death of Christ) precedes sanctification, of which we now speak. Yet is sanctification so intimately connected with justification, that if a man, whose sins have been forgiven him, should not follow earnestly after sanctification, but instead thereof be slothful and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is said of him, that "he is blind, and cannot see afar off, and "hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins," 2 Pet. i. 8, 9. We must yet add this, that a man has, even after his conversion, continual need of justification; that is, he has always reason to pray to God for the pardon of his trespasses; and this does not cease as long as he lives in this world. This we learn to comprehend in the school of the Holy Ghost, and cannot understand it, till He clears it up to us. For when a man, who feels the burden of sin, and is pungently grieved on that account, finds grace at the feet of the Saviour of poor sinners, and is, as it were, overpowered with it, he then commonly thinks, that now every thing is in the best and most beautiful order with him. His case may be compared to that of Peter, who said to our Saviour, "Lord, I will lay down my life for thy sake!" and he is really so disposed towards him. The bad things which he formerly delighted in, become so abominable to him through the sensation of grace, and the forgiveness of sins, of which he is assured by the Holy Ghost, that he hopes that he shall never perceive them in himself any more. Does he perceive afterwards, that he is still in the flesh, that he has a depraved nature, and that both in his soul and body, many things present themselves which are not conformable to the mind of Christ; then is he commonly per-

plexed about himself; especially when, notwithstanding all his good intentions, he makes so many mistakes, and finds so many infirmities, imperfections, and defects in himself. Then the Holy Ghost teaches him, that he must constantly fall, as a poor sinner, at the feet of our Saviour; and that he may, ought, and must beg forgiveness of him; and if he has any one at hand, who is experienced in the ways of God, he soon attains to that, that he can understand the Holy Spirit, and his sweet instructions, if he be only teachable, and will take advice. Is he faithful and obedient, he will guard against sin, and thus saves himself much anguish and distress. At the same time he doth not look upon his infirmities, imperfections, and defects, as trifling, but he is heartily ashamed of them, and often bewails them before our Saviour with tears. The Holy Ghost is so faithful and unwearied in his labour upon him, as not to suffer him to go on in ignorance of his transgressions, of his backwardness, and trespasses. Our Saviour always gives him, from time to time, new assurances of his love, grace, and complacency, and thus justification is continued. It is usual to call this daily repentance, and whoever understands it aright, he will acknowledge that a child of God, as long as he lives in the flesh, cannot cease to be in this case; though it is, alas! too true, that many entertain a perverse notion of it, looking upon that to be daily repentance, when they serve sin, fulfil the will of the flesh and of the mind, and then are in anguish and distress about it, because they are children of wrath.

From what has been said, we can understand the words of John, which he did not write to the world, but to believers: "If we say, we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, "and the truth is not in us: if we confess our sins, he is "faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse "us from all unrighteousness," 1 John, i. 8, 9.

Here is, first, *Justification* (he forgives us our sins); and, secondly, *Sanctification* (he cleanses us from all unrighteousness): God does all through Christ. See § 83. And thus

is Christ, when he becomes unto us *wisdom*, that is, when he has enlightened us, so that we are become acquainted with God and his will, and particularly with ourselves, as beginners, made unto us *righteousness*; that is, we have in him redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Then is he also made unto us *sanctification*; that is, he cleanses us from all sin, and makes us again like unto his own image; and at length is he made to us *redemption*, when he makes us free from all evil, and by grace receives us to himself into heaven. Amen. 1 Cor. i. 30.

§ 152.

THUS is Jesus Christ our sanctification; and the Scripture says, that "he is of God made this unto us," 1 Cor. i. 30. These words can have no other meaning, but that it is he, through whom we, according to the will of God, are sanctified. That he washes us with his blood, that is, that we through his blood have the remission of sins, and are in that sense through him sanctified, has been said already. But as we now speak of sanctification, which consists in our being freed and cleansed from such things as are not according to his mind, and are formed into his image; therefore it is to be observed,

(1.) That he has purchased the grace of this sanctification for us by his sufferings and death.

He says to his dear Father, in the prayer in which he not only commended his disciples, but all those also who should believe in him through their word: "For their sakes I "sanctify myself, *that they also might be sanctified through the* "*truth*," John, xvii. 19.

The meaning of these words is, I offer myself as an offering up to thee for them, that they may also become an offering unto thee, a sacrifice, that is living, holy, and acceptable unto thee, according to Rom. xii. 1.

The

The same is also said in the following Scripture passages: "Our Saviour Jesus Christ "gave himself for us, "*that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto him-* "*self a peculiar people zealous of good works,*" 1 Tit. ii. 14. "You has he" (Christ) "reconciled in the body of his flesh, "through death, *to present you holy and unblameable, and unre-* "*provable in his sight,*" Col. i. 21, 22. "Christ loved the "church, and gave himself for it, *that he might present it to* "*himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or* "*any such thing; but that it should be holy and without ble-* "*mish,*" Eph. v. 25, &c.

(2.) That, according to § 49. he is to us, as the perfect image of God, not only an example, after which we are to be formed in our sanctification, see § 105, but also that his thinking and willing, his praying and weeping, his speaking and being silent, his labouring and resting, his sleeping and watching, are meritorious for us. As he took our sins upon himself, and appeared before the judgment-seat of God, as if he himself had been the sinner; so he, with all his righteousness and holiness, becomes now ours; through faith, we are cloathed upon with him, and appear in him before God.

(3.) He, according to Ezek. xxxvi. 26. gives us a new heart, and a new spirit, and his chastisements are profitable unto us, as we are thereby made partakers of his holiness, Heb. xii. 10. Thus the promise given by him is fulfilled: "HE" (the Lord our Saviour) "is like a refiner's "fire, and like fullers sope. He shall sit as a refiner and "purifier of silver; *and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and* "*purge them as gold and silver,*" Mal. iii. 2, 3.

(4.) We have likewise, in our Lord Jesus Christ, a power sufficient for our sanctification. He himself said to his disciples, "Abide in me and I in you. As the branch "cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, "no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, "ye are the branches: *He that abideth in me and I in him,*

" *the ſame bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do* " *nothing*," John, xv. 4, 5. 1 John, ii. 28. 2 Pet. i. 3, &c.

§ 153.

THE incomprehenſible condeſcenſion of the great King of Glory, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to poor ſinners, with whom he has once dealt ſo graciouſly, contributes greatly to their ſanctification. He, by having forgiven them all by which they had grieved him, has already gained their heart. They love him ſo much the more, becauſe he forgave them ſo much, though they deſerved nothing but puniſhment. They become thereby ſo confident towards him, that they know of no happier hours on earth than thoſe they paſs with him. And whereas he richly and daily forgives them their debts, which they themſelves look upon as ſins (and ſo indeed they are), and has compaſſion with their weakneſſes, this therefore knits their hearts more and more unto him. They become, by experience, better acquainted with him, as the merciful, gracious, ſympathizing, kind, and invariably faithful friend of the poor and wretched. All this of courſe makes them to wiſh for nothing ſo much, as to prove an honour and joy to him. From this principle they abhor all thoſe things that are contrary to his mind, and wiſh to be cleanſed from them. On the other hand, they long with all their hearts to be, and to become as HE was in this world, and as HE yet is. O, how do they inwardly rejoice, when they can hope that he will not leave them, till he has made them perfectly according to his own image! and, becauſe they know that this will certainly be effected after this life, therefore they wait with longing for the hour of his appearance, or their being taken home to him. This is the condition of thoſe people, who are faithfully attached to our Saviour with their whole hearts.

§ 154.

§ 154.

THE Holy Ghoſt takes unwearied pains to further our ſanctification; for which reaſon ſanctification is particularly aſcribed to him, 2 Theſſ. ii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 2. Rom. xv. 16. And we are exhorted, "to purify our ſouls in obeying the "truth, *through the Spirit*," 1 Pet. i. 22. If we attend to the work of the Holy Ghoſt in our hearts, we obſerve as follows:

(1.) He makes the words of Jeſus, and of his apoſtles and prophets, plain and clear, and brings them frequently to our remembrance.

(2.) He ſhews us unweariedly thoſe things which are not conformable to the mind of Jeſus, and which we are to be diſengaged from, not only in general, but alſo in particular.

(3.) He ſets Jeſus Chriſt, as the image of God, conſtantly before our eyes; by which we can ſee what we ſhould endeavour to attain to; and prevents us from forgetting his example.

(4.) He doth not ceaſe to renew to our minds the agony of the ſoul of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the pangs of death he endured, and directs us to the cauſe of his ſufferings and death; it being for this reaſon neceſſary, that thereby the image of God loſt in Adam, might, through Chriſt, be again reſtored unto us.

(5.) He excites in us a loathing of thoſe things that are contrary to our Saviour's mind, together with a deep and pungent ſorrow on account of them; he alſo teaches us to pray inceſſantly, that God may take us into his protection againſt them, and in grace deliver us from them.

(6.) On the other hand, he gives us inward pleaſure in ſuch things as conſtitute the new man in Chriſt, or which appertain thereunto; cauſing us not to be weary of praying to God for them, and of ſtretching out after them.

(7.) When with an open face we behold the glory of the Lord our Saviour, then are we "changed into the same "image from glory to glory, even as *by the Spirit of the* "*Lord*," 2 Cor. iii. 18.

(8.) This same Spirit, who is the Lord, makes us more and more acquainted with the heart of our dear Father in heaven, which burns in love towards us, and teaches us, in all our concerns, to come with a child-like and confident spirit to him, and to pour our hearts out before him.

(9.) He also preserves us in an inward and confident intercourse of the heart with him, who out of love gave himself up unto the death for us. To him then we make our complaints, and tell him all our wants, and every thing which distresses us, and he sympathizes with and helps us assuredly. Whoever is backward in this, he certainly falls also short in sanctification.

(10.) The Holy Ghost also opens our eyes, that we not only understand the promises of God, which fill us with astonishment, but also lay hold upon them in faith: and this enlivens us, to follow after sanctification.

§ 155.

YET the Holy Ghost does not only take us under his care in general, but he also takes each individual poor sinner, who through faith comes to Christ, into his especial care. He knows every one in all respects, and nothing is hidden from him. "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of "God," 1 Cor. ii. 10. That he deigns to dwell in men, is of itself great condescension in him. But what shall we say to it, that he takes notice of the minutest circumstance relating to them? And yet he does this. When they stand in need of the word of God for doctrine, for warning, or for consolation, or for support, or for correction, and they do not of themselves think upon it; the Holy Ghost then brings,

bringe, in the right moment, to their remembrance all that which our Lord Jesus Christ has said unto his disciples, and what the disciples of Jesus have said unto the churches. See John, xiv. 26. "The truth makes us free," according to the word of Christ, John, viii. 32. But who is it that guideth us *into all truth?* The Holy Ghost, according to John, xvi. 13. "Through the knowledge of him, that "hath called us to glory and virtue," that is, of Jesus Christ our Lord, all divine power is given unto us, that is needful and serviceable unto life and godliness, 2 Pet. i. 3. But who is it that glorifies Jesus Christ to us? The Holy Ghost, John, xvi. 14. When we are so weak, as not to be able to pray, then HE helps our infirmities, according to the words of Paul: "The Spirit 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," Rom. viii. 26. See also ver. 27.

Whenever we deviate, he brings us back again into the right way; if we fall, he lifts us up again; if we are walking in the way of the Lord, he guides and leads us, and takes in all cases maternal care of us. See § 115, &c. Now, when we thus daily perceive how faithfully he attends to us, with what patience he bears with us, how wisely he rules us, how unweariedly he labours upon us, how often he inflames our heart with the love of Jesus, how powerfully he stands by us, what long-suffering he shews towards us (for, Oh, how often might he justly withdraw from us, and yet he doth not do it!) this knits our hearts to him in an inexpressible manner. We rejoice, and even with tears, on account of this Guest of our hearts, wishing to remain eternally under his tuition. And by so doing, we walk in the Spirit, we submit to his government, we follow him as children, according to Paul's admonition, Gal. v. 16. Who doth not see that the communion of the Holy Ghost, which Paul wishes for his Corinthians, 2 Cor. xiii. 13. belongs

indispensably to the great work of our sanctification? When the Holy Ghost rules in our hearts, and we submit ourselves like children to his guidance, we then approve ourselves to be the children of God.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the "sons of God," Rom. viii. 14. Gal. v. 18.; then "the "Holy Ghost beareth witness with our spirit, that we are "the children of God," Rom. viii. 16. "crying in us, "Abba, Father," ver. 15. Gal. iv. 6. "We, through "the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body," Rom. viii. 13. that is, every thing which springs up out of our depraved nature, according to Matt. xv. 19. and Gal. v. 19, &c. And on the other hand, are we filled with the fruits of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, &c. Gal. v. 22, &c.

§ 156.

THE Scripture testifies, that with the eternal purpose of the Father, to save us by Christ, was at the same time connected, that we through him should recover the image of God lost in Adam, and in him become holy. "*HE* "*hath chosen us* in him," (Christ) "before the foundation "of the world, *that we should be holy and without blame, be-* "*fore him in love*," Eph. i. 4. "Whom he did foreknow, "*he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his* "*Son*," Rom. viii. 29.

When the appointed time was fulfilled, he sent his Son into the world, to become a sacrifice for us, and to purchase salvation for us; but *he made him*, at the same time, *our sanctification*, 1 Cor. i. 30; that is, the only way by which we could regain the holiness that was lost. When we then come to Christ, receive him by faith, and confess our sins; then is He (the Father, see ver. 7.) "faithful "and just, to forgive us our sins, and *to cleanse us from all* "*unrighteousness*," 1 John, i. 9. This is the import of what our Saviour says, John, xv. 1, 2. "I am the Vine, "and

"and my Father is the Husbandman. Every branch in "me, that beareth fruit, *he purgeth it, that it may bring* "*forth more fruit.*" "And as the Father of our Lord "Jesus Christ, according to his abundant mercy, has be-"gotten us again unto a lively hope," 1 Pet. i. 3. "So "doth he also *sanctify us through his Truth,*" through his Word, John, xvii. 17. He gives us his grace, that we become obedient to the Gospel, and so we become holy.—When we bemoan our distress before him, and beg of him his grace, then he heareth us. For, "having deli-"vered up his own Son for us all, how shall he not with "him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. His work is also effectual, and is not directed only to one or another evil, but to every thing, which is requisite for the restoration of the image of God in us. In this sense, Paul says, "The very God of Peace *sanctify you wholly, and I* "*pray God your whole spirit,*" (by which it is probable he means the new heart, which is given unto us in the new birth) "*and soul, and body, be preserved blameless,* unto the "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Thes. v. 23.

Because we experience, both in internals and externals, so many proofs of his love, of his grace, of his paternal care, and of the most special share he takes of all, even the smallest circumstances, in which we may be; therefore this renders our love more confident and certain. O how much does this contribute towards our furtherance in sanctification! Moreover, the prayer of Christ, "Father, "sanctify them through thy Truth, thy Word is Truth," John, xvii. 17.; is always applicable to us: we reap that, which He hath sowed.

§ 157.

LET none think, we have said all which might be said concerning the kind and gracious labour of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, for our sanctification. O no!

O no!—For it is incomprehensible, and therefore unspeakable, what labour God bestows on poor man, to reinstate him in that happy condition from whence he is fallen.

In the mean time, from what has been said, it is evident, how we are to take and understand the following texts, which treat of sanctification. "*Let us cleanse ourselves* from "all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, *perfecting holiness* in "the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1. "Every man that hath "this hope in him (of being like him), *purifieth himself*, "even as He is pure," 1 John, iii. 3. "Ye are bought "with a price; *therefore glorify God in your body, and in* "*your spirit*, which are God's," 1 Cor. i. 20. "Let "every one of you *know how to possess his vessel in sanctifi-* "*cation* and honour," 1 Thes. iv. 4. "*Follow Holi-* "*ness*," Heb. xii. 14.

These, and other passages in Scripture, cannot possibly be taken in such a sense, as if man ought to strive by his own strength to obtain holiness: For our Saviour expressly says, not to the world, but to his disciples, "*with-* "*out me ye can do nothing*," John, xv. 5; and Paul writes to the believers at Phillippi, "*It is God, which worketh in* "*you, both to will and to do*, of his own good pleasure," Phil. ii. 13.

What has then a man to do, who would purify himself, even as HE (the LORD) is pure? Who would wish to glorify God in his body and in his spirit? In brief, who would follow holiness? He, 1. (as indeed he ought) premises, that holiness is necessary: For God did, from eternity, when he chose us in Christ, predestinate us to be made conformable to the image of his Son. (§ 156.) For this did Christ deliver himself up unto death, that we might be sanctified through the truth (§ 152.); and is it not evident, from the many passages of the holy Scripture there cited, that our sanctification is the will of God?

(2.) That

(2.) That the ſanctification of a man who, through faith, belongs to our Saviour, is nothing impoſſible, though he be ever ſo depraved by nature. For, ſince the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, labour ſo earneſtly upon the ſanctification of every man (§ 152, &c.) how ſhould it be impoſſible? unleſs a man ſhould, after his having obtained grace, make ſhipwreck of the faith, and ſo become a tree twice plucked up by the roots.

According to what has been ſaid, a man, who has found grace in Chriſt, who now ſhows all neceſſary faithfulneſs, and ſubmits to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, follows firſt of all holineſs *in faith*; that is, he has a child-like confidence, that God can, is willing, and will do all in him that is neceſſary to his ſanctification. See Phil. i. 6. As he knows that he can do nothing without our Saviour, ſo he, according to the exhortation of Chriſt, "Abide in me, "and I in you," John, xv. 4. ſeeks continually to be in the moſt cloſe fellowſhip with him: and in caſe he has not a conſtant enjoyment of this, he feels like a child abſent from its mother. Oh! how does the little child cry after its mother. That free acceſs to the Father, which we have through Chriſt, he is very glad to make uſe of, and remembers the words of Jeſus, that his elect cry to him day and night; and he grants certainly every thing, whatſoever we aſk of him in the name of Jeſus. If the Saviour chaſtens him for his good, he accepts it upon his knees; although it may give him pungent ſmart, and knows, by experience, that it will be productive of a new bleſſing to him. Does he obſerve that our Saviour has ſomething againſt him, he cannot reſt, until he gives him an aſſurance in his heart that he is ſatisfied. He is, without ceaſing, attentive to the voice of the Holy Ghoſt, and obſerves every thing, which he, from day to day, from hour to hour, from one quarter of an hour to another, is deſirous of effecting in him. He avoids with great care his own willing and running, toiling, and working, in doing which the aim is uſually good, but not obtained; for it obſtructs the work of the Holy Ghoſt,

who

who alone conducts us safely. And the Holy Ghost seeks every thing at its source, as well when he would remove that which is not good, as when he would produce that which belongs to the image of God in us, so he resigns himself as a child up to him, and thus he succeeds.

In general it is to be observed, that whatsoever may be further said concerning sanctification, and the keeping the commandments of God, is never to be so taken, as if this were to be expected from man's own strength. On the other hand, the meaning is this, when a man obtains the grace of becoming, through faith in Christ, a child of God, and a partaker of the Holy Ghost; then, he must not receive the love and faithfulness of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and particularly of the Mediator Jesus Christ, which from that time rules him "in vain," 2 Cor. vi. 1. For the Scripture speaks with great severity against those who sin thus; about which we will only quote the following: "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, "and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath "not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath," Matt. xiii. 12.

Our Saviour has urged these words more than once; and from Matt. xxv. 14, &c. we may plainly see what the sense of them is. If a man does not make such an use of the grace bestowed upon him by God, as is well-pleasing to him, it is the same as if he had not received it; and the consequence is, that if he persists in this levity, the grace is withdrawn from him again. Furthermore, our Saviour says, "Every branch in me, that beareth not fruit, my "Father taketh away," John, xv. 2.

Whosoever is a branch in Jesus Christ, the Vine, certainly derives sap and power from him: but if he receives this sap and power in vain, bringing forth no fruit, how does it go with him? The Father takes him away,—he is cast forth, and is withered;—men cast him into the fire, and he is burned. See verse 6.

§ 158.

§ 158.

A MAN who is, with a simple mind, devoted to our Saviour, and who endeavours to obtain sanctification, reflects as well upon the words, "Purify your souls in obeying the "truth, through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the "brethren," 1 Pet. i. 22; as on the words of Paul, Rom. xii. 1. "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, "that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, "acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable ser-"vice."

To purify the soul, implies as much, as to cleanse ourselves, with respect to our souls, from all such things as defile and pollute us in the sight of God. To these belong all those ideas and notions, which do not harmonise with the mind and word of our Lord Jesus Christ; likewise all those representations and imaginations which spring from the depravity of nature; together with all those propensities and mental emotions, which are repugnant to the doctrine and to the example of Jesus, and the like. From all these we are to purify ourselves by the Holy Spirit, in obedience to the truth of the Gospel, and to keep ourselves from them; and, from thence arises, among other things, an unfeigned love of the Brethren.

Would we present our body as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to the Lord, we should first of all consider, that it is a temple of the Holy Ghost. "Know ye not "that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in "you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 1 Cor. vi. 29. We must also observe these words, "Put "ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for "the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof," Rom. xiii. 14.

Thus, then, the use of our members is to be regulated according to the mind of Christ. Paul says, "Neither "yield 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," Rom. vi. 13. And, "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," Rom. vi. 19. See 1 Cor. vi. 15.

James speaks particularly concerning the tongue, shewing how needful it is to bridle it, chap. iii. 2—12. Our external senses, which men, before their conversion, so scandalously abuse, must be restored to their right use, by those who belong to Jesus Christ. For he that does not take care of, and watch over them, so as not to abuse them, and to use them aright, he certainly suffers hurt in his soul. Therefore Paul says, "The peace of God, "which passeth all understanding, *keep your hearts and minds*, "through Christ Jesus," Phil. iv. 7.

§ 159.

If a child of God does not faithfully watch over his heart and his mind, he may fall into temptation. He is yet in the world; but the world lies in the wicked one, and the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life rules in it. We are all as tinder, which may be kindled by a spark of evil. Thus it may happen, that something of his corruption may be stirred up in him. What is to be done in this case? As soon as we perceive any thing like this, (the Holy Ghost does however in such circumstances faithfully watch over us) we are to turn to our Saviour, beg his pardon, and implore his assistance against it. It is also necessary in this case, to flee, as much as possible, from every occasion, by which any detriment could accrue to the soul. See 1 John, ii. 15, &c.

Satan and his confederates do not cease to tempt the members of Jesus, against which we are to be upon our guard, by day and night, that he may not succeed in finding an entrance into us, and stir up something in us, by which we might be deformed and defiled. But should any

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one fall into temptation, and have any kind of evil put in motion within him, what is then to be done? In the first place, it is right that he seeks the fault in himself; for had he stedfastly withstood the tempter in faith, and kept himself, Satan would have fled from him, and he would not have fallen into such circumstances. See § 59. Secondly, he is humbly to bemoan his distress to our Saviour, and in faith to seek purification in his blood, and the pardon and the blotting out of his sins. And if he does this (to which the Holy Ghost faithfully impels him) with his whole heart, and prays to him without ceasing for deliverance from the temptation; then will the temptation terminate in such a manner, that he will be able to thank and bless God for it. That which (§ 71.) has been said of the temptations of Christ, is a benefit to us when under temptations. For it is said, "We have not an High-priest, who cannot be "touched with a feeling of our infirmities; but was in all "points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," Heb. iv. 15. And, "In that he himself hath suffered, being "tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted," Heb. ii. 18.

§ 160.

To speak in particular of all those things, which together constitute the old man, which we are to put off with his deeds; it is indeed impossible to specify all that from which those who follow holiness, are to be purified and made free: We can, however, point out that which we are chiefly to attend to, lest it hurt us; and from thence we may draw a conclusion to the rest.

Here then we are to mention first, and in general, the *carnal mind*; which rules in all men, who are not yet become new creatures. It consists in this, that we follow the impulses and the will of the depraved and sinful nature; and, as the apostle expresses it, Rom. viii. 1. "Walk after

"the flesh." He that is carnally-minded fulfils, as much as he can, the lusts of the flesh; according to the expression of Paul, Gal. v. 16. He who is governed by the carnal mind, and who is still a slave of his own nature, is not yet a child of grace. For Paul says, "*The carnal mind* "*is enmity against God*; for it is not subject to the law of "God, neither indeed can be," Rom. viii. 6, 7.

Now, when a man believes in Jesus Christ, and seeks for sanctification, he watches over himself; and if any thing of the carnal mind moves in him, he directly turns to the friend of poor sinners; bemoans it with pungent sorrow before him; begs of him grace and forgiveness, for the sake of his blood and death; and endeavours, by *our Lord's* power, to quench the first sparks of this evil.

But we are, secondly, to mention, in particular, the evil habits which men, before their conversion, fall into; and which are added to the corruption of nature, both in soul and body.

But if a man's heart be converted, he, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, is enabled to free himself from them; they can no longer have dominion over him. But here he is to attend to the Holy Ghost, who reminds him faithfully, as often as they present themselves, to entreat our Saviour to assist him against them, to deliver him from them, and to grant him forgiveness, for his blood and death's sake, on account of any thing of the kind which remains in him. Thus he overcomes them, and through the grace of God remains victorious; so that evil habits decrease more and more from time to time.

Thirdly, Mention must be made of *evil thoughts*, which proceed out of the heart, and of which our Lord Jesus Christ expressly says, Matt. xv. 19, 20. that "they defile "the man." Whatsoever is thought contrary to the word of God, and to the mind of Jesus Christ, these are evil thoughts. Likewise, whatsoever is not consistent with the love of God and our neighbour, these are evil thoughts; they

they are the fruits of a depraved underſtanding, and of a perverſe will, and God is the judge of them, Heb. iv. 12. It may alſo be the caſe, that ſuch kind of evil thoughts proceed from the wicked enemy. Thus, for inſtance, "*Satan* "ſtood up againſt Iſrael, and *provoked David*" (out of pride) "to number Iſrael," 1 Chron. xxi. 1. "*The devil* "*put into the heart of Judas Iſcariot*, Simon's ſon," (out of covetouſneſs) "to betray Jeſus." John, xiii. 2. O how needful is it then, to watch over ourſelves, and to be aſhamed of every unprofitable thought; to beg God to forgive them, and to be cleanſed and freed from them! If we only attend to the voice of the Holy Ghoſt, as we ought, all would be eaſy to us.

Fourthly, By means of the deplorable fall through ſin, there is in man an irregular, idolatrous, and ſinful *ſelf-love*. Certainly God has implanted in man, as in all the beaſts, fowls, fiſhes, and creeping things, an inſtinct and inclination to preſerve themſelves from hurt, and to attend to their own preſervation. Therefore, ſays Paul, "No man ever "yet hated his own fleſh, but nouriſheth and cheriſheth "it," Eph. v. 29. But if a man loves himſelf more than God his Lord; nay, if he loves himſelf more than his neighbour; this is not in that order, in which God would have it. Is not this quite manifeſt from Matt. xxii. 37—39? The Holy Ghoſt oppoſes this perverſe and ſinful ſelf-love earneſtly in the hearts of thoſe who belong to Chriſt; and as ſoon as we perceive it in ourſelves, we are to purify ourſelves from it, and to be always upon our guard againſt it. For this hateful diſpoſition will often diſcover itſelf anew. "We ought not to pleaſe" (or to have a complacency in) "ourſelves, for even Chriſt pleaſed not" (or had not complacency in) "himſelf," Rom. xv. 1. 3.

Fifthly, The *minding*, or *graſping after high things* is quite common to natural men; although the Scripture ſays, "Mind not high things," Rom. xii. 16.

A child of God cannot be governed by pride, and whoever is under the dominion of pride, is an abomination in the ſight of God. "*He hath ſcattered the proud in the imagination of their heart*," Luke, i. 51.

But the ſeed of this is in all men. *Haughtineſs*, a fruit of pride, cometh out of the heart, and defileth the man. Mark, vii. 21, &c. Conſequently, whoever is intent upon ſanctification, purifieth himſelf, and putteth it away from him, as ſoon as he, in the light of the Holy Ghoſt, perceives any thing of it; and this he does as often as any thing of it diſcovers itſelf again. Moreover, he is by ſuch an occaſion greatly aſhamed before our Saviour on account of this odious quality of his nature, and begs earneſtly for pardon on account of it.

Sixthly, *Covetouſneſs*, or a diſpoſition not to be content with food and raiment, but wanting to be rich, Paul calls the root of all evil, 1 Tim. vi. 10. "Becauſe they that "will be rich fall into a temptation, and a ſnare, and "into many fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which drown men in "deſtruction and perdition," 1 Tim. vi. 9.

"Covetouſneſs cometh forth out of the heart, and de"fileth the man," Mark, vii. 21, 22. And "Whoever "is born of God, can be no ſlave of covetouſneſs." He that is governed by covetouſneſs, is certainly not as yet a child of God. What do they do then, who are concerned about their ſanctification? They attend to their heart, and to the work of the Holy Ghoſt in it; and if any thing begins to ſpring up in them, which ſavours of covetouſneſs, they complain of it to their Lord and Saviour; —— they beg for the cleanſing of his blood, and for his help againſt this evil,—*they do not protect, but mortify it*. "*Mortify* your "members, which are upon the earth," (that is, every thing belonging to the carnal mind, which is enmity againſt God)—"*covetouſneſs*, which is idolatry," Col. iii. 5. For the Scripture ſays, "If ye then be riſen with

"Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ "sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on "things above, not on things on the earth," Col. iii. 12.

§ 161.

UNTO this head belongs further, seventhly, *Unbelief*. This is an inbred evil of the human heart, and which plunges us into temporal and eternal wretchedness and woe. When God, by his word, enkindles faith in us, it is, according to the Scripture, accounted equal to his greatest works. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of dark-"ness," (He said, Let there be light, and there was light) "hath shined in our hearts," (that is, he has not only granted unto us the knowledge of Jesus Christ in our hearts, but would also, that, by us should be given "the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face "of Jesus Christ,") 2 Cor. iv. 6. But we being very wretched, and having many defects, make frequent mistakes, and are guilty of many trespasses; therefore doth the question arise in us, more frequently than could be imagined, will not God be weary of forgiving us? We are apt to think that God is like us. We could not bear it, if any one behaved as basely towards us, as we do towards God. We should certainly break out in a passion and give such a person up; especially if we had loaded him with benefits. Now, if we give way to such thoughts, we are benighted, the confidence towards God is lost, and we are then no longer able to run our race with courage. Can this be a situation that is well-pleasing to God? O no!—We ought rather to confess our vileness, pray to him with child-like confidence for forgiveness, and draw nigh to his throne of grace; and hold fast by that word. "If we confess our "sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to "cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 John, i. 9. He, who will advance in sanctification, must make this his daily

occupation, and thus purify himself, otherwise he will make no great progress. If we give attention to the Holy Spirit, who is ever glorifying Jesus Christ, and his offering himself for us, then will unbelief get no power over us.

Eighthly, The passions are in their own nature not wrong, if I except those that grow out of a bad root, for instance envy; but they become, according to circumstances, bad and sinful. Therefore it is incumbent upon every one, who follows holiness, to watch over the emotions of his mind, and his passions, and when such arise in him, to examine strictly into their nature. For if any one becomes, for instance, angry, and he considers, why, and how, and with what consequences he is angry, his heart will then soon tell him, nay, the Holy Ghost will soon shew him, how he is to look upon his anger. If we read Eph. iv. 26. 31. Col. iii. 8. 1 Tim. ii. 8. James, i. 19, 20.; it will be easily discerned, that in a man's anger, we have more reason to be apprehensive of something bad, than of expecting any thing good. Nay, it may happen, that a man's wrath becomes a flagrant work of the flesh, Gal. v. 20.; excluding him from the inheritance of the kingdom of God, if he perseveres in it. Now does any one find he has trespassed with his anger, he should hasten to our Saviour, to be cleansed and freed from it. With sorrow, it is also the same case. There is a sorrow of the world, (2 Cor. vii. 10.) which every one who seeks sanctification must put away from him, and cleanse himself from. "Joy and meekness are fruits of the spirit," Gal. v. 22, 23.

Ninthly, One thing more is to be observed; men have commonly, before their conversion, certain bosom sins, and they are after conversion very dangerous. James says, "Every man is tempted, when he is *drawn away of his* "*own lusts*, and enticed," chap. i. 14.

Here a man's bosom-sin is termed his own lust, against which he is warned. Judas Iscariot's own lust was covetousness; and not being radically cured of it, at last it proved his ruin. Now he that shews faithfulness in the pursuit

purſuit of ſanctification, takes notice of the leaſt ſtirring of his own luſt, and purifies himſelf from it, by the power of Jeſus Chriſt, and of the Spirit, without ſparing or foſtering it.

From all theſe inſtances alleged, we ſee, that nothing is more neceſſary, than earneſtly to ſtand againſt all theſe evil things, from the very beginning, as ſoon as we perceive any of them in ourſelves. If we do not act thus, then out of a ſpark, which one might have extinguiſhed with a finger, ariſes a wide ravaging fire.

§ 162.

As from what has been ſaid, is to be perceived, what that implies, to put off the old man with his deeds; ſo we have yet to ſay ſomething concerning the putting on the new man. The Scriptures point out nothing elſe by this, but that through the grace of God we ought to endeavour to recover again that likeneſs to the image of God, which we loſt by the fall. The following words make this plain. "Put ye on the new man, *which after* "*God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs*," Eph. iv. 24. See Gen. i. 26, 27, &c. and Col. iii. 10. Paul expreſſes it thus, "Put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt," Rom. xiii. 14. In another place, Gal. iii. 27. he has ſaid, "As many of you as have been baptized into Chriſt, have "put on Chriſt," Gal. iii. 27.

This has no other meaning, but that thro' faith in Chriſt, upon which they had been baptized, they had been made partakers of the expiatory offering of Jeſus made for us, and for our ſins, and cloathed in his righteouſneſs; and Chriſt hath been moſt cloſely united with them, and they with Chriſt. Now, when Paul ſays to the Romans, who had already put on Chriſt in baptiſm, "Put ye on the Lord "Jeſus Chriſt," What does he mean by it? He would ſay thus much unto them, that they were to give all diligence

gence to be conformed unto the image of Jesus Christ; to have the same mind in them, that was also in him; and to walk as he walked. See Gal. iv. 19. For Christ, the most perfect image of God, is our example, by which we are to be formed; the original, of which we are to be copies. Therefore, says Peter, "As He, which hath "called you, is holy; so be ye also holy in all manner of "conversation," 1 Epistle, i. 15. "Christ suffered for "us, leaving us *an example*, that ye should follow his steps," chap. ii. 21.

But as the Lord our Saviour is our most immediate example, and most suitable; because he himself was a man in the world;—§ 49. and § 105.; so we are also directed to our dear Father in heaven; we have him also for an exemplar. "*Be ye merciful* (says our Saviour), *as your Father* "*also is merciful.* For he is kind unto the unthankful, "and unto the evil," Luke, vi. 35, 36.; and Matt. v. 44, 45. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, "do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which "despitefully use you, and persecute you; *that ye may be* "*the children of your Father which is in Heaven.* For HE "maketh his Sun to rise on the evil, and on the good, "and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

In the Epistle to the Ephesians it is said, "Forgive one "another, *even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.* "*Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children*, and walk "in love," chap. iv. 32. chap. v. 1.

But it is also to be well observed, that the whole life of Jesus belongs to his mediatorial office. He was, as the Mediator between God and man, only for our sake upon earth. He became a man like unto us, yet without sin; that he might redeem men by his death. "Though he was "rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we, through "his poverty, might be rich." He submitted to the very law, which he himself had given to the people of Israel; and was in all points in the most perfect manner obedient to it, that

that he might redeem those who were under the law (that is, who sighed under the curse and rigour of the law); and that we might receive the adoption, or might become children of the new covenant of grace, which consists of righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. His walk upon earth was, according to the truth of God, in holiness and righteousness that is acceptable to him. As he would reconcile mankind to God by his death, he must therefore have no need of any offering for his own person. "For such an High-Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, who needeth not daily, as those High-Priests, to offer up sacrifice first for his own sins," Heb. vii. 26, 27.

It was necessary that he should be a Lamb, without blemish, and without spot, otherwise he could not have been an offering acceptable and well-pleasing to God. This, in the Old Testament, was typified in that, according to God's commandment, no lamb that had any blemish, could be presented for an offering to the Lord; otherwise it was no acceptable offering to him. But Christ offered himself without spot to God for a sweet smelling savour: That is, his offering was lovely, and a joy to him. Thus this belonged to the mediatorial office of Christ, that he, without the least exception, without fault, and without sin, conducted his whole life and conversation on earth in conformity to the will of God.

Consequently the life and conversation of Christ upon earth was not our example only; but it contains pure blessing for us. Thus we derive a benefit from every thing Jesus did: For example, His child-like obedience, his diligence at his labour, his meekness and humility, his watching and fasting, his prayer and supplication, &c. do all of them communicate a blessing to us, and belong to our salvation.

§ 163.

IT is ſtill to be obſerved, that the word of God is given to us for the furtherance of our ſanctification in ſoul and body; and this "Word is Truth," John, xvii. 17. If we become obedient to *this* Truth; then ſhall we, through the Holy Spirit, be rendered pure both in body and ſoul. For it is the truth which makes us free from thoſe things which are not conformable to the image of God, and by which we are deformed, and defiled: "If (for inſtance) "we believe in Jeſus, and continue in his Word," John, viii. 31, 32. He therefore that is concerned about his ſanctification, ſhould read diligently the word of God, and, by the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the aſſiſtance of his Spirit, make a right uſe of it.

It is always neceſſary for every one that is come to Jeſus Chriſt, to view himſelf continually in the mirror of the word of God. We thereby become better acquainted with ourſelves, and our own defects and infirmities are thereby more diſcloſed, and made more manifeſt to us. We are alſo, through the word of God, which is, and remains Truth to all eternity, plainly directed to that upon which all depends, and what we are to ſeek after when we follow holineſs; and we are taught of the Holy Ghoſt by the word of God.

The Lord our Saviour laboured always to that end, that the Jews in general, and his diſciples in particular, might come to the knowledge of themſelves. The diſciples of Jeſus proceeded in the ſame manner, teaching all men, but eſpecially the churches, which were gathered together unto him, their own ſtate, wherein they were deficient, what they were to purſue, and how they might be effectually helped. When the Corinthians began to make diſtinctions between the ſervants of Chriſt; ſo that one attached himſelf to this, and the other to another ſervant of Jeſus; whence

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ſchiſms ſprang up; then Paul ſpoke earneſtly with them, and for this reaſon called them carnal. For this was not of the Holy Spirit, but of nature. This was walking after the manner of men, and they were to be cleanſed and freed from it. Thus alſo muſt every one, that is concerned about ſanctification, look daily to himſelf, that he conſigns unto death every thing which is not conformable to the mind of Jeſus, and to ſeek to be cloathed on with the image of Jeſus. Thus he will find cauſe enough to pray, to weep, and to reflect upon himſelf.

§ 164.

IN general, we have here to obſerve, that the doctrine and ways of Jeſus are as different from the doctrines and ways of men, as day from night, and light from darkneſs. The ways of men, who are not yet converted with their hearts to Jeſus, are manifeſtly ſuch, that every one, according to his idolatrous ſelf-love, (ſee § 160.) eſteems himſelf, eyes himſelf, ſeeks himſelf, and in all his thinking, ſpeaking, doing or not doing, has ever himſelf for his ultimate aim. To procure and to obtain for himſelf ſome profit or advantage, or ſome reputation and eſteem, or good days and pleaſures, or ſome other ſuch thing that he likes, is the main ſpring of every thing that he thinks, ſeeks, ſpeaks, or enterprizes. Is not this evident? and do we not find books enough, directing us to this? Are not children commonly educated and trained up in ſuch ſentiments?

But what is the doctrine of Jeſus? Jeſus ſaid to all, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, "and take up his croſs daily, and follow me," Luke, ix. 23.

What is that, "Deny himſelf?" It is the very oppoſite of all the above-mentioned ways of natural and unconverted men. He that regards himſelf merely as a wretched, depraved, ſinful creature, loaded with ſins and tranſgreſſions, lying

lying under the wrath and curſe of God, and worthy of damnation:—He who knows, on the other hand, that Chriſt, the Son of God, and the Creator of all things, came into the world to ſave ſuch ſinners; and that, on this account, he endured the moſt cruel penalty of death, to redeem us from our wretched condition, and beſtow everlaſting life upon us:—He that, for this cauſe, loves this Saviour (who receives even the moſt wretched ſinners ſo friendly, and is ſo gracious even to him) more than father, mother, ſon, daughter, himſelf, and his own life, yea, more than all things:—And he who for this reaſon, becauſe he loves Jeſus above all things, and makes him the only aim of every thing he does or does not, and pays thereby no attention to himſelf, and ſeeks not himſelf thereby;—he it is of whom it may be ſaid, that he denies himſelf, and looks upon himſelf as the meaneſt. With him Jeſus Chriſt, and his commands, are his honour and his joy, are the main ſpring of all his thinking, willing, ſpeaking, doing, and not doing; all he does being done for Chriſt's ſake.

But what is that, "to take up his croſs daily?" A malefactor, condemned to the death of the croſs, was uſually obliged himſelf to carry the croſs, or the wood to which he was to be nailed, unto the place of execution; as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt did himſelf carry the croſs to which he was to be nailed, to the Place of a Skull. Accordingly, the words of Jeſus imply thus much: He that would be my follower muſt, daily and willingly, for my ſake, take all that upon himſelf, which renders him a ſpectacle in the ſight of men; which falls hard and heavy upon his nature; and which is made uſe of by the world for his vexation; and thus follow me. Thus did Paul, for inſtance, who had perſecuted the church of Chriſt, after he had been converted, daily take up his croſs; from a learned and celebrated Phariſee, he became a confeſſor of Jeſus, though he thereby became an abomination to the Jews, which is certainly no

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easy thing to nature; he crucified his flesh, with its affections and lusts, which was also hard and difficult to nature; he devoted himself to the service of our Saviour; and although he knew he must suffer bonds and afflictions on that account, nay, even martyrdom, with which he was also honoured; yet he willingly took up his cross. He gloried only in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world was crucified to him, and he to the world; that is, he looked upon the world, as we are used to regard a criminal, who suffers his punishment on the cross, and the world regarded him in the same light, Gal. vi. 14. He who is converted with all his heart to Jesus Christ, has, on his part, and in his allotted measure, the very same to do, and to experience, that Paul has done and experienced.

But, finally, What does that mean, "And *follow me?*" If the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus, and we walk as he walked, being neither ashamed of him or of his words, but on every occasion boldy confessing him before men, thus do we follow our Saviour.

§ 165.

THE *hope of eternal life*, which lives and prevails in the heart that believes in Jesus, is a powerful excitement to sanctification. Therefore we have still something to add on this head. Our Lord Jesus Christ has said, "As Moses "lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the "Son of Man be lifted up," (on the cross) that whosoever "believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life," John, iii. 14, 15.

Upon this the hope of eternal life is founded in believers, "which God that cannot lie promised," Tit. i. 2.; which hope waits, with assurance and not doubting, for things not yet seen. This hope is a work of God in those who receive Jesus Christ by faith. "Blessed be the God "and

" and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," (says Peter) " which according to his abundant mercy, *hath begotten us* " *again unto a lively hope*, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ " from the dead," 1 Pet. i. 3.

Christ is called, " *Our Hope*," 1 Tim. i. 1. because we ground our hope upon Christ, who by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, Heb. x. 14. The Holy Ghost establishes us in it; for after that we have believed, we are sealed with him.

" *HE is the earnest of our inheritance*, until our" (consummate) " redemption," Eph. i. 13, 14. and " we abound " in hope *through the power of the Holy Ghost*," Rom. xv. 13. It is also the will of God, that we persevere in hope, according to Heb. vi. 11. " We desire that every one of " you *do shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope* " *unto the end*." For if this be in the heart, we have no reason to be afraid of death, but can say with Paul, " I have " a desire to depart, and to be with Christ," Phil. i. 23.

That this hope impels us to holiness, is evident from the following passages of Scripture: For instance, " *Having* " *therefore* these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse " ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfect- " ing holiness in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1. " When " Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also " appear with him in glory. Mortify *therefore* your mem- " bers, which are upon earth," (that is, the members of the old man, which, with his deeds, we are to put off and to lay aside) " fornication, uncleanness," &c. Col. iii. 4, 5. " Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not " yet appear what we shall be, but we know, that when " HE shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see " him as he is: and every man that hath *this hope* in him, " purifieth himself, even as HE is pure," 1 John, iii. 2, 3.

§ 166.

§ 166.

THE experience of the children of God agrees with this: for if we do but reflect, what God hath bestowed upon us;—he has delivered his only-begotten Son up for us; if we further weigh what Christ has done and suffered for us;—he tasted a bitter death for us, and shed his blood for us, for the remission of our sins; if besides this, we experience with what love, faithfulness, patience, long-suffering, wisdom, and power, the Holy Ghost labours upon us; then is this, together with so many other great benefits he daily and hourly confers upon us; a sufficient reason to excite our hearts to become a joy and honour to him. If there be added, that an inheritance, so beyond all conception glorious, awaits us, which he will make us partakers of, and of which he gives us the certain assurance in our hearts. Oh! how are we thereby enkindled with zeal, to live unto him alone, and to put all that away from us which might grieve him!

And whereas this hope of eternal life, as also the communion of believers with Jesus Christ, and with each other, is greatly strengthened by the right use of the Lord's Supper (see § 148.), from hence it is evident, that the Holy Communion is of exceeding great service in our endeavours after sanctification: and the more so, because the remembrance of the death of Christ for us, whereby he has so effectually displayed his love towards us, remains a principal point in the Holy Communion. For what can excite us to the sanctification which is acceptable unto God, more than the heart-affecting and grateful remembrance of the love of Jesus, which delivered him up to such a bitter and ignominious death of the cross for us.

§ 167.

If we sum up all that hath been said concerning sanctification, it is easy to conclude how we are to understand those

those words of Scripture which speak of perfection. Our Lord Jesus Christ says, undoubtedly, to his disciples, "*Be* "*ye perfect*, even as your Father which is in Heaven is per-"fect," Matt. v. 48.

From the words preceding it is evident, that our Saviour would lead his disciples from the perverse doctrine of the Scribes and Pharisees, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour, "and hate thine enemy."—Not so, says he, but, "Love "your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them "that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use "you, and persecute you," &c. ver. 44. The motive he alleges for it is this, "Your Father in heaven maketh his "sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain "on the just and on the unjust," ver. 45.

Now, because he is kind towards the unthankful and the evil, you therefore should be of the same mind. You should not only follow him in this, that you love your friends, but herein also, that you love your enemies, and do them good; you should make no exceptions in loving, This is therefore not spoken of the degrees but of the extent of love. If we love all men, this is that perfection of which we are speaking.

In other places of Scripture, the being perfect implies as much, as the growing and increasing in knowledge, and in all goodness. For instance, "Brethren, be not children "in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children, but "*in understanding be perfect* *," 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

Now, if we grow up into him in all things, "who is the "Head, even Christ," according to Eph. iv. 15. then shall we be perfect, "we shall abound more and more," 1 Thess. iv. 1.

But should any one conceive, that he had made such a progress in knowledge, as not to offend in a word; and

* In the English version it is, "Be men;" but in the margin, Gr. "Be perfect."

that

that he was arrived to ſuch a growth in goodneſs, as no longer to need, even in reference to himſelf, to pray, "Forgive us our treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs against us," he would give the plaineſt proof that he did not underſtand the Scripture: nay, he would in fact be a witneſs againſt himſelf, that he was far from perfection, and did not know himſelf.

§ 168.

AFTER what hath been ſaid concerning ſanctification, (ſee § 152.) we may repeat the following Scripture: Chriſt Jeſus "is of God made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption," 1 Cor. i. 30.

Now, as all this is together in Chriſt, ſo it ſhould be, by experience, altogether in us. For if any one, that has been awakened out of the ſleep of ſin, and comes with all his miſery to Chriſt, and through faith in him finds the remiſſion of his ſins, thinks within himſelf, Now has Chriſt been made unto me righteouſneſs, but I muſt alſo be ſanctified through him,—ſuch a man is certainly in the right way: but if he, in a manner, forgets the firſt, and ſeeks by day and night after the other, he will then become ſo wearied, that he loſes all deſire and power for ſanctification. Chriſt, and the ranſom which he paid, when he taſted the bitterneſs of death for us, muſt remain in our heart, and before our eyes, day by day, when we "follow holineſs." Does this not remain before our eyes, that in him we have redemption through his blood, namely, the forgiveneſs of ſins, we ſhall then make no great proficiency in holineſs. Paul, who with all the power that was beſtowed upon him by Chriſt Jeſus, followed after holineſs, has given us an excellent example in this. He ſays of himſelf, "I live, yet "not I, but Chriſt liveth in me, and the life which I now "live

" live in the flesh, *I live by the faith of the Son of God, who* " *loved me, and gave himself for me,*" Gal. ii. 20.

His heart was full of Christ Jesus, and of his death on the cross; and therefore from the abundance of his heart his mouth was always speaking. This is seen in the words which he writes to the Corinthians: " I determined not to " know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him " crucified," 1 Cor. ii. 2.

And because there were many at that time who aimed at something else, therefore he declared concerning himself, " God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross " of our Lord Jesus Christ," Gal. vi. 14.

That which he besought, on his knees, of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, among other things, for his Ephesians, " that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith," Eph. iii. 17. was quite applicable to him (Paul), through the grace of God. Christ lived in him, and was ever present to him as the Lamb of God, that bore the sin of the world. His life in the flesh, that is, his waking and sleeping, his labouring and resting, his thinking and contriving, his willing and seeking, &c. was a life in the faith of the Son of God. The faith in the Son of God was not, in Paul, something which to-day is, and to-morrow is gone again; but it was in him something which continued and advanced day by day, as long as he lived. And his faith was particularly directed to this point: " HE loved me, " and gave himself for me." To what did he give himself? Unto the death of the cross.

When our hearts are thus disposed, as was the case of the late Valerius Herberger, whose name, for that very reason, justly remains in esteem, because he loved his Redeemer so heartily, to implore,

" May, in my heart's recesses,
" Thy name and cross *always*
" *Sparkle with bleeding graces,*
" To yield me joy and peace," &c.

I ſay, when we are thus diſpoſed, when the name of Jeſus, and the croſs of Jeſus, always and alone ſhine in our hearts, then we ſhall neither be wanting in deſire or power for ſanctification.

Of the COMMANDMENTS *of* GOD.

§ 169.

THE article of the ſanctification of the ſoul and body, naturally leads us to that of the commandments of God, by which he has informed mankind what they ſhould do, and what they ſhould avoid. God has, at no time, ceaſed to let men know what he expected from them, and what they were to eſchew and avoid: the only difference is in the way and manner of his doing it. The heathens themſelves may and ought to diſcern, by the works of creation and preſervation, that it is our duty to fear, honour, and love the Creator and Preſerver of all things, and to ſerve him, to praiſe him, to thank him, and to perform his will. Alſo, that they ought not to injure their neighbour, but to love him, and to do him good. See § 55. What has been ſaid concerning God's œconomy, with men, from the beginning of the creation until Moſes, § 1, 2, 3, muſt be here called to mind. How God afterwards dealt particularly with the people of Iſrael, having choſen them in preference to all other nations for his inheritance, and made his will known unto them, for this the reader is referred back to § 13, &c.

But the moſt glorious of all the revelations of God made to men, has been, that he has ſpoken unto them by his only-begotten Son, by whom he alſo made the world. HE was that great Prophet whom God had ſent into the world,

and He preached the Gospel publicly, and to all men, with divine power, confirming it also with numberless signs and wonders. From his mouth multitudes heard (for they came out of all other countries to Jerusalem, to worship God, especially at the grand festivals) the true sense of the commandments of God, which had been given by him, even in the Old Testament. Every man was in astonishment at his powerful discourses, by which he declared the will of God towards men, and enforced his commandments upon them.

After the disciples of Christ had been baptized with the Holy Ghost, they, according to their Lord's injunction, went forth into all the world, and preached the Gospel to all men. They testified to every man, with demonstration of the Spirit and power, that Jesus Christ, who had been slain on the cross, and was risen again, is the LORD, who was set down at the right hand of God; and that all who believe in him should receive forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation; and such as believed they taught to observe all things, whatsoever Jesus had commanded them.

But the disciples of the Lord have not only inculcated the commandments of God upon them by word of mouth, but they have also, through the grace of God, handed them down to us likewise in writing. The men of God, who have described to us the walk of Christ upon earth, and his finishing his work by the suffering of death, have, being moved by the Holy Ghost, penned many of his discourses; and we cannot thank God sufficiently for them. Therein we find the will of God for our observance, that is, his commandments, so plainly and divinely expressed, as to afford unspeakable joy to the hearts of the children of God. What the disciples of Jesus have farther, in his name, and by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, enjoined us, this we are likewise to regard and follow as the commandments of God. We are bound to observe them; though it is a blessing to ourselves when we are obedient unto them.

But

But how is it with the commandments of the Old Teſtament? Are we under an obligation to follow them likewiſe in the New Teſtament? I anſwer, Yes, with diſcrimination. That the commandments of the Old Teſtament, which refer either to the regal government of God amongſt the people of Iſrael, or to the Levitical divine worſhip under it, (§ 13), do not bind the believers from amongſt the Gentiles in the New Teſtament, is plainly to be ſeen from Acts, xv. See § 18.

With reſpect to the Ten Commandments (§ 13.) which God gave the people of Iſrael, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt has, in the plaineſt and moſt complete manner, declared the meaning of them, according to the mind of God, Matth. chapters v. vi. vii. and in other places; and ſo far we are to abide ſtedfaſtly by them in the New Teſtament: and whoever does not obſerve them ſins againſt God. To this belongs all that the apoſtles of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt have ſaid, with reſpect to the meaning of the Ten Commandments, and of other paſſages of the Old Teſtament, which relate to the moral conduct of men. But where we find in the New Teſtament any point more explained, with more preciſion than in the Old Teſtament, we are then to keep to the New.

§ 170.

OUR Lord Jeſus Chriſt has conſtantly enforced the keeping his commandments, as a neceſſary point. At the concluſion of his ſermon, which has been laid before us in Matth. v. vi. vii. he ſays among other things, chap. vii. 19. 24, 25. "Every tree that bringeth not forth good "fruit, is hewn down and caſt into the fire. Therefore "*whoſoever heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and doth them*, I "will liken him unto a wiſe man, which built his houſe "upon a rock. And the rain deſcended, and the floods "came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that houſe; "and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock." And

ver. 26, 27. " And every one that heareth these sayings of " mine, and *doeth them not*, shall be likened unto a foolish " man, which built his house upon the sand. And the rain " descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and " beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall " of it."

Of his own sheep he says in general, " *My sheep hear my* " *voice*, and I know them, *and they follow me*," John, x. 27.

With respect to his disciples in particular, we see from divers passages in John, that he inculcated upon them the keeping of his commandments, and how he urged it. Thus he says, for instance, John, xiv. 15. " If ye love me, *keep* " *my commandments*." And, " *If ye keep my commandments*, " ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Fa- " ther's commandments, and abide in his love," John, xv. 10. " If a man love me, *he will keep my words*, and my " Father will love him," John, xiv. 23. " Ye are my " friends, *if ye do whatsoever I command you*," John, xv. 14.

From all these words of Jesus it plainly appears, first, That there can be no love of Jesus, if his commandments are not kept. (One is inseparable from the other; the very nature of the genuine love of Jesus produces this. And secondly, That our Saviour is not served by the external observance of his commandments, without love: as Paul says, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. " Though I bestow all my goods to " feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, " *and have not charity*," *(love)* " it profiteth me nothing." This then is to be attended to, with respect to all the commandments of God. Hence, when Luther expounds the Ten Commandments of Moses, he premises to each of them, " We should fear and love God." For example, " We should so fear and love God, as not to bear any false " witness against our neighbour," &c.

§ 171.

§ 171.

As our Lord Jesus Christ taught his disciples to keep his commandments, so did he also give them a direction, that they should teach the same to others. We see this by the short instructions which he gave his disciples before his ascension: "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the "Holy Ghost: *Teaching them, to observe all things, whatso-* "*ever I have commanded you*," Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

And this the disciples have done accordingly; which is evident from all their writings, wherein they not only bear witness of the doctrines of faith with a divine power, but also faithfully declare all that God demands and expects from us, unto whom he has shewn so much kindness, still shews it daily, and will shew it to us eternally. See § 169. But John says in particular, 1 Epist. v. 3. "This is the love of God, *that we keep his command-* "*ments*; and his commandments are not grievous." That is, God gives unto his children the powerful assistance of his grace, that they can keep his commandments; and he inclines their hearts thereunto, that they do it willingly, therefore it is no burthen to them, and is not grievous. Further, "He that saith, I know him, and *keepeth not his* "*commandments*, is a liar and the truth is not in him," 1 John, ii. 4. "*He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth* "*in Him, and He in Him*," 1 John, iii. 24.; that is, he is in the most close fellowship with God.

And this will remain the doctrine of Christ until the end of days. For when the Lord, at the consummation of all things, says, "Behold I come quickly; and my reward "is with me, to give every man according as his work shall "be," Rev. xxii. 12. it follows immediately thereupon, "Blessed are they *that do his commandments*," ver. 14.

§ 172.

IT muſt, however, be obſerved on this occaſion, that unconverted people are not here ſpoken of, but the children of God. An unconverted man can keep himſelf free from groſs ſins, for inſtance, from murder, adultery, theft, curſing and ſwearing, perjury, and the like; for if he could not do this, it would be hard to puniſh him on that account: he can alſo perform one and the other outward action, which is in itſelf good; as for example, he can provide for the poor, avert hurt from his neighbour, be induſtrious at his work, be an uſeful citizen, and the like, ſee § 55.; but if one ſhould imagine, that an unconverted perſon could keep the commandments of God in their deep and ſpiritual ſenſe, he would be greatly miſtaken. If, therefore, ſuch a man reſolves that he will keep the commandments of God, that he may eſcape condemnation, this is ſuch a reſolution, from which good may ariſe, if he comes into the right way; that is, if he comes to the knowledge of his miſery and corruption, deſpairs of himſelf, and his own powers, and with his heart turns to Jeſus, who can alone ſave us from our ſins: for thus he becomes a child of God, and a new creature, he is made a partaker of the Holy Ghoſt, freed from the ſlavery of ſin, and obtains a delight in, and power to perform the will of God. But if he does not come to Jeſus Chriſt, does not receive him in faith, is not with his heart converted to him, but this immediately and only occurs to him, Now I will forſake every thing God has forbidden, and do every thing he has commanded, he will in this caſe haraſs himſelf greatly, but all in vain. The following words of Jeſus refer thereto: "Strive to enter in at the "ſtrait gate:" (Who is this ſtrait gate? Chriſt. How do we enter into this ſtrait gate? By believing on him.) "For "many, I ſay, will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be "able," Luke, xiii. 24. But why not? Becauſe they paſs Chriſt by, and ſeek to help and amend themſelves.

There-

Therefore did our Saviour command his disciples, first to preach the Gospel, and to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, such as receive it in faith, and then to teach them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. And the disciples of Jesus proceeded in this order, as may be seen in the Acts of the Apostles. The first subject treated of in their preaching was this, that men should turn to Jesus, obtain forgiveness of sins, and become partakers of the Holy Ghost, and the fruits would certainly follow. Then was the time for teaching the observance of all things which Jesus had commanded. This is what our Saviour says, "Make "the tree good, and its fruits will be good," Matt. xii. 33. "For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither "doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For of thorns "men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather "they grapes," Luke, vi. 43, 44. Consequently, if any one is to bring forth good fruit, and to keep the commandments of God, he must first, by faith in Christ, become a good tree, and a new creature. We need only turn to what is related, Acts, ii. and we shall meet with a fine exemplification of this. No sooner did the men to whom Peter testified, that they had crucified and slain the Lord of Glory, smite upon their breasts, bewail and lament their transgressions, receive Jesus in faith, submit to baptism, and become partakers of the Holy Ghost, than they were filled with the love of God, and of their neighbour; and their love discovered itself powerfully in every respect; then came to pass that which God hath promised, "*I will put my laws* "*into their mind, and write them in their hearts*," Heb. viii. 10. Jer. xxxi. 33. Paul says, "Do we then make void "the law, *through faith?* God forbid." "Yea! *we esta-* "*blish the law*," Rom. iii. 31. § 132. We by faith become the children of God, new creatures, partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the child-like spirit. This dwells in our hearts, and "teaches us all things," John, iv. 26. "He

" guides us into all truth," John, xvi. 13. He withal teaches us the will of God, as Paul, for instance, says, 1 Thess. ix. 10. " As touching brotherly love, ye need " not that I write unto you, for *ye yourselves are taught* " *of God*, to love one another: and indeed ye do it," §. 144. He that does not learn, and has not learnt the will of God in the school of the Holy Ghost, forms many wrong ideas of it, as we see, for instance, in the Scribes and Pharisees. They had indeed the Scriptures of the Old Testament; but how opposite to their meaning did they interpret them? This we may see, amongst other places, in Matth. v. vi. vii. and xxiii. But the Holy Ghost does not only teach us the will of God, but he makes us likewise willing to do it, conferring the power upon us to that end. Therefore it is said, Gal. v. 20. " *The fruit of the Spirit* is " love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, " faith, meekness," &c. And " *The fruit of the Spirit* is " in all goodness, righteousness, and truth," Ephes. v. 9. Therefore, every thing that God hath commanded us, when it is done by us, is a fruit of the Spirit. See § 154, &c. He gives us the grace to see what is well-pleasing to God, and to be willing to do it; and moreover, to be able to do it in Christ. This is the meaning of the law's being put into our mind, and written in our heart. In Christ all this is found in the most perfect manner. See Psal. xl. 8, 9. Heb. x. 7. In us it is indeed imperfect, but it is, however, in truth, as Peter said, " Thou knowest all things, thou " knowest that I love thee," John, xxi. 17. Consequently, if we would keep the commandments of God, we are only to attend to the Holy Ghost; he will bring all things to our remembrance, and from hour to hour teach us how to act according to his good pleasure.

Now, as the Holy Ghost is unwearied in reminding us of the commandments of God, and in giving us the right understanding of them, in animating us to keep them, and in richly communicating to us the power and ability, so are

also

also our Lord Jesus Christ, and his and our dear Father, always ready to assist us herein. Of our Saviour Jesus Christ it is said. "He gave himself for us, that he might re-"deem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a pe-"culiar people, *zealous of good works*," Tit. ii. 14.

By good works, we commonly understand such benefactions as are bestowed upon our neighbours; and this is not wrong: but we are, in general, to reckon among the good works all the actions of a child of God, in which he, through grace, and the assistance of the Holy Spirit, regulates himself by the commandments of God. Here it is necessary to observe, that Jesus Christ, when he delivered himself up to death for us, would not only make thereby an atonement for us, but likewise purchase for us the grace of becoming diligent in, and zealous of, good works. We are bound to this, even at our baptism; this is the answer of a good conscience towards God; but which is broken, if we lose sight of the commandments of God. See § 140. Moreover, our Saviour teaches us, that we must, by faith, abide in his most close fellowship, if we, as branches in him, would bring forth fruit, that is, do good according to the commandments of God. He says, "He that *abideth in* "*me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit*; for "without me ye can do nothing," John, xv. 5. We are therefore always to see to it, that we may, through the grace of God, stand fast in the faith on Jesus Christ, through whom we become free from the dominion of sin, which is the victory that hath overcome the world, and by which we are rescued from the power of the devil (§ 131.) and be found in the faith, and remain in it, if we shall be able to keep the commandments of God.

What hath been said of our Father in Heaven, that he is also graciously attentive to assist us to keep his commandments, appears clearly from the following words of Scripture. Christ says, "Every branch in me, that beareth "fruit, HE" (my Father) "*purgeth it, that it may bring* "*forth*

"*forth more fruit*," John, xv. 2. And in the Epistle to the Hebrews it is said, "*God maketh us perfect* in every good "work, to do his will, *working in us* that which is well-"pleasing in his sight, *through Jesus Christ*," chap. xiii. 21.

§ 173.

UPON the subject of the keeping the commandments of God, we shall still make the following observations:

(1.) That all and each of the commandments of God are intended for the good of mankind; and that the observance of his commandments is in reality something blessed; as every kind of disobedience is attended with misery. For instance, our Lord Jesus Christ has said, "Come unto "me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will "give you rest," Matt. xi. 28, &c. This implies nothing else, than if he had said, If your sin presses upon you like a heavy load; if under it you are full of misery, solicitude and anguish; believe on me, as your Saviour and Redeemer, and thus your sins will be forgiven and blotted out. "Take "my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek "and lowly in heart." That means, Be satisfied with my government; resign yourselves wholly unto my will; cease to live according to your own will; be obedient to me with your whole heart; and learn in particular meekness and humility of heart from me. What is connected with this? "And ye shall find rest unto your souls." From whence it follows, that all those who do not follow this call have no rest for their soul.

(2.) Thus we should look upon all and each of the com-"mandments of God, as proofs of his love, and gracious attention to men, and especially to those who belong to Jesus Christ, and are ruled by his Spirit. Did David find himself moved to thank God with all his heart for the law of the Old Covenant; which, however, contained much that was extremely burdensome, as it took in the whole Le-

vitical

vitical service; as may be seen in the cxixth and other Psalms? We have in the New Testament much more reason to thank the Lord for the glorious commandments, which, by grace, he has given to us.

(3.) When thus a new heart and a new spirit are, thro' Christ, given unto us, so that his commandments become a joy and delight to us, Oh! what a great grace is that! and if then, by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, we walk in his commandments, that is, we are day and night intent upon doing what he has commanded, and upon abstaining from that which he hath forbidden; these are benefits for us; that is, as often as God grants us grace, to do something good, and to resist evil, this is a blessing for ourselves.

§ 174.

BUT every thing which we do according to the will of the Lord, is moreover attended with such consequences, that we are bound humbly to thank him for them: For example, our Saviour has said, "Blessed are the poor in "spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are "they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are "the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are "they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for "they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they "shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for "they shall see God. Blessed are the peace-makers, for "they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are "they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for "theirs is the kingdom of Heaven," Matt. v. 3, &c.

Here is the *being poor in spirit*, by which, in the light of God, we are convinced that we are destitute of every thing belonging to the state of grace; or how greatly we are defective as to what we should be. The *mourning*, when we are not careless about our misery and depravity, but our hearts mourn bitterly and are concerned about it. The

being *meek*, whereby the impetuosity of our natural passions is broken; and, on the other hand, we are only attentive to our own state, and think, O wretched man that I am! The *hungering* and *thirsting after righteousness*, in which situation we are solicitous about nothing so much as to find grace in the blood of Jesus, and to be cloathed in his righteousness. The *being merciful*, whereby we feel pity for, and mourn over the condition of poor mankind; and we would be glad to assist them in all their misery and heavy circumstances. The *pure heart*, whereby we diligently keep ourselves from all filthiness both of the flesh and of the spirit, and, through the blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God, are washed clean from all sins. The *being peacemakers*, whereby we not only seek to clear all out of the way, both in ourselves and in others, by means of which the bond of peace is injured; but do also every thing in our power, that love may be preserved and increased. The *suffering for righteousness sake*, in which state we are hated, reviled, and persecuted, not on account of our own evil deeds, but for the sake of Christ, whom we love and therefore serve; and on account of the good we do in his name:——all this, I say, and each of these things is in itself happiness, for which we are bound to thank God. But there are likewise most happy effects connected with every one of these graces.

Thus have we to consider, by every commandment, *first*, how good in itself that is which is enjoined upon us by it; and how bad in itself that is which is therein forbidden; and *secondly*, what consequences this and the other has.

§ 175.

UPON this occasion we are yet to observe, that in every thing that we do and leave undone in consequence of the divine commandments and prohibitions, we are to consider their aim. The external observance of the commandments

ments of God is not ſufficient; for God looketh at the heart. And therefore doth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt call thoſe hypocrites, who for this reaſon gave their alms, that they might have praiſe of men; and offered up their prayers, ſo as to be ſeen of men; and who alſo kept their faſts with the ſame view, that they might be ſeen, Matt. v. 2, &c. And adds, ver. 22, 23: "The light of the body is the eye: if "therefore thine eye be ſingle, thy whole body ſhall be full "of light: but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body ſhall "be full of darkneſs. If therefore the light that is in thee "be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs."

We ſee by the connexion of the whole diſcourſe, that by the *eye* is meant, the aim which we have in any tranſaction. Now as the whole man is in the dark, when his eye is evil, ſo is a tranſaction bad, and diſpleaſing to God, if our aim in it is evil.

If every thing be done purely out of love to God, and out of love to our neighbour; then is the eye ſingle, not looking aſide at any thing elſe; for inſtance, ſelf-honour, ſelf-intereſt, and the like. But the true ſource of love to God, and of love to our neighbour, John tells us in the following words: "We love him, becauſe he firſt loved "us," 1 John, iv. 19. See ver. 10. "If God ſo loved "us, we ought alſo to love one another," 1 John, iv. 11. See Matt. xviii. 33. John, xv. 12. Theſe words belong alſo to this: "Ye are bought with a price; there-"fore glorify God in your body, and in your ſpirit, "which are God's," 1 Cor. vi. 20. "Chriſt died for "all, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live unto "themſelves, but unto him who died for them, and roſe "again," 2 Cor. v. 15. See Rom. xiv. 7, &c. "HE, "his own ſelf, bare our ſins in his own body on the tree, "that we, being dead to ſin, ſhould live unto righteouſ-"neſs." That is, HE took our ſins upon himſelf, and "made himſelf a ſacrifice for them, 1 Pet. ii. 24.

(5.) Neither are we to loſe ſight of that which has been ſuggeſted § 18. that the intire doctrine of Jeſus, and of his diſciples

disciples is Gospel, and is called thus in the Holy Scripture. Now, when we find in the Scriptures, words which gloriously display to us the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of our Father in Heaven, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, with all those blessings which flow from thence, and are combined with it to all eternity, we are not to tear and sever from thence his commandments, in which we are shewn, how exceedingly thankful we ought to be, and what a joy and honour we should be to him; they belong to it. Do we reflect upon the commandments of God, we should at the same time always keep in sight the words of the doctrine of Jesus, and of his disciples, in which all the beatitudes are set before us, which we have in and through Jesus, and shall have to all eternity; and by no means to separate them therefrom. For otherwise we should make no great progress with all our endeavours in keeping the commandments of God; we should always be deficient in inclination and power.

§ 176.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ has comprised all the commandments of God, in the love of God and of our neighbour. "Thou shalt love (says he) the Lord thy God, with all "thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, "and with all thy strength; and shalt love thy neighbour "as thyself.——On these two commandments hang all the "law and the prophets," Matt. xxii. 37. 40. Mark, xii. 30, 31. His disciples follow him in this. For it is said, for instance, "The end (or summary) of the com-"mandment is charity (or love), out of a pure heart, and "of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," 1 Tim. i. 5, &c. And in 1 Cor. xiii. 1, &c. Paul gives such a description of charity, or love, that it is very evident how he deduces every thing from thence. [See also Rom. xiii. 8—10.]

Of

Of the Love *of* God.

§ 177.

IN treating of the commandments of God, we begin with that which he has given to all men in general, and to each in particular.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, "with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy "strength." We did not receive this commandment first in the New Testament; for it was commanded in the Old Testament: for thus it is written in Deut. vi. 5. "Thou "shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thine heart, and "with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

It was also given to the faithful even of the Old Testament, to keep this commandment in their degree. "I love "thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock "and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my "strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the "horn of my salvation, and my high tower," says David, Psal. xviii. 1, 2. But they had not at that time the doctrine concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, concerning his and our dear Father, and concerning the Holy Ghost, in such clearness as we now have it in the New Testament. Therefore a much more child-like and tender love to God is expected of the faithful in the New Testament. God approved himself to the believers in the Old Testament, as their gracious, kind, faithful, patient, long-suffering, and meek, merciful, and loving God and Lord. He forgave them their sins, he heard their prayers, he protected them in their distresses, and bestowed much good upon them. He made his will known unto them, he gave them the most glorious promises, he owned them graciously, and guided them with his hands. They were indebted to him for their bodies, and all their members, their souls, with all their

their faculties, their lives, and every good thing. He cared for them, like a kind father, and beſtowed every thing upon them, whatſoever was neceſſary for their nouriſhment and ſupport. Whenever it was needful, he chaſtiſed them for their good; and whenever they had ſtrayed from him, he brought them back again. Fire and water, air and earth, rain and ſnow, thunder and lightning, heat and cold, ſun and moon, and all the creatures were, at the command of God, obliged to ſerve them, whenſoever it was requiſite. Numberleſs were therefore the things that could excite them to the love of God. We have all this likewiſe in our days, and many more ſpiritual gifts, which we partake of in a rich meaſure in the New Teſtament. When a poor ſinner obtains the grace to know Jeſus Chriſt, and to believe in him, he then has in him redemption through his blood, namely, the forgiveneſs of ſins; and he has the power given him by Chriſt, of becoming a child of God. He is made a partaker of the Holy Ghoſt, and by his help is able to call the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt his Father. Through Chriſt he is made free from the dominion of ſin, from the power of Satan, and from this preſent evil world. He need no more to be afraid of death, of judgment, of the wrath to come, and of Hell. He can always comfort himſelf with the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with the love of God, and with the fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt. Is any thing burthenſome to him, or doth any thing ail him, he has always, through Chriſt, a free acceſs to his Father in Heaven. Through the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, the power requiſite for a godly life and converſation are richly imparted to him. But doth he ſtill err, and become blameable, then the Lord our Saviour, if ſuch an one confeſſes his ſins, is faithful and juſt, to forgive him his ſins, and to cleanſe him from all unrighteouſneſs. The Holy Ghoſt makes it plain to him, that the Father in Heaven, who gave us his only-begotten Son, will with him alſo freely give us all things. That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who

gave

gave his own life for us, and ſhed his blood for us, will deny us nothing, that is neceſſary to our ſalvation; and this he can believe by the aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt. He knows, that through faith he is a member of the body of Jeſus Chriſt, and that he enjoys the moſt faithful care of him, as the head of his body. He partakes, through Chriſt, of all the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, that are neceſſary for him until the end of his days. He has a hope, grounded upon the promiſe of God, of being an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Chriſt. The moſt faithful protection, ſuperintendency, and watchfulneſs of God our dear Father over him, ſkreens, ſhelters, guides, and provides for him, in all circumſtances that occur to him. He taſtes and ſees, moreover, the friendlineſs and benignity of God, our Saviour, &c. Now, ſince all theſe bleſſings of ſalvation, and treaſures of grace, deſcend upon us through Chriſt (he having indeed purchaſed them for us by his obedience and death upon the croſs);—it is eaſy to comprehend, that a believer firſt loves the Lord his Saviour, as a child does its mother; and with the love to him is alſo the love to his and our dear Father inſeparably connected. Therefore we take theſe words moſt aſſuredly to ourſelves, "We love him, "becauſe *HE firſt loved us*," 1 John, iv. 19. And, becauſe the Scripture ſays, "God hath not given us the "*Spirit* of Fear, but of Power, and of *Love*," 2 Tim. i. 7.

And, as amongſt the fruits of the Spirit Love is firſt mentioned, (Gal. v. 22.) therefore it is likewiſe poſſible for believers to love God; not indeed in the greateſt perfection, required by the holy law of God (which is peculiar to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt excluſively), yet, however, in truth.

"The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God," 2 Theſ. iii. 5.

§ 178.

It is easily comprehended, that when we treat of love to God, *faith in God*, in general, must be presupposed: for "he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and "that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6. But in particular, the faith in Jesus Christ, of which we have spoken in § 132, must be premised.

With the love to God and Jesus Christ is *the joy in the Lord* connected; and this joy is not only allowed, but commanded unto us——when we in the Holy Ghost joy first in Jesus Christ our Saviour, unto whom we are directed by God himself, but then also in our dear Father, to whom we come through Christ.

"*Rejoice in the Lord alway*, and again I say, *rejoice*." Thus writes Paul to the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, chap. iv. 4. And to the Thessalonians, "*Rejoice ever-*"*more*," 1 Thes. v. 16. And to the church at Rome, "Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, *rejoicing in hope*," Rom. xv. 11, 12.

It is of importance to our Saviour himself, that his people may possess this joy in the Lord. "These things have I "spoken unto you (said our Saviour to his disciples) "*that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be* "*full*," John, xv. 11. "Ask, and ye shall receive, "*that your joy may be full*,"," John, xvi. 24. And in his prayer, John, xvii. 13. he says to his dear Father, "And "now come I to Thee, and these things I speak in the "world, that they" (namely my disciples) "*might have my* "*joy fulfilled in themselves*."

This joy is a principal article in the kingdom of God, or in God's new covenant of grace with men, of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the Mediator. "The kingdom of "God is righteousness, and peace, and *joy in the Holy* "*Ghost*." According to Rom. xiv. 17. And this joy

6. belongs

belongs to the fruits of the Holy Spirit; which are mentioned in Gal. v. 22.

When Paul ſpeaks of the character of the ſervants of Chriſt, he, amongſt other particulars, deſcribes them, "as "ſorrowful, yet *always rejoicing*," 2 Cor. vi. 10. Iſaiah ſays, "*I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my ſoul ſhall be joyful* "*in my God*," Iſa. lxi. 10. And Mary, "My ſpirit hath "*rejoiced in God my Saviour*," Luke, i. 47.

This joy ſhall not be diſturbed even by ſufferings for Chriſt's ſake, but rather increaſed; which appears from the following paſſages of Scripture: "*Rejoice* inaſmuch *as ye* "are partakers of Chriſt's ſufferings," 1 Pet. iv. 13. "My brethren, *count it all joy, when ye fall into divers* "*temptations*," James, i. 2. And, "*Bleſſed are ye, when* "*men ſhall revile you*, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all "manner of evil againſt you falſely for my ſake: *Rejoice*, "*and be exceeding glad*, for great is your reward in Hea-"ven," Matt. v. 11. 12.

Neither ſhall this joy ceaſe, according to 1 Pet. i. 8. "At the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt, whom having not ſeen "ye love; in whom though now ye ſee him not, yet "believing, ye *rejoice with joy unſpeakable and full of* "*glory*."

All this is proved thus plainly by the Scripture for this reaſon, becauſe it is ſo very uſual, that well-meaning ſouls imagine that the ſpirit of ſorrowfulneſs belongs to genuine Chriſtianity. True it is, that David ſays, "I am weary "with my groaning, all the night make I my bed to "ſwim, I water my couch with my tears, mine eye is "conſumed becauſe of grief, &c. Pſal. vi. 6, 7. This each experiences in his meaſure, when his conſcience awakes; and in the diſtreſs of his ſoul he ſeeks grace and forgiveneſs of the Lord. It is alſo true, that a heart may experience great grief, if after its converſion it is not obedient to the word of God, and doth not attend to the voice of the Holy Ghoſt. This was the caſe with the Church at Corinth,

and especially with that person who had been guilty of such a grievous transgression. See 2 Cor. ch. vii. But it was not always so with David, but he was richly comforted and rejoiced. See § 122. And then did he sing, "Bless the "Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his "holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not "all his benefits. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; "who healeth all thy diseases. Who redeemeth thy life "from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kind-"ness and tender mercies; *who maketh thy mouth joyful.*" (Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things) &c. Psal. ciii. 1, &c. The Corinthians were also richly comforted. I conclude then with this wish, "*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, Rom. xv. 13.

§ 179.

IF we duly consider what we possess in our Lord and Saviour, what he is unto us through grace, and what through him we possess in our dear God and Father in Heaven, and in the Holy Ghost our Teacher and Comforter; we find a thousand reasons to rejoice in God, and to be glad in him. We speak of those who have obtained the redemption, viz. the forgiveness of sins, through the blood of Jesus Christ; that is, such as are by faith become children of God, and heirs of everlasting salvation: and these are they, who can and ought to *glory in God their Saviour*, according to 1 Cor. i. 31. "He that glorieth, *let him* "*glory in the Lord.*"

When, for instance, the wise glory in their wisdom, the mighty in their might, the rich in their riches; and glory in this, that they are wise, strong, and rich; yet all this is nothing, when compared with the grace, the blessing, and the happiness of knowing the Lord, and of living in his fellowship. This is alone worthy of being highly prized; and

and whoſoever has him, has all things, and abundance. Therefore Paul ſays, " I count all things,"—which otherwiſe are highly eſteemed amongſt men, and upon which they are apt to pride themſelves; for of this he ſpoke)—" but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt " Jeſus, my Lord," Phil. iii. 8.

§ 180.

BUT we muſt proceed from the joy in the Lord to the *fear of the Lord.* In the New Teſtament we find various paſſages concerning this point, which ſeem to contradict one another. For here it is, on the one hand, ſaid, " God " hath not given us the ſpirit of fear," 2 Tim. i. 7. " He " remembers his holy covenant,—that he would grant unto " us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our ene- " mies, might ſerve him without fear, all the days of our " life," Luke, i. 72, &c. " There is no fear in love, " but perfect love caſteth out fear; becauſe fear hath tor- " ment; he that feareth is not made perfect in love," 1 John, iv. 18. " Ye have not received the ſpirit of " bondage again to fear; but ye have received the ſpirit of " adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father," Rom. viii. 15.

Whereas on the other hand it is ſaid, " Fear God," 1 Pet. ii. 17. And, " Work out your own ſalvation with fear and " trembling," Phil. ii. 12. And " Paſs the time of your " ſojourning here in fear," 1 Pet. i. 17. And, " We " receiving a kingdom, which cannot be moved, let us " have grace, whereby we may ſerve God acceptably with " reverence and godly fear," Heb. xii. 28.

However, there is no contradiction in theſe paſſages of Scripture. For it is one kind of fear, which ſhould not find place in us after we have experienced the grace of the New Covenant, unto which we are called; and it is again another kind of fear, which is enjoined upon the children of

the New Covenant, and which we for that reason must have. A poor slave, who does not love his Lord, serves his Lord merely out of fear, because he knows that he incurs a severe punishment if he does it not; and if he does not the things, which his Lord has forbidden him, not out of love to him, but merely from the fear of punishment; such a fear as this is incompatible with the New Covenant. For if we believe in Jesus Christ, we then become the children of God, we obtain the forgiveness of sins, our heart is inflamed with love, the child-like spirit takes possession of our heart, the will of God becomes our joy; in which case the slavish fear is lost. This is the condition of which Paul speaks, Gal. iv. 1, &c. concluding with these words, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth "the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, "Father," ver. 6.

But if a man, who is in this state of grace in the New Covenant, consequently who heartily loves Jesus Christ his Lord, and his dear Father in Heaven; who withal certainly knows that he has the privilege of rejoicing in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost:—if such a person (I say) reflects seriously, who he himself is; in what circumstances he finds himself; with whom he has to do; what he might fall into, will he not be in fear? He is a poor creature depraved in soul and body, who can put no confidence at all in himself, and to whom it will happen, that he will plunge into sin and shame, if he doth not abide in Christ. Satan spares no pains to deprive us of simplicity, and thus to seduce us into some evil, by which we are brought into distress and misery. We are yet in the world, and the world lieth in the wicked one; and its allurements and incentives may be as hurtful, and as effectually ruin a man, even after his having been delivered from the world, as its enmity and persecutions. He has to do with God, who is as holy and just, as he is gracious, kind, and merciful; with Jesus Christ,

Christ, who judgeth without respect of persons; and with the Holy Ghost, who is grieved by levity and withdraws himself. Even though he be a branch in Christ, the true Vine, yet, if he bringeth forth no fruit, he is taken away by the Father. And, "if he doth not abide in Christ, "he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men "gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are "burned," John, xv. 2. 6. Will a man then, who takes all these considerations to heart, be without fear? Will not the love to Christ and his Father in Heaven cause him to be upon his guard? Will he, in the danger in which he stands, be indifferent or trifling? will he not cry day and night to God, to keep and preserve, and to take him into his protection against that depravity which is in him? Will he not pray to God, to seal and shut him up from the temptations of the world, and of the wicked enemy? Will he not think upon what Christ was obliged to suffer on our account, and from thence see how angry God is at sin? Will it not come into his mind by this occasion, O how dreadfully should I sin, were I not to prize the grace he has shewed me, and what an heavy judgment should I thereby draw down upon me? Will he not also think by every occasion given, and by every allurement to sin, and to act against the mind of Christ, and say, as Joseph once did, How should, how could I do this great wickedness and sin against God?—against my Lord and Saviour, who loved me unto death, and against my dear Father, whose child I, by grace, am? Will he not be like a person, who carrying a precious treasure in some brittle vessel, be careful of every step he takes, for fear he should fall, and lose his treasure?

This is the fear which is and must be in the children of God, with which also the peace of God, and the joy of the Holy Ghost are very compatible, according to Acts, ix. 31. "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and "Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and *Walked in*

" *the FEAR of the Lord*, and *in the comfort of the Holy* " *Ghost*."

This was then the disposition of the whole church of Christ in those days.

§ 181.

WITH this fear of God is the *confidence towards God* closely connected: by which confidence, we, in all our concerns, turn to him, expect from him all comfort and help in our distress, go on our course in a firm dependance upon him; not harassing the heart with anxieties and cares. The doctrine of the providence of God, and of his government over his creatures, but especially over men, (whereof § 32, &c.) is the foundation of this. No less also that which has been said concerning his love, omnipotence, wisdom, truth, &c. § 41, &c. Our Lord Jesus Christ has said, " God is kind unto the unthankful, and to the " evil," Luke, vi. 35. " He feeds the fowls of the air, " though they neither sow nor reap, nor gather into barns," Matt. vi. 26. " He cloaths the flowers of the field," (which yet are but of a short duration) " so that Solomon " in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these, Matt. vi. 28, &c. He from thence shews to his disciples, that they had no occasion to be anxious about their food and raiment. God, their Father, would certainly provide for them. This is as much as if he had said, depend upon God, and put your confidence in him, " he will not leave " you, nor forsake you," Heb. xiii. 5. See § 36, &c.

This is also in other passages of Scripture expressly enjoined upon men; as, for instance, " *Trust in the Lord* " *with all thine heart*," Prov. iii. 5. " *Trust ye in the* " *LORD for ever*, for in the LORD JEHOVAH is " everlasting strength," Isai. xxvi. 4. " Who is among " you, that feareth the LORD,—that walketh in darkness, " and hath no light," (that is, is in melancholy circumstances,) " *let him trust in the Name of the LORD*, and " *stay*

" *ſtay upon his GOD*," Iſai. l. 10. " *Truſt in him at all* " *times*, ye people! pour out your heart before him: God " is a refuge for us. Selah." Pſal. lxii. 8. " Offer the ſa- " crifices of righteouſneſs, and *put your truſt in the Lord*," Pſal. iv. 5. " *Fear thou not*, for I am with thee: Be not " diſmayed, for I am thy God: I will ſtrengthen thee, yea, " I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right " hand of my righteouſneſs," Iſai. xli. 10. " *Fear not*, " for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy " name, thou art mine. When thou paſſeſt through the " waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they " ſhall not overflow thee. When thou walkeſt through the " fire, thou ſhalt not be burned, neither ſhall the flame kindle " upon thee," Iſa. xliii. 1, 2.

By which occaſion we are to take good notice, that God inſiſts earneſtly upon the obſervance of theſe commands. This is evident from the words, Jer. xvii. 5. " Curſed be " the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm, " and whoſe heart departeth from the LORD;" the happy contraſt of which is, " Bleſſed is the man that truſteth in " the Lord, and whoſe hope the Lord is," Jer. xvii. 7.

The Bible contains many examples, partly of people, who by truſting in their own underſtanding and power, or upon other men, have brought upon themſelves dreadful puniſhments; partly of men, who by turning to God in their diſtreſs, and placing their truſt in him, have on that account been glorioſly delivered. For example, when the people of Iſrael did not hearken to the words of the prophets, who cried unto them with great earneſtneſs, " Woe " to them that go down to Egypt for help, and ſtay on " horſes, and truſt in chariots, becauſe they are many, and " in horſemen, becauſe they are very ſtrong; but they look " not unto the Holy One of Iſrael, neither ſeek the " LORD," Iſai. xxxi. 1. And yet they went down, they plunged themſelves into the moſt lamentable circumſtances, which are deſcribed by the prophet Jeremiah. Whereas Hezekiah, on the other hand, having put his truſt in the LORD,

LORD, experienced a wonderful deliverance, 2 Kings, xix. 19. But the examples on both ſides are too numerous to be here particularly alleged; but they are written for our inſtruction. And what do we not ſtill experience of this kind continually?

Is that then a grievous commandment, when God directs us to put our truſt him? O no!—happy is he, who like a ſimple child confides in him! Yet we are ſtill to obſerve on this occaſion, firſt, That we reſign ourſelves up like children into the hands of our Father in Heaven, even though we cannot ſee the poſſibility of our being helped. For he knows ways and means enough how to aſſiſt us, when we are totally without counſel. Secondly, That we muſt ſimply leave to him the time and hour, alſo the way and manner of our being helped. For HE is wiſe: What do we know? To us it is conſolation enough, that we can believe with an aſſured conviction, that "all things work "together for good to them that love God," Rom. viii. 28.

The more ſimple and tender our converſe with our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is, the more does our confidence in him increaſe. We have daily new proofs of his tender love towards us, and of his taking ſhare in all our circumſtances. When our defects caſt us down before him, and our many miſtakes would diſcourage us, his great patience which he exerciſes towards us, and the gracious encouragement which the Holy Spirit gives us, comfort us. Is the Lord our Saviour alſo ſevere towards us (for he is like the refiner's fire, and like fuller's ſoap), he then not only richly and daily forgives us, when we come weeping and praying to him, but he alſo healeth all our infirmities. His love to us, which induced him to plunge into woe and death, and to take the chaſtiſement we had deſerved upon himſelf, that we might have peace, is, through the Holy Ghoſt, rendered clear to us by a renewed impreſſion and ſenſation in our heart. He alſo often reminds us, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt has all

power,

power, both in heaven and upon earth. If we at the ſame time become more acquainted with our dear Father in heaven, through Chriſt, our confidence in him grows thereby. But, in the ſchool of the Holy Ghoſt, we are daily made more acquainted with our dear Heavenly Father; for he puts us faithfully in mind, that whereas God has given his Son unto us, we need not doubt but that with him he will freely give us all things. He teaches us, with boldneſs and confidence to lay all our neceſſities before him; and to ſpeak with him, as loving children ſpeak with their loving Father. Through the grace of the Holy Ghoſt we alſo learn to ſay with Paul, "I am perſuaded, that neither "death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, "nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor heighth, nor "depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate "us from the love of God" (towards us) "which is in "Chriſt Jeſus our Lord," Rom. viii. 39. Moreover, we ſee from time to time, how graciouſly he hears our prayer and ſupplication, which we offer at his feet, and all theſe prove ſo many new ſeals of his love towards us. The words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, "Your Father in Heaven has "numbered all the hairs of your head, ſo that not one of "them ſhall periſh," are often laid before us by the Holy Ghoſt. When we ſpeak with our dear Father, he then alſo grants unto us, to feel in our hearts that we are accepted in the Beloved, his Son Jeſus Chriſt. All this enables us to put our whole truſt in him, and in his word, though our diſtreſs be ever ſo great, or ever ſo heavy. To this belong the words, "Caſt not away your confidence, which hath "great recompence of reward," &c. Heb. x. 35.

§ 182.

When, by the grace of God, love to God, joy in God, and confidence towards God, are really in the heart of man, then he not only ceaſes to be *idolatrous*, if he was ſo before, but

but he guards against becoming idolatrous again. Of the Gentiles, Paul says, "Because that, when they knew God, "they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, "but became vain in their imaginations," (that is, in their worthless thoughts, and the conclusions drawn by their wisdom) "and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing "themselves to be wise, they became fools;" (that is, they had recourse to very foolish practices in their imaginary worship of God,) "and changed the glory of the incor-"ruptible God into an image made like to corruptible "man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping "things. *Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness*, "through the lusts of their own hearts," &c. Rom. i. 21, &c.

From hence we see, (1.) That idolatry, properly so called, when idols are worshipped, is a judgment of God upon men, who do not glorify and thank God, who has however manifested unto them that he is, Rom. i. 19, 20. He suffers them to become fools. (2.) That idolatry has been, by God's holy and righteous judgment, attended with abominable sins, which in Rom. i. 24, &c. are mentioned.

This heathenish idolatry God very earnestly forbad to his people Israel, with the most severe threats. "Thou shalt "not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness "of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the "earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth," Exod. xx. 4.

Neither would he have it, that they should worship him himself, and pay honours, *at the same time*, to idols, chap. xx. 3. "Thou shalt have *no other gods before me*."

How the people of Israel conducted themselves touching this prohibition, has been already treated of, § 5, 6. Paul, who had to deal with people who had been heretofore heathens, frequently reminds them of the wretched circumstances from which they had been delivered. For instance, he writes to the Corinthians, "Ye know, that ye were "Gentiles,

"Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as "ye were led," 1 Cor. xii. 2. See also Eph. ii. 11, &c. And when he is speaking of the open works of the flesh, which exclude men from any inheritance in the kingdom of God, he also mentions idolatry, and other abominations combined with it, Gal. v. 19, &c. See also 1 Cor. vi. 9, &c. Rev. ii. 14. 20. Doubtless he had sufficient reason, even after they were converted to Christ, to warn them against it. For it may be, even among such as no longer outwardly worship idols, that many ideas and customs remain, which take their rise from heathenism, and are propagated among mankind. What else are the interpretation of dreams, telling of fortunes, conjurations, the distinction of lucky and unlucky days, the attention to the screaming of birds, the questions made to the dead, and departed spirits, and the like, which to this very hour we meet with amongst people who are baptized into the name of Christ? Are they not either deceits, or heathenish abominations, which have been thus propagated unto our days?

Furthermore, it must not be forgotten, that the Scripture calls him an idolater, or worshipper of images, who attaches his heart, and reposes his confidence, and takes his pleasure and delight in something out of God and Christ. Thus is covetousness, whereby Mammon is served (according to Christ's expression, Matt. vi. 24.) termed idolatry, Col. iii. 5. And Paul says of it, "This ye know, that no co-"vetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in "the kingdom of Christ and of God," Eph. v. 5. See § 160.

Thus doth Paul also speak of people who cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which the Romans had learned: "Such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but "their own belly." Rom. xvi. 17, 18. Of the enemies of the cross of Christ he says, Phil. iii. 19. "Whose God is "their belly;" testifying at the same time, that "they mind "earthly things, that their end is destruction, and their "glory

" glory in their ſhame." John concludes his firſt Epiſtle with theſe words: " We know that the Son of God is " come, and hath given us an underſtanding, that we may " know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, " even in his Son Jeſus Chriſt. This is the true God, " and eternal life.—*Little children, keep yourſelves from* " *idols*," chap. v. 20, 21.

§ 183.

HE that loveth the Lord his God with all his heart, and has a child-like reverence for him, he will certainly never *make uſe of his name, but with the moſt profound reſpect and veneration.*

That the word, " Thou ſhalt not take *the name of the* " *LORD thy GOD in vain*, for the Lord will not hold him " guiltleſs that taketh his name in vain," Deut. v. 11. has equal force under the New, as it had under the Old Teſtament, is plain from hence, becauſe our Lord Jeſus Chriſt teaches his diſciples to pray to God, " Hallowed be thy " name," Matt. vi. 9.

" God hath highly exalted Jeſus Chriſt, and given him " *a name which is above every name*, that at the name of " JESUS every knee ſhould bow, of things in heaven, and " things in earth, and things under the earth," Phil. ii. 9, 10.

We are commanded, " Whatſoever ye do in word or " deed, *do all in the name of the Lord Jeſus*, giving thanks " to God and the Father by him," Col. iii. 17.

And it ſtands in another place, " Whether therefore ye " eat, or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of " God," 1 Cor. x. 31.

Our dear Lord and Saviour ſaid to his diſciples, " Theſe " ſigns ſhall follow them that believe *in my name*, they " ſhall caſt out devils, they ſhall ſpeak with new tongues," Mark, xvi. 17, &c.; (that is, in languages they had not learned.)

All

All this ſhews in the plaineſt manner, that the holy and conſolatory name JESUS muſt by no means be made uſe of and uttered in a light manner, and without ſome real purpoſe; and that it is an heinous ſin, if we make uſe of it in and for evil purpoſes, or rather by ſuch means abuſe it. Hence the ſeven ſons of Sceva, one of the chief prieſts, ſuffered ſeverely, when they preſumed to call the name of the Lord Jeſus over ſuch as had evil ſpirits, ſaying, "We adjure you by Jeſus, whom Paul preaches," Acts, xix. 13, &c. But why ſo? Did not the diſciples of Jeſus caſt the evil ſpirits out in the name of Jeſus Chriſt? Certainly; ſee Luke, x. 17. But the ſons of Sceva were perſons who did not believe in Jeſus, and who had neither command or permiſſion for that which they did. The conſequence therefore was, that "the man in whom was the evil "ſpirit, leapt on them, and overcame them, ſo that they "fled out of the houſe naked and wounded." For they had taken the name of Jeſus in vain. Therefore the evil ſpirit anſwered them, "Jeſus I know, and Paul I know; "but who are ye?" ver. 15. O that many people, who are certainly not better than were the ſeven ſons of Sceva, did duly ponder the words in Pſal. l. 16, 17. "To the "wicked God ſaith, What haſt thou to do, to declare my "ſtatutes, or that thou ſhouldſt take my covenant in thy "mouth: Seeing thou hateſt inſtruction, and caſteſt my "words behind thee?" For what do they elſe, than take the name of God in vain?

That prophane ſwearing, which is ſo common, and againſt which our Lord and Saviour ſpeaks earneſtly, Matt. v. 34, &c. belongs alſo to this head. There are often ſins that are cuſtomary in whole nations; will God the Lord ſuffer them to paſs with impunity?

§ 184.

§ 184.

WHEN the love to God, and the child-like reverence towards him, fill the heart of a man, there *disobedience* finds no place. For, § 172. it has been shewed, that whoever loves God and Christ, and fears him as a child, keeps also his commandments. Yet something farther is to be added concerning disobedience.

We experience what distress and misery the disobedience of our first parents against the command of God has entailed upon themselves, and upon all and each of their posterity. See § 51, &c. The consequences of disobedience, during the time of that covenant which God established with Abraham and his seed, and which is usually called the Old Testament, were likewise dreadful. See § 5, and 6. Numb. xv. 30, 31. and Deut. xxviii. 15—19. But how is it under the New Covenant, the Mediator of which is Jesus Christ? May not disobedience, according to that covenant, be looked upon with more lenity, since God has revealed himself therein much more as Love? and is disobedience to the Gospel less punished than the disobedience to the Law? Not at all. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance *on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:* who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Thess. i. 7—9.

But what does that mean, *not to obey the Gospel?* As the word *Gospel* is here, as in many other places, to be taken for the entire doctrine of Jesus and of his apostles (see § 18.), so is disobedience to the Gospel; in the first place, When any one does not receive Jesus Christ, who is therein preached unto us, as his Lord and Saviour, and does not believe on him: "This is God's commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ,"

1 John,

1 John, iii. 23. And whoever doth it not, ſhall be damned on account of his diſobedience to the Goſpel. Secondly, We are diſobedient to the Goſpel, when we deſpiſe that which Jeſus commanded to his diſciples, and we perſiſt in our ſinful courſes, although with our lips we make confeſſion of the truth of the Goſpel. Such may look to it, what their end will be, who pretend to believe on Chriſt, and yet ſerve ſin, and fulfil the will of the fleſh and of the mind. Certainly they will be damned, according to the Scripture, if they be not converted, and give up this perverſe conceit of a faith that is dead, and is in reality nothing but unbelief, becauſe that it doth not evidence itſelf in power.

§ 185.

God did not make man to live in *indolence*; for even before his fall, "He put him into the garden of Eden, to dreſs "it, and to keep it," Gen. ii. 15. From hence it appears, that man, even though he were not fallen, would have laboured in obedience to God, who for that end had put him into the garden of Eden. But the toilſome and burdenſome labour came into the world by the fall. God ſhewed it to Adam as the puniſhment of his tranſgreſſion, that from thenceforward in *ſorrow* he ſhould eat bread in the ſweat of his face, the ground being curſed for his ſake, Gen. iii. 19. And thus after man, through the ſubtlety of the ſerpent, had been beguiled and corrupted from his ſimplicity, 2 Cor. xi. 3. his labour was perverted. For, whereas before, when man was yet in the ſtate wherein God had created him, he laboured from a principle of love to God, and of obedience to him; in his bleſſed ſimplicity he looked to his Creator only, and how he might pleaſe and be a joy to him; he now, after the fall, began to labour from a very different motive. In the beginning neceſſity drove him; for the ground, if it was not cultivated, brought forth thorns and thiſtles. But afterwards, when men multiplied, and the

one took this, and the other that piece of land, and made it his own property, with the exclusion of others, thence arose covetousness, and other evil motives. Thus, when any one was powerful, as for instance Nimrod, he made himself master of the rest, who were not so powerful as himself, and compelled them to serve him: He even sold them to others, and they believed that thereby they had acquired a right of compelling them to do their work. Now, a proprietary right having been introduced amongst mankind, as well over men, as over portions of land and other things, therefore God the Lord made amongst the people of Israel, with whom he had entered into a special covenant, good and wise ordinances, how they should act in this respect. These his ordinances are founded upon his love, goodness, righteousness, and holiness, and ought therefore to be observed to this very hour with all fidelity: for instance, when it is said, "Thou shalt not steal," Exod. xx. 15.

But other ordinances relate so entirely to the constitution amongst the people of Israel at that time, that since this constitution is at an end, they are not applicable, according to their literal sense, to our times: for example, that which is said, Levit. xxv. 23, &c. concerning the sale of lands.

§ 186.

But to return to the article of labour: God then made this wise regulation amongst the people of Israel, "Six days "shalt thou labour, and do all thy work, but the seventh "day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou "shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daugh-"ter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor "thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy "stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant "and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou," Deut. v. 13, 14. Our Lord Jesus Christ has shewn us, that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the

"Sabbath," Mark, ii. 27. That is, God gave it to men as a benefit, and for his good, but not as a burden to them. That the believers from amongst the people of Israel did celebrate the Sabbath, even after their conversion to Christ, according to the commandment that was given by God to the people of Israel, is without doubt: and we may gather it from the words of the elders of the church of God at Jerusalem, with which they addressed Paul: "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are *all zealous of the law*," Acts, xxi. 20. But we do not find a word in the Scriptures of the New Testament, whereby the celebration of the Sabbath was enjoined upon the Gentiles. However, the seventh day, in consideration of our Lord and Saviour having lain and rested thereon in the sepulchre, is, on that account, a special day of commemoration and thanksgiving.

It was found good to introduce the celebration of the first, instead of the seventh day, into the church of Christ: And we find traces in the Scriptures of the New Testament, that even in the apostles days they called the first day the Lord's day, because he rose again upon it, Rev. i. 10. Now, though there is no express command found in the New Testament for the celebration of the first day, yet are we bound to thank God with our whole heart, that he has, through his own wise government, and through the administration of the higher powers, caused this day to become in Christendom a day of rest. For what might not be the consequence, if men had no opportunity of hearing upon this day something of the word of God? And, would not the covetous and unmerciful man harass himself and others to death with labour, if a day like this were not in some measure to set bounds to him? Whosoever, therefore, loves our Saviour, makes use of this day with hearty thanksgiving to God, to enjoy a blessing and edification for himself and others.

§ 187.

Moreover, the New Teſtament does not only ſhew us, that we are to labour, but alſo how we ſhould labour. It informs us, likewiſe, how ſervants and maſters ſhould conduct themſelves towards each other, ſo as to be well-pleaſing to God. That all thoſe who belong to Chriſt ought to labour, we ſee from the words of Paul: "Study to be "quiet, and to do your own buſineſs, *and to work with your* "*own hands*, that ye may walk honeſtly towards them that "are without," (that is, the unconverted and unbelieving, who do not belong to the church of Jeſus), "and that ye "may have lack of nothing," 1 Theſſ. iv. 11, 12. And, "*If any will not work, neither ought he to eat*," 2 Theſſ. iii. 10.

He who, according to circumſtances, is obliged to work for other people, being not his own maſter, is to obſerve what follows: "*Servants*, obey in all things your maſters "according to the fleſh; not with eye-ſervice as men-"pleaſers, but in ſingleneſs of heart fearing God," Col. iii. 22, &c. Again, "Servants, be ſubject to your maſters "with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but alſo to "the froward," 1 Pet. ii. 18. Likewiſe, "Servants, be "obedient to them that are your maſters according to the "fleſh, with fear and trembling, in ſingleneſs of your "heart as unto Chriſt, not with eye-ſervice as men-"pleaſers, but as the ſervants of Chriſt, doing the will of "God from the heart. With good-will doing ſervice, as "to the Lord, and not to men," Eph. vi. 5, &c.

Finally, "Let as many ſervants as are under the yoke, "count their own maſters worthy of all honour, that the "name of God, and his doctrine, be not blaſphemed. "And they that have believing maſters, let them not de-"ſpiſe them becauſe they are" (or under the pretence of their being) "brethren; but rather do them ſervice, be-"cauſe they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the be-"nefit," 1 Tim. vi. 12.

By

By these Scripture passages we see, (1.) That the apostles did not abolish the diversity of stations in life. They let masters remain masters, and servants, servants. But see 1 Cor. vii. 20, &c. (2.) That they deduce the genuine service of servants from the love of God, and of Jesus Christ, and not because they *must*. (3.) That they call the service of a poor slave (for with such sort of servants the apostles properly speak) even though it be done for an heathen master, a service of God. (4.) That the right comfort for poor slaves, who sigh under such a yoke, lies properly in this, that it is the will of God concerning us; so he will have it.

§ 188.

The masters of such slaves meet with their lesson in the following words: "Masters, give unto your servants that "which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a "Master in heaven," Col. iv. 1. Likewise, "Ye masters, "do the same things unto them," (that is, approve yourselves as the servants of Christ), "knowing, that whatso-"ever good thing any man doeth, the same he shall re-"ceive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free, forbear-"ing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in "heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him," Ephes. vi. 9.

Of this the apostle speaks with such masters as had to deal with slaves. But if we reflect, that it was forbidden by God, even to an Israelite in the Old Testament, "to "rule with rigour" over another Israelite, whom poverty had driven to give himself up to the other as a servant; but that "he should fear God," (Levit. xxv. 43.); from hence it is deducible, that the same is much more expected of such masters as are the children of the New Covenant.

But in general, that word of holy writ, "Whether ye "eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory "of God," 1 Cor. x. 31. extends to every kind of work

we have to do. Likewise, "Whatsoever ye do in word or "deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving "thanks to God and the Father by him," Col. iii. 17.

If any one loves Jesus Christ, submits to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, and labours in *that* mind, he will feel, at his work, the peace of God in his heart, and be able to comfort himself with his assistance. Whereas, on the other hand, a man who does his work either out of pride, in order to signalize himself, or out of covetousness, in order to enrich himself, or to earn something, that he may consume it upon his lusts, if his conscience be not dead, and his heart without feeling, is ever attended with disquietude, reproach, and condemnation, on account of his labour.

§ 189.

MANY persons are urged to labour by no other motive than pure *necessity* (which in German is called *dear* necessity, because it actually restrains us from many bad things, which others, who are in affluence, but too easily plunge into, and is therefore, in this point of view, profitable, especially if they have wives and children, for whom they wish to procure a livelihood). When it so happens that they can get no work, by which to support themselves in an honest way, this often brings them into lowness of spirits, and melancholy. But this is not right; for the Lord our Saviour says, "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any "time your hearts be overcharged with cares of this life," Luke xxi. 34. See Matt. xiii. 22. He also speaks very comfortably, chap. vi. 25, &c. "Therefore I say unto you, "take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what "ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put "on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than "raiment? therefore take no thought, saying, What shall "we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we "be cloathed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek)

ſeek) " for your Heavenly Father knoweth, that you have " need of all theſe things. Take therefore no thought for " the morrow; for the morrow ſhall take thought for the " things of itſelf." Peter ſays, " Caſt all your care upon " *Him*, for he careth for you," 1 Pet. v. 7. And David, " Commit thy way unto the LORD; truſt alſo in him, " and he ſhall bring it to paſs," Pſal. xxxvii. 5. See § 181.

Yet it muſt be here obſerved, that we ought to be *well ſatisfied* with that which the LORD giveth us. Paul ſays, " Godlineſs with *contentment* is great gain. For we brought " nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry " nothing out: And, having food and raiment, let us " be therewith content," 1 Tim. vi. 6. And, " Let your " converſation be without covetouſneſs, *and be content with* " *ſuch things as ye have:* For HE hath ſaid, I will never " leave thee nor forſake thee," Heb. xiii. 5.

But what a pity it is, that men are ſo apt to ſtand poring upon the external neceſſity which pinches them; and yet our Saviour has ſaid, " Seek ye firſt the kingdom of God, " and his righteouſneſs, and all theſe things" (which ye ſtand in need of for a livelihood) " ſhall be added unto " you;" (ſhall be, as it were, given you into the bargain.) He that truſts theſe words of our Saviour (and why ſhould we not truſt them? heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but his word is unchangeable), ſhall not be confounded.

§ 190.

BUT we ought not only to be contented with the ways of God, but alſo *to thank him from the heart*, and to be ſatisfied with poverty, which, however, cometh from God, ſee § 98. § 38.; although all is not poverty which people call poverty: for he to whom God daily gives that which is enough to ſatisfy his hunger, and to cover his nakedneſs, is not, if we conſider the thing aright, to be called poor. He,

who being hungry, has not wherewithal to appease it; and being destitute of raiment, cannot procure so much as is requisite to cover his nakedness; such a one is poor. He who has more than he stands in need of for daily food and raiment, may rather look upon himself as rich. But, supposing he was actually poor (which, according to the word of Christ, Matth. xxv. 31, &c. may befal the children of God), yet saith the Scripture, Ephes. v. 20. "Give thanks "always *for all things* unto God and the Father, in the "name of our Lord Jesus Christ." "*In every thing* give "thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus con-"cerning you," 1 Thess. v. 18. "*Do all* in name of "the Lord Jesus, *giving thanks to GOD* and the Father by "him," Col. iii. 17.

But we are bound, not only in poverty, but also in other tribulations that befal us, to be patient, (Rom. xii. 12. Prov. iii. 11, 12. Luke, xxi. 19. Heb. x. 36. James, v. 7, 8.) and even to be thankful to God. Thus do we read concerning Job, that, having *in one day* heard, that he had lost all his property (and he had indeed very great possessions), and every one of his children (he had seven sons and three daughters), "he fell down upon the ground, and "worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's "womb, and naked shall I return thither: The Lord "gave, and the Lord hath taken away; *blessed be the name* "*of the Lord!*" Job, i. 20, 21.; which example is also expressly recommended to our imitation, James, v. 10, 11.

The afflictions which befal us are of various kinds; and it is a very common thing for men to endeavour to console themselves under them with philosophical reasons. But he who has a right understanding of what our Saviour is to him, seeks no consolation out of him. He has consolation enough, if he be poor, in the great poverty of Jesus; when his circumstances are distressing, and things go heavily with him, in the distressed life of Jesus; if he finds himself in low and mean circumstances, in the form of a

servant

ſervant which Jeſus took upon him; if none regards him, and every one ſlights him, in the deſpiſed and rejected condition of Jeſus; if he is tempted, and is in danger that his ſoul may ſuffer damage, in the temptations of Jeſus; if his body and ſoul be weakly, and full of pains, in the weakneſs and anguiſh of the ſoul of Jeſus, which became ſo extreme, that he was in an agony, (wreſtled with death); when he is full of anxious care, and is forced to weep bitterly, in the meritorious tears of Jeſus; if he ſuffers unjuſtly for the ſake of the Goſpel, were it even to fetters and bonds, in the ſcourges and bonds of Jeſus, and in what he ſuffered even unto death. For the Lord our Saviour has in every one of theſe points, not only given us an example, after which we are to walk, but all he has done and ſuffered was alſo done and ſuffered for our benefit. He has ſuffered every kind and degree of diſtreſs; he has a fellow-feeling with us; he can and will counſel and help us. As for the reſt, we find the reaſon, why we are to thank the Lord even for ſuch things as are oppreſſive to nature, in the words, "We know that all things work together for good to "them that love God," Rom. viii. 28.

For God, amidſt all the tribulations which he ſuffers to come upon us, has nothing in view touching us but love and good-will; and he brings it to paſs by his wiſdom. See § 37, &c.

§ 191.

A HEART devoted to our Saviour has, beſide all this, numberleſs cauſes for thanks and praiſe. For beſide the benefits which by the hand of the Lord are conferred upon him, in common with other men, and which are, as it were, univerſal, for inſtance, that God has cauſed him to exiſt, and has given him body and ſoul, hands and feet, and all members, underſtanding, and all his ſenſes, and which he ſo graciouſly preſerves; he further enjoys the great and many bleſſings of ſalvation, which Jeſus Chriſt has purchaſed

chased for him with so much pain. No sooner does he taste and see how gracious the Lord is, and that his sins are forgiven him, but genuine thankfulness takes place in his heart. The more he grows, from day to day, in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, the more is he filled with thankfulness. Through the love of the Father, which is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, and is sensibly felt and evident, he becomes more and more thankful. The unwearied labour of the Holy Ghost, which he daily perceives, and his own inexpressible unworthiness, with which he by grace becomes daily more acquainted, lay him continually prostrate in the dust. All those benefits which incessantly accrue and flow to him out of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, and which he is to expect in eternity, keep him abashed, lowly, and thankful: and it is impossible to describe the sensation that is felt by a heart thus reconciled to, and united with God. Oh! that many thousands, who as yet know nothing of it, did but experience it; and that those who are partakers of it might grow more in it.

§ 192.

FROM the spring of a thankful and fervent heart in the love of Jesus, certainly flows also an undaunted *confession of him*, and his word. Our Lord Jesus Christ says, "Whosoever "shall confess me before men, him will I confess also be-"fore my Father, which is in heaven: But whosoever shall "deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Fa-"ther, which is in heaven," Matt. x. 32, 33. In another place, he says, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and "of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of "him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he "cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels," Mark, viii. 38. And in 2 Tim. ii. 12. it is said, "If we "deny him, he also will deny us." Thus then it is manifest,

nifest, that the confession of Jesus and of his word, cannot be dispensed with, if our Lord Jesus Christ is to confess us, that is, if we are to be saved.

With the confession of Jesus Christ and his word and gospel, much distress and danger was formerly connected. A confessor of Jesus Christ and of his word, had nothing to look for but reproach and tribulation; the spoiling of his goods, nay, chains and bonds, and often a painful and ignominious death. This our Lord and Saviour told his disciples and followers beforehand, and every thing came to pass as he had foretold. The Scriptures of the New Testament are full of it; and the histories of the martyrs inform us, how many thousand persons were executed in the most barbarous manner for the confession of Jesus, and of his Gospel. Yet he did nevertheless abide by it, "Whosoever "doth not confess me and my word, him will I also not "confess before my heavenly Father, and before the holy "angels, when I appear in my glory;" that is, when I come to the last judgment. Was not this then something severe? Verily, if in this life only we had hope in Christ, it might be looked upon as something severe indeed. But Paul says, "Our light affliction, which is but for a mo-"ment, (God help us to bear it) worketh for us a far more "exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not "at the things which are seen, but the things which are "not seen," 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. And, "I reckon that "the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be "compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," Rom. viii. 18.

Therefore the sufferings annexed to the confession of Christ, are a grace for us, and an especial blessing for which we ought to rejoice and be glad, Matt. v. 11, 12. Luke, vi. 22, 23. 1 Pet. iv. 13, &c.

But how is it in our days with the confession of Christ, and of his Gospel? Although the witnesses of Jesus and of his Gospel in Christendom are not always deigned worthy

of

of martyrdom; (but who can deny, however, that this hath happened many thousand times, and doth yet happen?) Yet it is evident that they are reviled, looked upon as fools, hated, and persecuted, more or less, according to the circumstances of the country in which they dwell. But shall we on that account not confess our Saviour and his word? Certainly we will confess him, and indeed so much the more boldly and zealously, the more we have to suffer on that account.

But we not only confess and deny Jesus Christ and his word with the mouth, but also by our actions. For if any one conforms to the world, against the prohibition, Rom. xii. 2. does he not then deny Christ by so doing? But when his words and actions, and the whole of his conversation are conformable to the mind and word of Jesus, does he not thereby, and in fact also, confess Jesus to be his Lord, and his Word as the rule of his life.

§ 193.

HAD the holy and glorious God only *permitted* us, his needy and sinful creatures, to bring our concerns before him, and to bemoan our distress to him; that would have been in itself a grace, which would deserve our eternal praises to him. But he *commands* us with emphasis, to *pray* to him for whatever we want, and gives us the most sacred promise that he will hear us. Is not he a good GOD? Even in the Old Testament it is said, "*Call upon me in the* "*day of trouble*, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify "me," Psal. l. 15. "*Seek ye the LORD*, while he may "be found, *call ye upon him*, while he is near," Isai. lv. 6. In the New Testament the Lord says, "*Ask*, and it "shall be given you; *seek*, and ye shall find; *knock*, and "it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh, "receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that "knocketh, it shall be opened," Matt. vii. 7, 8. And farther

farther it is ſaid, " Be careful for nothing, but *in every* " *thing by prayer and ſupplication, with thankſgiving, let your* " *requeſts be made known unto God,*" Phil. iv. 6.

If a ſavage Indian, who believes in a good and in a bad ſpirit, aſcribing to the former all good, but to the latter all the evil that any way occurs amongſt men, utters ſuch ſentiments as theſe; I have no need of praying to the good ſpirit, for he is previouſly inclined, even without any prayer of mine, to procure me all good; but I muſt pray to the evil ſpirit, not to do me any hurt; in this caſe it is difficult to convince him, before he is converted to Chriſt, and believes in him. But if he believes and becomes obedient to the Goſpel, his ſin and miſery, and his deep depravity, are alſo, through the grace of God, diſcloſed to him; and then he ſoon finds how neceſſary it is for him to call upon God, that he would deliver him from them. When it is afterwards told him, that he muſt pray diligently,—Why? God will have it ſo,—he has commanded it;—then we ſoon are agreed about it. But have we to do with a ſcoffer at religion amongſt Chriſtians, it is always more difficult to bring him to rights, than if we have to treat with an Heathen.

§ 194.

But the holy Scripture does not only teach the neceſſity of prayer; but alſo how to pray. To this point belongs firſt the words of Chriſt: " What things ſoever ye deſire, " when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye ſhall " have them," Mark, xi. 24. Farther, " If any of you " lack wiſdom, let him aſk of God, that giveth to all men " liberally, and upbraideth not; and it ſhall be given him: " *but let him aſk in faith, nothing wavering.* For he that " wavereth, let him not think that he ſhall receive any " thing of the Lord," James, i. 5. " Without faith it " is impoſſible to pleaſe him (God): For he that cometh " to God, *muſt believe* that he is, and that he is a rewarder

" of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6. Thus prayer must be made in faith.

Here, besides the passages of Holy Writ before cited, the promises of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, suit excellently: For instance, " It shall come to pass, that " *before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speak-* " *ing, I will hear*," Isai. lv. 24. See Gen. xxiv. 12, &c. " God having not spared his own Son, but delivered him " up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us " all things?" Rom. viii. 32. " This is the confidence " that we have in him, that, *if we ask any thing according to* " *his will*, he heareth us. And if we know that he hears " whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions " that we desired of him," 1 John, v. 14, 15. See Luke, xi. 11, &c.

These, and such-like promises, of which the Holy Ghost willingly reminds us, we are, through grace, to keep in our hearts, and to depend with all our might upon them.

§ 195.

GOD has many holy and wise reasons, why at one time immediately, and as it were upon the spot, he doth that, for which he is intreated, (as for instance) Gen. xxiv. 11, &c. Acts, iv. 24, &c. but at another time protracts the help, and makes us wait, as Matt. xv. 21, &c. In the latter case the Scripture gives us directions to persevere in our prayers. This our Saviour illustrated to us by the instance of a widow, who did not cease to importune the judge——avenge me of my adversary, and she overcame him with her continuing prayer, though he was otherwise an unrighteous man, so that he however helped her; and he subjoins, " And shall not God avenge his own elect, who " *cry day and night* unto him?—I tell you, that he will " avenge them speedily." Luke, xviii. 1, &c. Also Luke, xi. 5, &c.

In

In another place it is said, "*Continue instant* in prayer," Rom. xii. 12. "Pray always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, *and watching thereunto, with all* "*perseverance* and supplication for all saints," Eph. vi. 18.

Because mention is here made of praying and supplicating in the spirit, and it is said in another place, "Pray without "ceasing," 1 Thess. v. 17. Therefore must it be well observed, that this last cannot possibly be understood in such a manner, as if we were to be always upon our knees, and praying aloud. Concerning Daniel it is said, "He kneeled "upon his knees three times a-day, and prayed, and gave "thanks before his God," Dan. vi. 10.

This is excellent, but not sufficient: the heart must be ever, incessantly directed to God, and walk with him, in some such way as we find it in Exod. xiv. 15. "The "Lord said unto Moses, wherefore criest thou unto me?" And yet Moses was all the while talking with the people.

§ 196.

Moreover, our Lord and Saviour has commanded his disciples to pray *to the Father in his name*. "Verily, verily, "I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father *in my* "*name*, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked no-"thing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your "joy may be full," John, xvi. 23, 24. And, "What-"soever ye shall ask *in my name*, that will I do, that the "Father may be glorified in the Son," John, xiv. 13.

What then is the meaning of asking the Father in the name of Christ? In the mere form, wherewith we commonly conclude our prayer, it cannot consist. For many thousand men conclude their prayer with this form, "for the sake of thy dear Son;" and are however not heard. And yet the prayer in the name of Christ cannot remain unheard. Thus the praying in the name of Christ must be

something

something else. When, for instance, we pray to the Father, with faith in Jesus Christ, with a chearful confidence in his word, by the impulse of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, in such a manner, that our Saviour himself owns it as his own before his Father; this is to pray in the name of Christ. We find an example of it, Acts, iv. 24, &c.

§ 197.

FOR the rest, the following observations are still to be made concerning prayer.

(1.) Our Saviour says to his disciples, "*If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you*, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you," John, xv. 7. And John writes, "Beloved, *if our heart condemn us not*, then have we confidence towards God, and whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight," 1 John, iii. 21, 22.

Thus if any one will ask any thing of God, he ought strictly to examine himself, Whether he be in Christ? Whether he has the word of Christ in his heart? Whether he walks in the commandments of God? Whether he doth those things that are well-pleasing in his sight? Or, Whether his heart condemns him, and his conscience tells him that he is not right? For, in this case, the best expedient for him is, to turn first to his dear Saviour, to pray for forgiveness, and to be cleansed from the things about which his heart condemns him.

(2.) Our Saviour has absolutely forbidden us to make a vain babbling in our prayers, or to rest the matter upon much speaking; and adds the following, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before you ask him," Matt. vi. 7, 8.

He calls the people, who in their prayers use vain repetitions, Heathens; and will not have his people to conform to

to them. On the other hand, he has taught his disciples, in that excellent prayer, "Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name, &c." very plainly how they are to speak with God, their Father, Matt. vi. 9, &c. Thus when awakened people make long prayers, in which they often feel as much vain complacency themselves, as they endeavour to please others; let them see to it, whether their hearts do not suffer by it.

(3.) These words of Jesus should be well attended to: "When ye stand praying, *forgive, if ye have aught against* "*any*, that your Father also, which is in Heaven, may "forgive you your trespasses," Mark, xi. 25. Especially since Christ teaches us to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as "we forgive our debtors," Matt. vi. 12.

And not this alone; but we must also clear away what others have against us, if we would pray to God acceptably. The words of Jesus, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, "and there remembereſt that thy brother hath ought against "thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and *go thy way*, "*first be reconciled to thy brother*, and then come, and offer "thy gift," Matt. v. 23, 24.

We ought to take it, as if he thus spake, When thou hast a desire to pray, and it comes into thy mind that thy brother has something against thee; then postpone thy prayer, and run to thy brother, who has something against thee; and when thou hast satisfied him, and, as far as it is in thy power, made peace with him; then mayest thou return back again into thy closet, shut thy door, and pray to thy Father in secret, Matt. vi. 6.

(4.) Our Saviour lays an especial blessing upon fellowship in prayer. "*If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing, that they shall ask*, it shall be done for them "of my Father, which is in heaven," Matt. xviii. 19.

For, "Where two or three are gathered together in my "name, there am I in the midst of them," ver. 20.

§ 198.

Men are not all in the same circumstances. Some are yet in their childhood, and others are already grown up. Such as are grown up, are either unmarried, or married. Those who are unmarried, have been either married already, and are now widowers and widows, or they are yet in the state of celibacy, as young men and virgins. In respect to their vocation, among other callings, they are either of magistrates, or subjects. God has made known to each in his word, how he is to act, with respect to the circumstances in which he is placed; and every one is bounden to conduct himself conformable to the will of God. This flows from the love to God, and to our Lord Jesus Christ. For he that loveth him, keepeth his commandments.

Before we proceed to the diversity of circumstances in which men are placed, and treat of the conduct suitable thereunto, we must necessarily repeat, what has been mentioned above. We do not write here any system of morality for such persons as are estranged from the life which is of God, and who are yet wretched slaves of sin and the devil. As long as they abide in this miserable situation, they are incapable to walk as becometh children of God. But if they come to Christ, and receive him in faith, and he gives them power to become the children of God; if they obtain a new heart and a new mind, and the Holy Ghost takes up his abode in them; if by faith they become branches in Jesus Christ the Vine, and abide in him; then are they first capable to comprehend and follow the following points: Whatsoever we say concerning the behaviour of a child, of a boy, of a youth, of a married man, of a widower, &c. well-pleasing to God, always presupposes the grace in the blood of Jesus. Where this is found, that is, when a person has, through faith in Jesus Christ, obtained forgiveness of

ſins, and is become a member of the body of Chriſt, then he ceaſes to fulfil the deſires of the fleſh and of the mind. He is, on the other hand, repleniſhed with the love of Chriſt, and with the Holy Ghoſt. When therefore a boy, or a youth, or a married man, or a widower, &c. underſtands by the word of God what the will of God is, according to the circumſtances in which he finds himſelf; then the Holy Ghoſt opens his underſtanding, and renders every thing not only plain, but alſo agreeable to him. He brings, from time to time, to his remembrance, every thing which behoves him, and adorns the doctrine of Jeſus. Beſides, the Holy Ghoſt encourages him, and cares for him, as a mother cares for her child. See § 154. In the mean time, this is alſo to be obſerved on the preſent ſubject, that we have either premiſed, or at leaſt briefly touched upon the points which every one, notwithſtanding his own particular circumſtances, has in common with others; and every one is to add them to that, which is eſpecially applicable to his own caſe.

Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who has been alſo a child in this world, has left the children, no leſs than the grown-up people, an example, that they ſhould follow his ſteps, 1 Pet. ii. 21. The Scripture teſtifies concerning him, "The child grew and waxed ſtrong in ſpirit, filled with wiſdom, and the grace of God was upon him," Luke, ii. 40.

Now, if the grace of the New Covenant, which Chriſt begun with us, and into which our children are by baptiſm received, abides with a child, and is preſerved by him; if the Holy Ghoſt, who alſo makes children to be his temples, and dwells in them, meets with obedient hearts in them, ſo that, through him, they become ſtrong, both in the doing good, and in the eſchewing evil; if children remain children, that is, unwiſe, and inexpert to that which is evil, but become daily more wiſe, that is, quick of underſtanding, and more expert in that which is good;—then are

they in the right way to follow the child Jesus. Then also will they love and honour their parents, and obey them, according to Eph. vi. 1, &c. "Children, obey your "parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honour thy father and mother," (which is the first commandment with promise, that is, a special promise, Exod. xx. 12.) "that it "may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the "earth." And, according to Col. iii. 20. "Children, "obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing "unto the Lord."

By which occasion we are however to observe, that the apostle is here speaking of parents, who do not command their children to do any thing that is evil. For, in this case, they are to obey God rather than men. But in other matters, children are absolutely to obey their parents. Much is not expected of children; but they can love, as the child Jesus loved. Paul doth also testify concerning Timothy, that "from a child he had known the holy "Scriptures," 2 Tim. iii. 15. O how good a thing it is, when our children do so too! Also when they early begin to praise and magnify God, fulfilling the words, "Out of "the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained "strength," (praise, according to Matt. xxi. 16. Psal. viii. 2.)

§ 199.

WHEN children arrive at their youthful years, and they suffer themselves to be led by the Holy Ghost; then will they not become worse, but better. For when Jesus Christ was grown up to be 12 years old, *he was subject unto his parents*; and *increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour* with God and man, Luke, ii. 51, 52.

Indeed it is not to be denied, but that corruption commonly shews itself more, both in body and soul, during those youthful years of boys and girls, than before. But if they, with child-like hearts, cleave to our Saviour, a divine

divine power will be given them, that they can lead a godly life, through the knowledge of Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. i. 3. And the more they perceive in themselves, that "the imagination of man's heart is evil *from his YOUTH*," according to the declaration of God, Gen. viii. 21. the more will they find, how much they stand in need of a Saviour. And, if they confess their sinfulness and depravity to him; he will, being faithful and just, forgive them their sins, and cleanse them from all unrighteousness. 1 John, i. 9. If they only come in simplicity, with every thing belonging to them (John, iii. 21.), and do not attempt to hide their evil, or shun the light, then they can be easily advised and effectually helped. Jesus was, as a boy, obedient; that is, he continued obedient, as he had been before. He increased in wisdom. For in all points, sin only excepted, he would be like other men, and thus also *grow* in wisdom. He increased in favour with God and man; that is, he, as a child, loved God and men, and was reciprocally beloved by God and men; and thus he went on, when he became a youth; he advanced continually in it. And all this is likewise expected of boys and girls, who in baptism have put on Christ. To such boys and girls then do these words also particularly belong, "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother," Prov. i. 8. Also, "Be not wise in thine own eyes: Fear the Lord, and depart from evil," chap. iii. 7.

§ 200.

DOES *a boy* enter into those years, when he must conclude upon some line of life for himself, without being compelled by any one; that is a very dangerous period for him. For if then, as all depends upon his choice, he chuses something which is not agreeable to the purpose of God with him, he may thereby render all the future days of his life extremely heavy to him. What then is to be done for

him in this case? The best counsel that can be given him is, that, with body and soul he devotes himself anew to Jesus Christ the Lord, who offered up his life for him, and has thus far preserved him; that he renews from his heart the covenant of a good conscience, into which he, in baptism, entered with God; and that he resigns himself as an humble child anew to the Holy Ghost; who, for Christ's sake, and out of grace, takes us under his tuition. If this be done in truth, then he also knows, that now he lives, and by rights ought to live, not to himself, but to him who died for him. Then he prays with humble confidence, "Teach me to "do thy will, for thou art my God; thy Spirit is good, "lead me unto the land of uprightness," Psal. cxliii. 10.

Thus he does not rashly resolve, and choose that for himself, to which his natural propensity tends; but rather thinks, I am a child, and God is my Father; Christ is my Lord, and I am his poor servant. A child must do his father's, and a servant his master's will; and this will I do also. "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And "the life, which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith "of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for "me," Gal. ii. 20.

He endeavours, by the grace of God, to attain to this admonition, "Purify your souls in obeying the truth "through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren," 1 Pet. i. 22. And has these words before his eyes, "I be-"seech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable "unto God,—and be ye transformed, by the renewing of "your mind, that ye may prove, what is that good, and "acceptable, and perfect will of God," Rom. xii. 1, 2.

He takes Christ for an example, and endeavours to resemble him in his mind and conversation upon earth. He thinks upon the words of Paul, which he wrote to Timothy, a servant of Christ, who was also a single man, "Flee youthful lusts, but follow righteousness, faith (fide-

"lity),

"lity), charity (love), peace with them that call on the "Lord out of a pure heart," 2 Tim. ii. 22. Alſo, "Thou, O man of God, flee theſe things (covetouſneſs), "and follow after righteouſneſs, godlineſs, faith, love, pa-"tience, meekneſs," 1 Tim. vi. 11.

Does God honour him, to do ſomething for his glory, and for the benefit of his neighbour; he does it faithfully, and thanks God for it. For he knows, that "thoſe, who "have believed in God muſt be careful to maintain good "works," Tit. iii. 8. But is he convinced that, according to the will of God, he ought to change his ſtate and marry; then he begs and prays, that it may be "done "in the Lord," according to Paul's expreſſion, 1 Cor. vii. 39.

§ 201.

Do *the girls* come to years of maturity, Oh! what can be better for them, than to devote themſelves with body and ſoul to our Saviour, and to ſurrender themſelves anew to him as his property? Certainly he has purchaſed them with bitter pain; he has reconciled them with his own blood, and delivered himſelf up unto death for them. Thus they are to eſtabliſh this in their hearts, which the Scripture ſays, "He (therefore) died for all, that they which live, ſhould "not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him which "died for them, and roſe again," 2 Cor. v. 15. And Rom. xiv. 7, &c. "None of us liveth unto himſelf, and "no man dieth to himſelf. For whether we live, we live "unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the "Lord;——for to this end Chriſt both died, and roſe and "revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and "living."

Thus they reſign themſelves entirely (as by rights an handmaid of Jeſus ſhould, who is the Lord's ſole

property, and whom he has so dearly bought) to the will and good pleasure of their Lord; and whatsoever he pleaseth to do with them, their hearts reply (how hard soever it might be to them); yea and amen to it. To this the labour of the Holy Ghost tends with every one of them, and he teacheth, leadeth, and guideth them, with incomprehensible fidelity, wisely and graciously. As long as any one continues in her single state, such a virgin careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit, 1 Cor. vii. 34. She endeavours to be kept by his grace, from the love of the world, 1 John, ii. 15. and knows, she is to "keep her heart with all diligence," Prov. iv. 23. Also, that the "end of the commandment, "is charity, (love,) out of a pure heart, and of a good "conscience, and of faith unfeigned," 1 Tim. i. 5.

Is *a virgin*, when any one desires to have her in marriage, assured in her heart that it is of the Lord, she complies with the call, for the Lord's sake; though she knows beforehand, that she will meet with much more difficulty in the married, than in her single state. But, if she has not the conviction that it comes from the Lord, and she has reason to apprehend besides, that she shall suffer hurt in her soul, and depart from that happy path, in which she had been in her single state; then she has, according to the Scripture, liberty to remain single. See 1 Cor. vii. 25, &c. When, for the rest, Paul speaks, that it is better to abide unmarried than to marry, 1 Cor. vii. 38. 40. We are to observe, that this was only an advice, which he gave with a view to the distress then ensuing, and in part already present. For this he says expressly, 1 Cor. vii. 26. Neither does he deliver this as a commandment of the Lord, but as his own judgment.

§ 20.

§ 202.

MARRIAGE is to be looked upon as a wise institution, approved of God for mutual assistance, and for the propagation of mankind. God did not only create the man, but the woman also, according to his own image, Gen. i. 27. When Adam saw his wife, which the Lord brought unto him, he said, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh "of my flesh, she shall be called woman, because she was "taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his fa-"ther and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and "they shall be one flesh," Gen. ii. 23, &c. That Adam did not invent this of himself, but that it was discovered and revealed to him by the Creator, is evident from Matth. xix. 4, &c. For here our Lord Jesus Christ puts these very words into the mouth of him who made man at the beginning. It was HE who informed Adam, what his intention by marriage was, namely, that a man should live in the most intimate union with his wife, in such a manner, as to leave his father and his mother, to cleave unto his wife. For this reason our Lord adds, "Wherefore they are *no more* "*twain, but one flesh*;" and says further, "*What therefore* "*God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*" Now God having joined the first couple together, whom he had formed with his own hand, he therefore imparted his blessing to their marriage, and said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and "replenish the earth," &c. Gen. i. 28. Before the woman was created (which, according to Gen. i. 27. was done on the sixth day, though it is not *circumstantially* related until in Gen. ii. 18, &c.) the Lord says, "It is not good that "the man should be alone, I will make him an help "meet for him." But after the woman had been created, which is recorded Gen. i. 27. it is then said, "God "saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very "good," Gen. i. 31. Consequently the marriage of our first parents was a holy state, which God had himself in-

ſtituted and bleſſed; and as long as they bore the image of God, they lived in that ſtate, in godly ſimplicity and innocence, according to Gen. ii. 25.

But after our firſt parents had proved diſobedient to the commandment of the Lord, and were fallen from him; then did the depravity which was in them diſcover itſelf, in reſpect to their marriage alſo. This the Scripture expreſſes thus, "They knew that they were naked, and they ſewed "fig-leaves together, and made themſelves aprons," Gen. iii. 7. The Creator himſelf found it alſo now needful for men to cover their bodies; for it is ſaid, "And to Adam "alſo, and to his wife, did the LORD God make coats "of ſkins, and cloathed them," Gen. iii. 21. Whoever duly reflects, that we are, according to the will of God, obliged to cover our bodies, on account of the depravity we are plunged into by ſin, will certainly not wiſh to make a vain ſhew and parade with his cloaths.

But to return again to marriage: Indeed this inſtitution, according to which every man has his own wife, has not ceaſed even amongſt the moſt ſavage nations. But for all that, ſo many ſins and ſcandalous proceedings have at the ſame time entered in, that it is ſcarce poſſible to enumerate them all, and is dreadful. We need only read over the xxth chapter of Leviticus, to find proofs enough of it. In the twenty-third verſe it is ſaid, "Ye ſhall not walk in the "manners of the nations which I caſt out before you, for "they committed all theſe things," (namely, that were forbidden by the Lord in this chapter), "and therefore I ab-"horred them." The contents of the xviiith chapter of Leviticus is the very ſame, and forbids the very ſame abominations. The concluſion thereof is, "Defile not your-"ſelves in any of theſe things; for all theſe abominations" (which had, for inſtance, been before enumerated) "have "the men of the land done, and the land is defiled," ver. 24—30.

Now

Now seeing God did detest and extirpate the heathen on account of such things as are specified in the eighteenth and twentieth chapters of Leviticus; as he also would have those crimes punished with death amongst the people of Israel, so there can be no doubt, but all men, who would not become an abomination in the eyes of God, should guard against them. When something of this kind occurred in the church of Corinth, and some one took his father's wife, O how zealously did Paul testify against it, and with what severity did he not condemn it, not only in respect to the person who had been guilty of it, but also in reference to the whole church! See 1 Cor. v. 1, &c.

We will, however, pass on to the times of the New Testament; and there we know, from Heb. xiii. 4. that "Marriage is honourable," and that it must be and remain so in all respects. From Matt. xix. 4, &c. we see, that the Lord our Saviour takes from the institution of marriage his proof against the divorces which were common amongst the Jews. He says, "He which made them at the be-"ginning, made them male and female," &c. Now, if God has joined a man and his wife together, they are, according to his word, no more twain, but one flesh; therefore should no man put them asunder. Hereby our Lord Jesus Christ makes the first institution of marriage a standard: and it is as much as if he had said, Would you know whether your marriage be of the right kind, then you are to look to him who regulated it from the beginning; by his word and ordinance it must abide.

§ 203.

As marriage is in general an ordinance of God, according to which a man has his own wife, and dwells together with her in love and peace, begets children with her, and educates them with understanding, conducts himself faithfully, according to the laws of the country in which he dwells,

dwells, which refer to matrimony, and in this way becomes an useful inhabitant; so by the manner in which the children of God conduct their marriage the following is still specially to be observed.

(1.) A man and his wife, if they have faithful and obedient hearts to our Saviour, and are taught, led, and directed by the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth in them, are justly, from the beginning of their marriage, agreed with each other, that, in all that which belongeth to the Lord, they will care for it as faithfully in their matrimonial state, as ever they did before in their single state. For what Paul says, "He that is married careth for the things that are of "the world," 1 Cor. vii. 33. we cannot take in any other sense, but that married people must, on account of their circumstances, be obliged to be more engaged with the things of this earth, than those who are unmarried. But here also that must be valid, which is said, ver. 29. "They "that have wives, must be as though they had none."

(2.) They should be agreed with each other, to conduct themselves in the married state, by his grace, according to the mind of Jesus Christ; to "abstain from fleshly lusts, "which war against the soul," 1 Pet. ii. 11.; "to purify "their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit," 1 Pet. i. 22.; "to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, "acceptable unto God," Rom. xii. 1.

(3.) The establishing this principle, that if their marriage is to be acceptable to God, they must act in it according to the ordinance of God; that is, the man must love his wife; but he must be the head, and she submit to him. For this is the doctrine of the Scripture: "*Wives, submit your-* "*selves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord: For the* "*husband is the head of the wife,*" Ephes. v. 22.; and ver. 25. "*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved* "*the church,* and gave himself for it."

(4.) They consider well, that they are both to love their Saviour above their own selves, and above all things; and that

that their love of each other must not be a fruit of nature, but chiefly a fruit of the Spirit, and must flow from faith, as its true source, Gal. v. 22.

(5.) Thus all they do, is done in love; that is, what they do or do not in their marriage flows first from the love to Jesus Christ, and then from the love which they bear one towards another.

6. Because they know, that they are not able to do all this by their own strength and power; therefore they pray and cry to the Lord, not only each separately, but also together heartily, that he would be pleased to guide, direct, and keep them from all evil, strengthen them to all that is good, and in every point prepare them according to his own will. And this they do,

(7.) Especially when, according to God's ordinance, they choose to come together as man and wife; that the same may be done in his presence, in the peace of God, with his blessing, and according to the good pleasure of his will. For the scripture says, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to "God and the Father by him," Col. iii. 17.

(8.) And, because amidst all fidelity towards our Saviour, they both know that they are poor and weak human creatures, who are often prone to err, notwithstanding all the good-will which our Saviour has bestowed upon them, and that they do actually mistake; therefore they daily cleanse themselves in the blood of the Lamb, and know, that merely through grace, for Christ's sake, they partake of salvation.

§ 204.

Such married people look upon their children as "a he-"ritage (or gift) of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb "as his reward," Psal. cxxvii. 3.; and they endeavour to educate their children in such a manner as is well-pleasing to him, who shed his blood also for them. See § 141, 142.

The

The holy incarnation of Jesus in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and that she carried him under her heart, and brought him forth like another child into the world, makes a blessed impression upon them. As Jesus was used to put his hands upon the children, and to pray over them (Matt. xix. 13, &c.) so they commend their children to the Lord from their very conception, and never cease praying for them. Because our Saviour denounces a woe upon him who offends one of those little ones that believe on him (Matt. xviii. 6, 7.), therefore they watch over them, that they may not only not speak or do any thing themselves, whereby their children might suffer hurt in their souls; but they also endeavour diligently to preserve them from being offended by others. The examples of Moses and Samuel, who throughout their lives enjoyed a blessing by means of what they had learned of their mothers in their tendereſt years (although the former was educated amongst the heathenish Egyptians, and the latter among the wicked sons of Eli), incite and encourage them to accustom them, in their earliest infancy, to become acquainted with Jesus Christ, with what he has done and suffered for them, and with his will and words; and to habituate them to a tender and confident converse with him. They keep them, and teach them obedience, always giving them something to do, according to their abilities; lest they might fall into something evil, if they had nothing better to do. For, "Idleness teacheth much "evil," Eccles. xxxiii. 27.

And, amidst all this they think of the words of Scripture, "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; "but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the "Lord," Eph. vi. 4.; and, "Fathers, provoke not your "children to anger, lest they be discouraged," Coloss. iii. 21.

For children must, amidst all the earnestness of their parents to keep them from evil, and to direct them to good (which is indispensably necessary, lest we fall into the transgression

gression of Eli), yet remain always assured of their parents love, that they may not lose their confidence in them.

§ 205.

SUCH a true Christian marriage is an image of Christ, and of "the church of God, which he purchased with his "own blood," Acts, xx. 28. For, "As Christ loved the "church, and gave himself for it, so ought men to love "their wives, as their own bodies. He that loveth his "wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own "flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord "the church. And, the husband is the head of the wife, "even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the "Saviour of the body. And, as the church" (that is, the flock of Jesus's sheep, who hear his voice, whom he knows, and they follow him, to whom he gives eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand; and none is able to pluck them out of his Father's hand, as he describes them, John, x. 27, &c.) "is "subject unto Christ, so also should the wives be to their "own husbands in every thing." As Paul treats fully the subject, Eph. v. 22, &c.

Christ is the bridegroom, John, iii. 29.; the church is the bride, 2 Cor. xi. 2. The bridegroom loves the bride more than his own life (this he gave effectual proof of, when he died upon the cross); the bride loves the bridegroom more than her own life (this have many thousand martyrs sealed with their blood). O what a great model have the children of God in their marriages! and what a glorious race have both husbands and wives to run, to obtain this great prize! See also 1 Pet. iii. 1, &c. Col. iii. 18, 19.

§ 206.

WHEN God, by death, separates a woman from her husband, then is he called *a widower*. Paul did not choose to advise

advise the widowers at Corinth, partly on account of the present, and partly of the ensuing distress, to enter into marriage again. He says, 1 Cor. vii. 27, 28. "Art thou "bound unto a wife, seek not to be loosed: but art thou "loosed from a wife, seek not a wife. But if thou marry "thou hast not sinned." Will any one take the words, 1 Tim. iii. 2. "A bishop must be blameless, *the husband of* "*one wife*," in such a sense, as if this were Paul's meaning, that Timothy should take no one for a bishop who had married again, after his first marriage; he should justly consider that Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles, and sent Timothy to the places where the Gospel had been preached, in order to regulate and form the believers from among the Gentiles into churches, and to ordain overseers, or bishops and deacons among them. The Gentiles had the custom of taking more than one wife, and the very kings in Israel allowed this practice to themselves. Paul had advised, but however, not commanded in the name of God, that, supposing a brother had an unbelieving wife, and she chose to dwell with him, he should not put her away, 1 Cor. vii. 12. Now, if a man had more than one wife, what was to be done in this case? Probable it is, that he kept her, if she chose to dwell with him; for which should he put away from him? But Paul would not have it, that Timothy should make such a man a bishop, who, at one and the same time, had more than *one* wife.

Thus, when a widower marries again, every thing relates to him, which, § 202, &c. is said concerning married people. Does he remain single, on account of his age, or for other causes, then it is incumbent upon him to observe what is said in § 200, concerning single people, who have not yet entered into the state of holy matrimony. In which case also, the words following have a peculiar relation to him: "Our conversation is in heaven, from whence "also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ," Phil. iii. 20. "According to my earnest expectation, and "my

"my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that "with all boldness"—"Christ shall be magnified in my "body, whether it be by life, or by death."—"I have a de-"sire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better," Phil. i. 20, &c.

§ 207.

Is a man separated from his wife by death, we then call her *a widow*. The children, who lose their father in the same way, we call the *fatherless*. Widows and the fatherless are usually joined together in the Holy Scripture. Yet are *those* children more eminently to be regarded as orphans, who have neither mother nor father. God is in the Scripture called a "Helper," nay, a "Father of the father-"less," Psal. x. 14. lxviii. 5. He is on this account extolled for relieving the fatherless and widow, Psal. cxlvi. 9. and for not despising their supplication, Eccles. xxxv. 14. He is also called the Judge of the widows, or the Lord who procures them justice, Psal. lxviii. 5. All that is said concerning children, boys and girls, relates also to the orphans, when they are either children, or boys or girls; and what has been said concerning single people of the female sex, who have never yet been married, relates also to the widow. However, because orphans have peculiar promises, they ought also to put a peculiar trust therein; and the widows ought to do the same. And as they are both of them a peculiar property of the Lord our Saviour, therefore they ought to be also peculiarly concerned to be his honour and joy.

At the time when Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians, he was as unwilling to advise the widows to marry, as any other unmarried persons, 1 Cor. vii. 40. The reason was this; he had his eye upon the ensuing distress, and was desirous to spare them, ver. 26. 28. He says, however, ver. 39. "A wife is bound by the law" (of marriage) "as long as her husband liveth; but, if her

" husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom " she will, *only in the Lord.*" In those times the parents of a virgin gave the decisive answer, in respect either of her marrying, or not marrying, ver. 36, 37. But when she became a widow, it depended principally *upon herself*, when she was asked whether she would marry, and to whom? And Paul expressly advised it, 1 Tim. v. 14. that " the " younger women should marry, bear children, guide the " house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak re- " proachfully." Now, when it happens that a widow marries again, then she comes into the same state she was in before. See § 205.

§ 208.

But does she remain a widow, these words especially concern her: " She that is a widow indeed, trusteth in " God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night " and day," 1 Tim. v. 5.

The Scriptures of the New Testament make mention first of Anna, " who had lived with an husband seven years " from her virginity." Consequently, she was then a young widow; for it was the custom among the children of Israel, at that time, to marry virgins young. She lived afterwards as a widow until her eighty-fifth year, never departing from the Temple (that is, she neglected no divine service), and serving God with fastings and prayers night and day. This woman came in at the instant, when Jesus, being about five weeks old, was according to the law, Levit. xii. 2, &c. presented to the Lord in the Temple. " And " she gave thanks unto the Lord, and spake of him to all " them that looked for redemption (through the Messiah) " in Jerusalem," Luke, ii. 36, &c. Secondly, Widows are spoken of, who " are well reported of for good works, " who have brought up children, who have lodged strangers,

" who

"who have washed the saints feet, who have relieved the "afflicted, who have diligently followed every good work," 1 Tim. v. 10.

Hence it is clear, (1.) That all young widows are not obliged to marry again; but it depends upon the particular circumstances in which each widow is. (2.) That it is well-pleasing to the Lord, if a widow in a decent and proper manner continues her business and œconomy, educates her children, and in the church where she lives approves herself, by services done to others, as an handmaid of Jesus and of his people. (3.) But that it is also well-pleasing to the Lord, if a widow, being, on account of age and infirmity, and for other well-grounded reasons, freed from external occupations, devotes herself entirely to the continuing in prayer and supplication before God, and to the spending her days and nights, without intermission, in converse with Jesus Christ, and with the souls belonging to him.

The words of James, chap. i. 27. may be properly mentioned in this place: "Pure religion and undefiled before "God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and wi-"dows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted "from the world." Likewise, "If any man or woman "that believeth have widows," (that is, if his or her mother or grandmother, or near relation, is a widow) "let "them relieve them, and let not the church be charged, "that it may relieve them that are widows indeed," (that is, desolate persons, who have nobody to take care of them, and are in no capacity to get their own livelihood), that these may be supplied, viz. with a livelihood. "For if any "provide not for his own, and especially for those of his "own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than "an infidel," 1 Tim. v. 3. &c. particularly ver. 16. 4. 8.

§ 209.

Of *Magistrates*, the following passages of the Scriptures of the New Testament treat: "Let every soul be subject "unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of "God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of "God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves "damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, "but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the "power, do that which is good, and thou shalt have "praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to "thee for good: but if thou do that which is evil, be "afraid," (thou hast cause to be afraid) "for he beareth "not the sword in vain. For he is the minister of God, a "revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. "Wherefore ye must needs be subject" (you must by all means be subject) "not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also; "for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon "this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, "fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour," Rom. xiii. 1, &c. See also Matt. xxii. 21. "Submit yourselves "to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake: whether "it be to the king, as supreme," (the highest magistrate) "or unto governors," (those invested with offices) "as "unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of "evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king," 1 Pet. ii. 13, &c. See also Tit. iii. 1. "I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, "intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: "for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our "Saviour," 1 Tim. ii. 1, &c.

§ 210.

§ 210.

OUT of these passages of Scripture the following points flow very naturally:

(1.) A supreme magistrate, who has a love for our Saviour, and will be governed by his Holy Spirit, has here, in brief, every thing that is expected from him. It stands here plainly, that he, like all other magistrates, is ordained of God, and is his servant. Thus it is his sole concern, how he may please his Lord, whom he serves, and do his will, in every respect, in small and great things. He knows also from the Scripture, that "God raised Christ "from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in "the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, "and might and dominion, and every name that is "named, not only in this world, but also in that which is "to come," Ephes. i. 20, 21.; and that "HE is King "of Kings, and Lord of Lords," Rev. xix. 11-16. chap. xvii. 14. Thus is Christ, in his government, an example for them in their measure; they learn of him, and order themselves according to his word, and thus they possess the genuine wisdom, and choose the best means, to put a stop to the evil, and to further the good. They know likewise, that they themselves can only be saved like other men, by Jesus Christ; and that they are to observe the very same commandments which are given to other men. And this has its influence upon every thing which they, as magistrates, take in hand.

§ 211.

It farther appears clearly from hence, that, (2.) He who belongs to Jesus Christ, who is under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, and is faithful in his ways, considers duly, that the higher powers are ordained of God for his good, and for the good of all those who are truly godly. On this

account, he is thankful to God for them, loves them from his heart, and yields them obedience, not because he would be punished if he did not, but from love to God, and to our Lord Jesus Christ, who has ordained the higher powers, and who willeth that men shall be subject to them.

(3.) Because the magistrate must have a great many officers and servants under him, to maintain peace in the land, to protect every man in his property, to administer justice and judgment, to make every where good regulations, and faithfully to watch over them; and all this requires great expences, and a variety of disbursements; therefore a man who cleaves with his whole heart to our Saviour, and follows faithfully his precepts, is not only bound to bear his proportionate share of the expences which are laid upon subjects, but he is also heartily willing so to do. And if it were in his power to keep back part of that which he should give to the magistrate, without being discovered, and suffering any punishment for it, yet he does it not for conscience sake, that is, because he knows that his Heavenly Father, and his Lord and Saviour, are displeased with such conduct.

(4.) When he brings his supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks for kings, and for all that are in authority, especially for those under whose protection he lives, before God, then does he not only call to mind their government, that it may prosper, and that under it we may lead a peaceable and quiet life in all godliness and honesty, but he prays also for their persons. For Paul connects the words, "God our Saviour will have all men to be saved, "and to come to the knowledge of the truth," immediately with the commandment for us to pray for all men, and in particular for kings, and all that are in authority, and alleges the one as cause for the other.

Of

Of the LOVE *to our* NEIGHBOUR.

§ 212.

WE now come to the love of our neighbour; and will, first, observe, That it was commanded to the people of Israel even in the Old Testament. "Thou shalt "love thy neighbour as thyself," Lev. xix. 18.

That by the word neighbour, all and each of mankind were meant, the Scribes * of that time might have easily seen, by comparing it with other passages in the books of Moses: for when God says, "Thou shalt not bear false "witness against thy neighbour," Exod. xx. 16. "Thou "shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife," Exod. xx. 17. "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's land-mark," Deut. xix. 14. "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, "neither rob him," Levit. xix. 13. is it not evident, that all and each of mankind are to be understood by the word neighbour? And it is just as much as if it had been said, Thou shalt not bear false witness against any man, &c. But they made the perverse explanation, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy; as if enemies were not to be reckoned amongst our neighbours. See Matt. v. 43. This false explanation of the Scribes, which they had perversely advanced out of the commandment of God, "Thou "shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," our Lord and Saviour opposed directly with the words, "I say unto you, "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to "them that hate you, and pray for them which despite-"fully use you, and persecute you," Matt. v. 44. And he speaks to the same purpose upon other occasions: for upon being asked by one, Who is my neighbour? he answered him with the account of a Jew from Jerusalem, and a Samaritan. The former had been most cruelly

* The Scribes were such as studied the Scriptures.

treated by thieves, and the latter took him under his care, and saved his life. But how were the Samaritans looked upon by the Jews, and the Jews by the Samaritans? They were bitter enemies, and were quite intolerable to each other: for the Jews regarded the Samaritans as heretics; and such they really were. The Samaritans thought, however, that they had the right religion. But our Saviour testifies, that the Jew was the neighbour of the Samaritan, and the Samaritan of the Jew. See Luke, x. 29, &c. Thus then the words, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy-"self," imply, according to the explanation given by our Lord and Saviour, Thou shalt love all men as thyself, whether they be thy friends or thy foes, whether they are of the same religious persuasion with thyself or not; and to express ourselves according to the circumstances of our own times, we must be obliged to say, Thou shalt love all and each of mankind as thyself, whether they be converted or unconverted, whether they be Christians, or Jews, or Turks, or Pagans, or by whatever name they may be called.

Now here the Scripture testifies, that in this commandment of God, all other commandments, relating to our behaviour towards our neighbour, are included and comprehended. "Owe no man any thing, but to love one an-"other; for he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law. "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," Rom. xiii. 8, 9. "All the law is fulfilled in "one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as "thyself," Gal. v. 14. Therefore this commandment was also called, James, ii. 8. "The Royal Law," that is, the chief of all laws; for the rest flow from, and depend upon it. And upon this are also the words of Christ especially founded,

founded, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do "unto you, do ye even so to them," Matt vii. 12.

§ 213.

Hatred against any man is therefore not compatible with a heart that has experienced Jesus to be its Saviour. For hatred, which is a strong aversion to a person, whereby we are induced to meditate his hurt, misfortune, and ruin, and to seek to effect it, or to rejoice at it; is a notorious work of the flesh, and whoever suffers this to rule over him, cannot inherit the kingdom of God, Gal. v. 20, 21. Even in the Old Testament it was said, Levit. xix. 17. "Thou "shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart." And in the New, "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his "brother, is in darkness until now," 1 John, ii. 9. And, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye "know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him," 1 John, iii. 15. Farther, "If a man say, I love God, "and hateth his brother, he is a liar," 1 John, iv. 20.

But we have all of us our descent from one father and one mother, and are all, in that point of view, brethren; although believers, who have all only one Father, who is also the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, are brethren in a peculiar sense.

Hence, when David says, "I have hated them that re-"gard lying vanities," Psal. xxxi. 6. And, "Do not "I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee?" Psal. cxxxix. 21. Nay, when it is said of God himself, that "his soul hateth "the wicked," Psal. xi. 5. All this must be understood to mean, that wicked people are hated, in so far as they are wicked, but not, in so far as they are creatures of God; or, as we otherwise express it, we do not hate the person, but his sin. In which sense also are the words to be taken on the other side, "God abhorreth nothing, that he has "made,"

"made," Wisdom, xi. 24. "The LORD loved the "people" (as his creatures.) Deut. xxxiii. 3.

The words "Love not the world," 1 John, ii. 15. are to be interpreted in the very same way. "God so loved "the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have "everlasting life," John, iii. 16. And thus we should undoubtedly love the world; that is, all mankind, not excepting even such, as are yet poor slaves of sin and the devil, so far as they are men. But the ways and spirit of the world, viz. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, we are not to love, or to have any fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.

Hence it is clear, that we are to endeavour to love all men, according to 1 Thes. iii. 12. "The LORD make "you to increase and abound in love one to another, and "*towards all men*," 1 Thes. iii. 12.

For the fruit of the Spirit is love, Gal. 5. 22. and is it possible that love should not be found in a heart in which the Holy Ghost dwelleth? And this love is a hearty inclination, yea an eager desire, and pressing impulse, to do good to all and each of mankind, and to seek their best interests. Moreover, we are to "*walk* in *this* love," Eph. v. 2. that is, we are to grow in love without cessation; and, "all our things are to be done with charity," (love) 1 Cor. xvi. 14.

§ 214.

FARTHER, mutual love is in an especial manner recommended to all those who believe in Jesus Christ; which also in the writings of the New Testament is called *brotherly love*. The reason of it lies in the words of our Lord, "One "is your master, even Christ, *and all ye are brethren*," Matt. xxiii. 8.

To

To which the disciples of Christ conformed, having called believers simply *brethren*; as it plainly appears by the discourses and epistles, which we find in the Scriptures of the New Testament. For, although our Saviour did not abolish the difference of rank amongst men, as is evident from what has been alleged concerning masters and servants, and concerning the higher powers and subjects, § 187. 208.; yet this remains fixed, that in reference to the things that belong to his kingdom (for his kingdom is not of this world), no difference is allowed. Therefore James very seriously reprimands the churches of his time on this account; in that, amidst their assemblies for divine worship, they gave the rich a preference to the poor. His words are, "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus "Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect to persons."— "If ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin, and are "convinced of the law as transgressors," chap. i. 1. 9.

Neither would our Saviour, that his disciples should seek a preference, one above the other. For, he called them unto him, and said, "Ye know that the princes of the "Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are "great, exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be "so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, "let him be your minister," (servant) "and whosoever "will be chief among you, let him be your servant," Matt. xx. 25.

According to this, so far as relates to the kingdom of Christ, or God's covenant of grace, with men, of which Jesus Christ is the Mediator, and into which we are translated by means of faith in Jesus Christ; we are all to look upon each other as brethren; who have all one father, who "is also the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Blessed "be the God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, "*which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us* "*again* (and through Christ made us new creatures) "unto a lively hope," 1 Pet. i. 3.

§ 215.

§ 215.

MANY are the passages in which believers are commanded to love one another; from which it is to be seen, what is the nature of this brotherly love. Our Saviour said to his disciples, "A new commandment I give unto you, that "you love one another, *as I have loved you, that ye also love* "*one another*. By this shall all men know that ye are my "disciples, if ye have love one to another," John, xiii. 34, 35. Farther, "This is my commandment, that ye "love one another, *as I have loved you*," John, xv. 12.

The disciples of Jesus, whom the Lord had commanded, with respect to those who should believe in him, and be baptized, "Teach them to observe all things, whatsoever "he had commanded them," Matt. xxviii. 20. did afterwards earnestly inculcate this doctrine upon them. Peter says, "Purify your souls in obeying the truth through the "Spirit *unto unfeigned love of the brethren. See that ye love* "*one another with a pure heart fervently*;" that is, love them with all your heart: 1 Pet. i. 22. And, "Above "all things have *fervent charity*," (love) *among yourselves*, "for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." That is, although others were to injure us much and often, yet love hides it, and gladly forgives it, 1 Pet. iv. 8. See also chap. ii. 17. Farther, "*Be kindly affectioned one to ano-* "*ther with brotherly love*." Rom. xii. 10. Likewise, "*Let brotherly love continue*." Heb. xiii. 1. And, "*You* "*are yourselves taught of God to love one another*." (See Mark, xii. 31.) and "indeed ye do it towards all the "brethren; but we beseech you, brethren, *that you increase* "*more and more*," 1 Thes. iv. 9, 10.

John, likewise, in his first epistle, from beginning to end, urges brotherly love; and says, amongst other things, "This is (God's) commandment, that we should believe "on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, *and love one another*, "as HE gave us commandment," 1 John, iii. 23. And, "beloved,

"beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and "every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth "God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God "is LOVE," 1 John, iv. 7, 8. "Hereby perceive we the "love of God, because HE laid down his life for us; *and* "*we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren*," 1 John, iii. 16.

Paul, 1 Cor. xiii. gives us a most beautiful description of the state of a person, whose heart is truly replenished with the love of Jesus; and who therefore enjoys the love to God, and truly loves his neighbour. No one can attentively view himself in this glass, without becoming sensible of his deficiency in love, and without receiving an impression of the happiness which they enjoy, who become more like their Saviour in love.

From all these passages, we see, that we should love one another; but how? As Christ hath loved us; and this goes so far, that we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Consequently, our love one to another must discover itself. Every one by this shall know, that we belong to Jesus. Moreover, we should love one another with reverence, truly from the heart, with constancy; and increase therein more and more. The fruits of such love will certainly not be wanting.

From hence it is clear, that believers are so far from being blameable for loving one another preferably, that it is required of them in the holy Scripture, and is agreeable to the nature of the thing. "As ye have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, *especially unto them, who* "*are of the household of faith*." That is, to those who with us are partakers of the faith in Christ, Gal. vi. 10.

However universal love is included in this brotherly love, 2 Pet. i. 7. as it is said, "The Lord make you to increase "and abound in love one towards another, and *towards all* "*men*," 1 Thes. iii. 12. "Follow that which is good, "both among yourselves, and *to all men*," 1 Thes. v. 15.

§ 216.

§ 216.

THE love of enemies is especially recommended to us by our Lord Jesus Christ in the words above recited, "Love "your enemies, bless them who curse you, do good to "them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully "use you and persecute you," Matt. v. 44. See § 212. That the children of God have always enemies is not only known by history, but also by universal experience. If we ask for the reasons, why men are their enemies? one assigns this, and another that, and a reason is never wanting. But what our Lord and Saviour says to his disciples shews us the true reason of it; "Because you are not of the world, but "I have chosen you out of the world, *therefore the world* "*hateth you*," John, xv. 19. And what he speaks with his Father, "I have given them thy word, and the world hath "hated them, *because they are not of the world*, even as I "am not of the world," John, xvii. 14.

Now, if any one loves his enemy, then he not only seeks to avoid whatever might hurt him; but there is an inclination also, yea an earnest desire in him to do every thing to the utmost of his power, to the furtherance of that which can be of service to him. Whence it follows, that "he "does not avenge himself." See Rom. xii. 19. Neither renders evil for evil, according to 1 Thess. v. 15. "See "that none render evil for evil unto any man." To this also belong the words of Jesus, "I say unto you, that ye "resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy "right cheek, turn to him the other also," Matt. v. 39.

If a man, in obedience to these words of Jesus, would bear to be smitten on the other cheek, if some one had smitten him already upon one (instances of which have actually occurred), he would not sin. But the meaning of Jesus was doubtless this, that in such a case a man would do better, if he bore a stroke upon the other cheek, rather

than if he acted on the defensive, and would return stroke for stroke. He himself said to the officer who struck him upon the face, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the "evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" John, xviii. 23. The exhortation of Paul, "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," Rom. xii. 20. must be also rightly understood. For, had any one intended, by doing good to his enemies, of only heaping coals of fire on his head, in order to his detriment or destruction; that would not be love. But if any one attends to the words of Christ, and simply follows it, and overcomes evil with good that is, the more evil he then suffers from his enemy, so much the more good he does him; it might happen, that the latter is at last so put to shame, and feels so much anguish for his enmity, as if he had coals of fire upon his head. See for instance, 1 Sam. xxiv. 4, &c. 2 Kings, vi. 8, &c.

This reduces many an enemy, that he reflects within himself, sees, and owns his injustice, and from an enemy, becomes a friend. O how heart-cheering are the examples of this nature! Our Lord Jesus Christ died for men, who were yet sinners, that is, his enemies, Rom. v. 8. 10. and prayed for those who crucified him, Luke, xxiii. 34. This is to love enemies.

Our Saviour has not said much of the love, *in friendship*, when one man loves another, by whom he is singularly and preferably loved, in the same singular and preferable manner, and seeks upon all occasions to counsel, to assist, to serve, and to promote him. For although this be in itself right, and rather necessary, inasmuch as it includes gratitude, and is the opposite of unthankfulness, which is a scandalous vice, 2 Tim. iii. 2.; yet our Saviour will not, that his disciples should stop at the love of a friend, and look upon that as an evidence and proof of the sonship of God. He says, "If ye love them, which love you, what reward have "ye?

"ye? Do not even publicans the same? Matt. v. 46. "And if ye do good to them, who do good to you, what "thanks have you? For sinners also do even the same," Luke, vi. 33. "But love ye your enemies."

§ 217.

PEACEABLENESS, whereby a man is not only peaceably inclined towards others, but also takes pains to make peace between others, and to preserve them in peace, flows infallibly from the love of our neighbour. In children of God, unity in the spirit is pre-supposed. This was of great importance to our Saviour, which we see by his High-priestly prayer, in which he remembers all believers; "I "pray for them," says he, "*that they all may be one; as* "*thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may* "*be one in us*," John, xvii. 21.

In the church at Jerusalem, this prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ was immediately accomplished. For "the multi-"tude of them that believed" (and the number of the men only were at that time about five thousand), "were of one "heart and of one soul," Acts, iv. 4, 32.

The disciples of the Lord made a point of it, that this might continue with blessing in all the churches. Paul says, Philip, i. 27. "Let your conversation be as becometh "the Gospel—*that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one* "*mind*."

Now, if the unity of the spirit truly takes place, then must the children of God maintain and keep peace. "En-"deavour to keep the unity of the spirit *in the bond of* "*peace*," Eph. iv. 3. "Follow righteousness, faith, "charity, *peace with them that call on the Lord*, out of a "pure heart," 2 Tim. ii. 22. "Finally, brethren, fare-"well: be perfect, be of good comfort, *be of one mind,* "*live in peace*; and the God of love and peace shall be with "you," 2 Cor. xiii. 11. "*Let us follow after the things* "*which*

"*which make for peace*, and things wherewith we may "edify one another," Rom. xiv. 19. See also Mark, ix. 50. Matt. v. 9.

But the children of God ought not only to be peaceable one amongst another, but to labour also *to live peaceably with all men*. "Follow *peace with all men*," Heb. xii. 14. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, *live peaceably* "*with all men*," Rom. xii. 18. See 1 Pet. iii. 11.

For peace is also one of the fruits of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22. There are many things which might disturb peace, and which, for that very reason, we ought to eschew. Especially self-conceit belongs to this class, on which account also we are earnestly warned against it. "Let us "not be *desirous of vain-glory*, provoking one another, "envying one another," Gal. v. 26.——"I say, through "the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, "*not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think*, "*but to think soberly*," Rom. xii. 3.

When the disciples of Jesus began to conjecture and reason amongst one another, who should be the greatest among them, directly strife sprang up amongst them, and peace was interrupted, Luke, xxii. 24.

With self-interest the case is the same. O how often is peace disturbed by this! Our Saviour shews us the shortest way to maintain peace, when the question is about thine and mine. "If any man will sue thee at the law, and "take away thy coat," (rather than that thou shouldst dispute with him) "*let him have thy cloak also*," Matt. v. 40. Paul gives the Corinthians a similar admonition. "There is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to "law one with another. *Why do you not rather take wrong?* "*Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?*" 1 Cor. vi. 7. Concerning both the aforesaid interruptions of peace, he speaks in the following words, "If there be "therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of "love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and

" mercies; fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having
" the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. *Let*
" *nothing be done through strife, or vain-glory, but in lowli-*
" *ness of mind, let each esteem other better than himself; look*
" *not every man on his own things, but every man also on the*
" *things of others,*" Phil. ii. 1, &c.

§ 218.

THE more a man is devoted to our Saviour, and keeps to the doctrine of Jesus and of his disciples; the more his eye is fixed upon Jesus, who is the image of God, and the example for us all; the more he gives due attention to the Holy Ghost, who so faithfully teacheth, leadeth, and ruleth us;—the greater is the growth in the love towards one another, which he in a measure possesses and exercises. We have all but one and the same rule to walk by; we have all one pattern, that justly ought to be ever in our view; we are all in one school, and have there one and the same instruction and direction. Therefore it is not only necessary but also possible; yea one might say, not difficult, for the members of Jesus to be collectively of one mind, and to remain in peace, if they be only faithful and obedient. Here the following things may be farther observed upon this head.

(1.) Because they are still men, who are compassed with many infirmities, and err in manifold ways, they should have *patience*, and bear with each other. This patience is likewise one of the fruits of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22. And shews itself not only towards the brethren, but also towards every man. For so is it said in the Scripture, " Walk
" worthy of the vocation, wherewith ye are called—*with*
" *long-suffering* (patience) *forbearing one another in love,*"
Eph. iv. 1 and 2. And, " *Support the weak, be patient to-*
" *ward all men,*" 1 Thes. v. 14.

The patience of the Lord, which he has with us, and which is unbounded, affords us the very best arguments for

our patience with others. The patience which has been spoken of, § 190. consisting in this, that we are resigned under afflictions, and do not murmur against God, is different from that patience of which we are here treating; and which is, however, certainly connected with it. To this head belongs also *meekness*, by which we spare our neighbour, and do not easily become angry with him, or retain our anger; of which our Saviour says, "Learn of me, for *I am meek* "and lowly in heart," Matt. xi. 29. And, "Blessed are "the *meek*," Matt. v. 5.

(2.) Thus we also look to him, how "HE does not "bruise the broken reed, nor quench the smoaking flax." For on this account "the strong ought to bear the infirmi-"ties of the weak," Rom. xv. 1. "*Receive ye one ano-"ther, as Christ also received us*, to the glory of God." Rom. xv. 7.

As a shepherd takes up a tender lamb, and a mother a child, that is yet weakly, and thus carries it with her; so doth our Saviour treat us; and so we ought also to act one towards another. "Comfort the feeble-minded, *support*" (to carry) "*the weak*," 1 Thes. v. 14.

(3.) If we love others as we do ourselves, then we cannot be indifferent about those circumstances which affect them; but *we take share* in them; according to the word of Paul, "Rejoice with *them that do rejoice*, and weep with *them that* "*weep*," Rom. xii. 15.

This was the exhortation of that loving father, at the return of his prodigal son, to his brother, who was dissatisfied at the joy of his father and of his whole family; "It "was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for "this thy brother was dead, and is alive again, and was "lost and is found," Luke, xv. 32. This sympathy is the cause of these words, "Remember them that are in "bonds," (as Paul, for instance, was at Rome, being bound with a chain to a soldier) "and them which suffer "adversity," Heb. xiii. 3.

(4.) If we have in the same loving mind with Jesus, we then *forgive* our neighbour gladly. See § 197. For our Lord Jesus Christ says, " *If ye forgive men their trespasses,* " your Heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye " forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father " forgive your trespasses," Matt. vi. 14, 15. And in other places it is said, " *Forgive one another, even as God,* " for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you," Eph. iv. 32. " Forbear one another, *and forgive one another, if any man* " *have a quarrel against any, even as Christ* forgave you, so " also do ye," Col. iii. 13. See Matt. xviii. 21, &c. Luke, xvii. 4. If this be put in practice, then do we not retain resentment (sigh) one against another. James says, " *Grudge not one against another,* brethren, lest ye be con- " demned."

How is that meant? If any one grudges, James, v. 9. against another, that is a proof of his not having forgiven him: but doth he not forgive him, neither will he himself be forgiven: and, if he is not forgiven, then is he condemned. See Matt. xiii. 23—35.

(5.) By the words of the Holy Scripture, " By love " *serve one another,*" Gal. v. 13. Likewise, " Let us " not love in word, neither in tongue, but *in deed and in* " *truth,*" 1 John, iii. 18. And, " *As every man hath* " *received the gift, even so minister the same one to another,* " as good stewards of the manifold grace of God," 1 Pet. iv. 10.

The following only is to be observed, when any one stands in need of another's assistance, it is but just that he accepts of it, as a blessing out of the Lord's hand, if he becomes a partaker of it; thanking the Lord for it, with all his heart, in the first place, and then also his neighbour. But he, who is counted worthy to assist and serve another (if he has an understanding to judge according to the mind of Christ), he considers the opportunity as a still greater benefit from God; and is still more glad and thankful,

especially

especially if it concerns the members of Christ. For he well knows, that every thing that is done to the members of Jesus Christ, is looked upon by him, as if it were done unto himself.

(6.) A certain willingness and complacency is always necessary, if the service done shall afford pleasure. "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile" (with him) "*go* "*with him twain*," Matt. v. 41.

Also with respect to the manner in which we are to treat others, the Holy Scriptures do not leave us without instruction: For instance, "*Be ye kind one to another, and* "*tender-hearted*," Eph. iv. 32. "*In honour prefer ye one* "*another*," Rom. xii. 10. "In lowliness of mind *let each* "*esteem other better than themselves*," Phil. ii. 3. "*Forbear* "*ye one another* in love," Eph. iv. 2. "Let your *moderation*" (that means the benevolence which is not severe) "be known unto all men," (exercise it towards every one) Phil. iv. 5. "See that *ye walk circumspectly*, not as fools, "but as wise," Eph. v. 15. "*Walk in wisdom* towards "them that are without," Col. iv. 5. That is, towards such as do not belong to the church of God.

§ 219.

FROM the love to God, and the love to our neighbour, which are inseparable in their very nature; for the Scripture says, "Every one that loveth him that begat (GOD), loveth "him also that is begotten of him," 1 John, v. 1. (his brother.) And, "If a man say, I love God, and "hateth his brother, he is a liar: For he that loveth not "his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, "whom he hath not seen?" John, iv. 20.—It follows further,

(1.) That we seek our neighbour's edification according to our ability, pursuant to Rom. xiv. 19. "Let us follow "things wherewith *one may edify another*." And, "Let

"us *consider one another to provoke unto* LOVE *and to good* "*works*," Heb. x. 24. Moreover, 1 Cor. viii. 1. Eph. iv. 16. "*Love edifieth*."

(2.) That we do not neglect to restore our neighbour, who has strayed; neither withdraw from him, when the situation of his heart is such that he wants help. "Bre-"thren," (says Paul) "if a man be overtaken in a fault, "ye which are spiritual, *restore such a one in the spirit of* "*meekness*," Gal. vi. 1. "Brethren, if any of you do err "from the truth, *and one convert him*; let him know that "*He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way*, "shall save a soul from death," Jam. v. 19, 20.

(3.) That we set our neighbour a good example, and shew him the way by our good conversation. That even a heathen, who doth not as yet believe in the Gospel, may and ought to be won by the subjection and chaste conversation of his wife, who is a believer in Jesus Christ, without the word, is testified by Peter, 1 Epist. iii. 1, 2. Whence it is evident, that the walk of a person who loves Jesus, is sometimes of more benefit than the finest words; and this experience doth also confirm. Whereas, on the other hand, a man who teaches the word of God, and denies it by his walk and conversation, causes the name of God to be blasphemed, and gives an occasion of offence; as Paul testifieth concerning the Jews, Rom. ii. 17, &c.

Now a good conversation implies, in general, that we avoid and flee from evil, and learn to do good. Thus saith David, "*Depart from evil*, and *do good*," Psal. xxxiv. 14. and Isaiah, "*Cease to do evil*; *learn to do well*," chap. i. 16, 17.

Paul, "*Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is* "*good*," Rom. xii. 9. And Amos, "*Hate the evil, and* "*love the good*," Amos, v. 15.

To this we are also exhorted by the following passages of Scripture. "Brethren, whatsoever things are true, what-"soever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, "what-

"whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, "whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any "virtue, if there be any praise," (any thing praise-worthy), "think on these things," Phil. iv. 8. "The grace of "God, that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared, "teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, "we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this pre-"sent world," Tit. ii. 11, 12. Farther, "*Let your light* "*so shine before men*, that they may see your good works, "and glorify your Father, which is in heaven," Matth. v. 16. "*Have your conversation honest among the Gentiles*, "that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they "may by your good works, which they shall behold, glo-"rify God," 1 Pet. ii. 12.

Believers are called, "A light in the Lord," Ephes. v. 8. Why? As the moon shines bright in the night, because receiving the light of the sun, it reflects it back again upon the earth, so do the children of God, by their good conversation, shine in the midst of a wicked world, for the benefit of others: yet they have not this of themselves, but from Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness.

To this head then doth this also belong, that "All things "be done decently and in order," according to 1 Cor. xiv. 40.; and that they demean themselves "as blameless and "harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst "of a crooked and perverse nation," &c. Phil. ii. 15.; also, "that they have no fellowship with the unfruitful "works of darkness, but rather reprove them," Eph. v. 11.

§ 220.

IN general, they who belong to our Saviour are never to forget, that they are all of them in the world, in order to shew forth the praises of him, "who hath called them out of "darkness into his marvellous light," 1 Pet. ii. 9. For though a person be not appointed to be a shepherd and

teacher in the church of Christ, he is nevertheless, according to the abundant mercy of God, begotten again unto a lively hope, as Peter speaks concerning the people to whom he writes, 1 Epist. i. 3.; and he therefore belongs to "the "chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, "the peculiar people," or to those people who belong to our Lord Jesus Christ, as his property; of whom it is expected, that they should shew forth the virtues of Christ. Indeed it becomes these people, first of all to look to themselves, according to the words of Scripture: "*Let every* "*man prove his own work*, and then shall he have rejoicing "in himself alone, and not in another." That is, if he reforms himself first of all, before he wants to reform others, it will be an honour to him, Gal. vi. 4.

It also becomes them not to be precipitate, but to be glad to learn; as James exhorts, "Let every man be *swift to* "*hear, slow to speak*," James, i. 19.

They are to observe also what Paul says, "*Comfort your-* "*selves together, and edify one another*," 1 Thess. v. 11. And, "*Let the word of Christ dwell amongst you richly* in all "wisdom," Col. iii. 16. Likewise, "*Speak to yourselves* "*in psalms*, and hymns, and spiritual songs," Eph. v. 19. Hereby they are to take good notice of the exhortation of Paul to Timothy, "Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, "knowing that they do gender strifes," 2 Tim. ii. 23.

And, seeing our Lord and Saviour has expressly said concerning the preaching of the Gospel, "From henceforth "there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, "and two against three. The father shall be divided "against the son, and the son against the father; the mo- "ther against the daughter, and the daughter against the "mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, "and the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law," Luke, xii. 52, &c. the same may also happen to be the case in our days, that one who is from his heart converted to God, must be obliged to suffer much from his very

nearest

nearest relations. Then the words are applicable to him, "Let them that suffer, according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as "unto a faithful Creator," 1 Pet. iv. 19.

Yet they are not to be backward, as often as it is required of them, to witness a good confession of the grace in the blood of Jesus: for it is said, "*Be ready always to give "an answer to every man* that asketh you a reason of the "hope that is in you," 1 Pet. iii. 15.

§ 221.

If we love our neighbour, then we avoid every thing whereby we might injure and be detrimental to him. For, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour," Rom. xiii. 10.

But he may be injured and hurt, (1.) With respect to his body, soul, or his life. (2.) To his marriage and children. (3.) To his goods and possessions, and livelihood. (4.) To his reputation and good name. Therefore has God our Lord, by his holy commandments, made a barrier, a wall around all this, to preserve and secure it.

Certainly there are cases, in which it is right a man should be punished with death. God had, in the Old Testament, ordered capital punishments to be inflicted on account of many sins: nay, it was his will and pleasure, that entire nations should be extirpated, on account of the dreadful abominations which were in general practice among them. Thus, for instance, he commanded the Israelites to cut off the Canaanites entirely. In these cases, the putting men to death was right; and if, for example, any one who had wilfully taken away his neighbour's life, had not been punished with death, it laid the country under the guilt of blood. And, whereas the Israelites spared the Canaanites, and did not exterminate all of them from the earth, according to the commandment of God, they sinned thereby, and drew upon themselves many and heavy judgments.

Except

Except in these cases, God, for the preservation of men's lives and limbs, forbids putting to death or killing men, under the severest penalties. Cain knew, that by killing his brother Abel he had done very wrong. Immediately after the deluge, the Lord said, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, "by man shall his blood be shed," Gen. ix. 6. The reason of which God gives, "For in the image of God made "he man." Thus is man, in preference to all other creatures, the object of God's attention. Consequently, if a man who exercises cruelty upon any other creature, does not remain unpunished by God, much less will God suffer him to escape punishment, if he takes away his neighbour's life. See Gen. ix. 5. In the law of Moses it is said, Levit. xxiv. 17. "He that killeth any man shall surely be put to "death," See Numb. xxxv. 16, &c.

By this law, such are not meant who have had the misfortune to slay a man unawares, against whom he had no ill-will. For if, for instance, any one should fall from the top of an house upon a person passing accidentally by, and kill him, yet he, notwithstanding the law before specified, was not to be put to death. But if any one should wilfully cause the death of another, though he did not kill him with his own hand, he would be considered as the murderer. Therefore Nathan said to David, "*Thou hast* "*killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword,*" 2 Sam. xii. 9. though he fell by the hand of the enemy. But it was by David's command that Joab contrived the method by which it was effected.

Nor did God only forbid murder itself, but also every thing else which gives or can give occasion to it: For instance, (1.) *Hatred.* "Whosoever that hateth his brother "is (in God's sight) a murderer," 1 John, iii. 15. See § 213.

(2.) *Enmity*, when a man has malice against another; as Joseph's brethren did (for instance) hate him, Gen. xxxvii. 4.; which carried them to such lengths, that they contrived his death, ver. 20.

(3.) *Re-*

(3.) *Resentment*; when a man bears malice against his neighbour, and retains bitterness; as Joab from revenge, killed Abner, who had killed his brother Asahel with a spear. 2 Sam. iii. 27.

(4.) *Envy*; when a man with his heart grudges his neighbour the good which befals him. Thus did Cain kill his brother Abel, because "the Lord had respect unto "Abel and his offering, but to Cain and his offering he "had not respect," Gen. iv. 3, &c. See also 1 John iii. 12.

(5.) *Anger*. This made Simeon and Levi so outrageous, that they put Hamor and Sehechem, and all the males that were in the city, to the sword, Gen. xxxiv. 25.; chap. xlix. &c. See § 161.

(6.) *Quarrelling, calumniating, reviling, scolding*, and the like. For who can be ignorant of the many murders which ensue from thence? Therefore the Scripture enjoins, "Let "all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and "evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice," Eph. iv. 31. Likewise, "Put off all these, anger, wrath, "malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your "mouth," Col. iii. 8. "Where envying and strife is, "there is confusion and every evil work," Jam. iii. 16. "God will give to them that are contentious, tribulation "and anguish," Rom. ii. 8. See also chap. xiii. 13.

For, "Hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, se-"ditions," do all belong to the list of the flagrant works of the flesh, which prevent our coming into the kingdom of God, Gal. v. 20, 21.

Who can doubt, but that the conduct connected therewith is equally opposite to the mind of the Lord? Such are of the nature of Cain's, who being very wroth with his brother Abel, his countenance fell, Gen. iv. 5.

(7.) *Revenge*. "Ye have heard, that it hath been said, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say "unto you, that ye resist not evil," Matt. v. 38, 39.

Moses

Moses commanded the judges to moderate the punishment of men, according to the nature of their crimes. But the Pharisees put such a construction upon these words, as if they were thereby warranted to revenge themselves in such a manner. But this the Lord expressly forbids; and Paul says, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather "give place unto wrath (the wrath of God); for it is "written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

§ 222.

How highly our Saviour values the soul of a man, is evident from his own words: "What is a man profited, if he "shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or "what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matth. xvi. 26.

When, in another place, he says, that in case our right eye, or right hand, or right foot, offend us, we are not to spare, but to pluck out, to cut off, and cast them from us, Matt. v. 29. he shews thereby, how much we are to be upon our guard, and what earnestness we are to use, that we may not suffer hurt in our soul. And whereas, according to the commandment of the Lord, we are to love our neighbour as ourselves, it is therefore certain, that we should also be as carefully concerned, that by our means he may not suffer any damage in his soul. This the holy Scripture thus expresses, We are not *to give offence* to any man; that is, we are to demean ourselves in such a manner, that no one should be offended by us, or have occasion given him to commit sin, and to be thereby hurt in his soul. Christ says, "Wo unto the world because of offences; "for it must needs be that offences come," (the meaning is, that considering the deep depravity of men, it cannot fail but men will hurt the souls of each other) "yet wo to "that man by whom the offence cometh," Matth. xviii. 7.

This

This may happen in various ways. If, for instance, a person whose situation makes him an object of attention, is unmerciful towards his neighbour, and thereby is the occasion that another does not shew mercy where he ought, in this case the former offends the latter. The holy Scripture says, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of "your mouth," Eph. iv. 29. And, "Shun prophane and "vain babblings," 2 Tim. ii. 16.

Men must give an account, in the day of judgment, for every idle word that they shall have spoken, Matt. xii. 36.

Ah! how many persons are thereby offended. For, "Evil communications corrupt good manners," 1 Cor. xv. 33. One man gratifies his own pride in dress; and another follows his example, even though he believes it to be wrong. Is not this an offence? Another thinks, Why should I not be present at this and the other public diversion, as for instance, at the play-house? Why should I make a conscience of so doing? He goes. His neighbour, though believing it to be wrong and sinful, sees it, and follows him in the same practice, and thus actually commits a sin; for he acts contrary to his better knowledge. Does he not in this suffer hurt in his soul? "Give none of-"fence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God," 1 Cor. x. 32.

Hence it follows, that we ought as little to give any offence to unconverted people, to Jews, Turks, and Heathens, as to those that believe in Christ. This was God's meaning by the commandment, "Thou shalt not put a "stumbling-block before the blind," (that is, thou shalt not put any thing in his way, whereby he might stumble, and fall over it), "but shalt fear thy God. I am the "LORD," Levit. xix. 14.

To this head also do the words belong, "Judge this ra-"ther, *that, no man put a stumbling-block*" (or an occasion to fall) "*in his brother's way*," Rom. xiv. 13. And, "Take "heed, lest by any means this liberty of yours *become a*

"*stumbling-*

"*stumbling-block to them that are weak*," 1 Cor. viii. 9, &c. That we are not to give offence to children in particular, we refer to § 204.

We are still, on this occasion, farther to remark, that we are not only to flee from such things as are in themselves evil, and an offence to others, but we have also a word of the Lord, which is, "Abstain from all appearance of evil," 1 Thess. v. 24. Now, as what has been said concerns every man, so have the servants of Jesus in particular, who are appointed to be assistants in the house of God, that is, in the church, this very earnest admonition given them, "Give "*no offence to any man in any thing, that the ministry be not* "*blamed*," 2 Cor. vi. 3.

§ 223.

LOVE also worketh no ill to his neighbour, in regard to his marriage and children.

Concerning married people, and their behaviour one towards another, we have spoken already, § 202, &c. We have only to add this, that although polygamy was tolerated by God under the Old Testament, yet it never was approved or commanded. It was rather forbidden to the kings to multiply wives, with the additional clause, that their hearts turn not away (from God), Deut. xvii. 17. Solomon having, notwithstanding this prohibition, taken many, and moreover strange wives, that is, such as were from idolatrous nations, 1 Kings, xi. 1. these turned away his heart after strange gods, so that his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, 1 Kings, xi. 3, 4. The argument against polygamy lies in this, that God in the beginning gave the man only one wife; and our Lord Jesus Christ appeals to this ordinance, approved by God himself, as to the rule for all other marriages, Matt. xix. 4, &c.

For the same reason also, our Lord Jesus Christ does not allow of divorces; which is evident from Matt. xix. 3, &c.

For

For although God had, on account of the hardness of their hearts, permitted the people of Israel to divorce a wife, (ver. 8.) (he let it take place in order to prevent murder, and other sins among them *), yet it was not according to his perfect will. Therefore says Christ, "Whosoever shall "put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, "causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall "marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery," Matt. v. 32. See Matt. xix. 9. and 1 Cor. vii. 10, &c.

This, amongst other things, belongs to the wicked customs which had gained ground among the Jews and Heathens, from which Christ has redeemed us at so dear a rate; as Peter says, "Ye know, that ye were not redeem-"ed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from *your* "*vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers*; "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb with-"out blemish and without spot," 1 Pet. xviii. 19.

The holy Scripture often classes fornication and adultery together; and both belong to the flagrant works of the flesh, which exclude us from the kingdom of God, Gal. v. 19, &c. 1 Cor. vi. 9. For, "Fornication and adultery "come out of the heart, and defile the man," Matth. xv. 19.

Fornication is to be eschewed and avoided as an heathenish abomination, incompatible with faith. Paul classes fornicators with idolaters, adulterers, thieves, and revilers; that is, with such persons as shall not inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, and says, "Flee fornication.— "Know ye not that 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! What, know "ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, "which is in you, which ye have of God, and are not "your own?" 1 Cor. vi. 18. 15. 19. Of adultery it is said,

* The permission was but occasional and temporary.

Levit.

Levit. xx. 10. "The man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with "his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall "surely be put to death." The New Testament says, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled; but "whoremongers and adulterers God will judge," Heb. iii. 4.

But not the wicked act only was intended, but every thing also from whence it springs. God said even in the Old Testament, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's "wife," Exod. xx. 17. And the doctrine of Christ is, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath "committed adultery with her already in his heart," Matt. v. 28.

Now, when the evil lust that is in the heart becomes a root of unclean and sinful thoughts and representations, also of looks, carriage, and allurements of the persons upon whom the eye, so inflamed of sin, is cast, then is a man commonly affrighted (if he is still capable of being affrighted, and is not without feeling), more at the fruits than at the root of them. We have also cause enough for being alarmed, seeing that by means of such things we hurt the souls of others. But otherwise the root is always the worst; and if that be not destroyed, we can expect nothing but evil fruit from it.

The ambiguous speeches usual amongst men, and which cover carnal lusts and impure fancies, are to be looked upon in no other light, than as so many poisonous darts, which one shoots into the heart of another. These Paul no doubt means, when he makes mention of filthiness, foolish talking, and jesting, Eph. v. 4. For, in the words immediately preceding, he is speaking of fornication and uncleanness. Such words should never be heard among people who are called by the name of Christ.

Whosoever doth not keep within the bounds of such temperance and sobriety in eating and drinking, as is according to the will of God, nourisheth his lusts. For, as on the one hand, we are to give our bodies that which is necessary

for them, and to keep them clean and orderly, so are we, on the other hand, to flee all excess. For the Scripture says, "Let us, who are" (children) "of the day," (that is, we who are turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God) "*be sober*," 1 Thess. v. 8. And, "*Be sober*, be vigilant; because your adversary the "devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom "he may devour," 1 Pet. v. 8.

On the other hand, the Scripture warns against gluttony and drunkenness, as being the abominations of the Gentiles, 1 Pet. iv. 3. and a gross work of the flesh, excluding us from any inheritance in the kingdom of God, Gal. v. 19. "Take heed to yourselves, *lest at any time your hearts be "overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness*," Luke, xxi. 34. "Let us walk honestly, as in the day, *not in rioting "and drunkenness*," Rom. xiii. 13. See Eph. v. 18.

§ 224.

To guard men's goods, possessions, and livelihood, God has in his law forbidden theft, Exod. xx. 15. "Neither "covetous, nor thieves," (if they be not converted from the heart), "shall inherit the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. vi. 10.

The restitution of that which had been stolen was earnestly enjoined upon the Israelites, Exod. xxii. 3.

Therefore said Zaccheus, "Behold, Lord, the half of "my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken any "thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him "fourfold," Luke, xix. 8. This was a consequence of his conversion. Alas! how few are there now who do as Zaccheus did! He that is truly converted with his heart to God, will not keep back that which has been stolen, if it be possible for him to return it, or to make restitution. But if it be actually not possible (for such cases happen), is it then to be according to the old rule, *Non tollitur peccatum,*

nisi restituatur ablatum? (that is) "Without restitution of "that which has been stolen, the sin cannot be abolished." We may boldly answer, *No!* for as the malefactor on the cross, although he could not bring the man to life again whom he had murdered, obtained pardon of his sins, and inherited everlasting life, after having known, bewailed, and repented of his sins, and laid hold upon Jesus in faith, ("To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise,") so may also a thief, upon doing the like, become a child of God, and inherit everlasting life, although it be not possible for him to make restitution of that which was stolen. Paul's advice is this: "Let him that stole steal no more, but ra- "ther let him labour, working with his hands the thing "which is good, that he may have to give to him that "needeth," Eph. iv. 28.

For the rest, God has not only forbidden theft in itself, but every thing, likewise, which is in fact theft, although it may not seem so. For example, when a man in trade sells bad commodities for good ones; when he uses false measures and weights; when he sells any wares too dear, and uses extortion towards his neighbour; and other things of the same kind. To such practices the following passages of Scripture refer: "Woe to him that increaseth that "which is not his!—How long?" Hab. iii. 6. "Know "ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the king- "dom of God?" 1 Cor. vi. 9. "Ye shall do no un- "righteousness in meet-yard, in weight, or in measure; "just balances, just weights, a just ephah, a just hin, shall "ye have," Levit. xix. 35, 36. See Deut. xxv. 13, &c.

But God has forbidden the root from whence all these things spring: "Thou shalt *not covet* thy neighbour's house, "nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, "nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's." Exod. xx. 17. Therefore, our Saviour says also, "Take "heed *and beware of covetousness*," Luke, xii. 15. Of this

this have we ſpoken already, § 160, and 182. He in whoſe heart that commandment is written, "*Love thy neighbour as* "*thyſelf*," will not only faithfully guard againſt all thoſe things that have the nature of theft in them, but alſo mortify within himſelf the deſire after his neighbour's property, and covetouſneſs, as ſoon as he perceives ſuch thoughts ariſe in his heart. See § 160.

§ 225.

THUS it is alſo the will of God, that as we have opportunity, we ſhould, with the ſubſtance given unto us by him, aſſiſt and ſerve our neighbour. Concerning this it is ſaid in general, "Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due "ſeaſon we ſhall reap, if we faint not," Gal. vi. 9. "To "do good, and to communicate forget not; for with ſuch "ſacrifices God is well pleaſed," Heb. xiii. 16.

We have all that we have, be it much or little, from God the Lord: but we are only his agents and ſtewards, who are to uſe and expend faithfully, according to his mind, that which has been entruſted to us. The day is coming, when we all, and each for himſelf, muſt give an account concerning the uſe we have made of that which God has put into our hands. For as little as that ſervant, who went and hid his Lord's talent in the earth, after it had been entruſted to him, could at length juſtify himſelf before his Lord (at his command he was caſt as an unprofitable ſervant into outer darkneſs, there is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth, Matth. xxv. 24, &c.) ſo little will they be able to juſtify themſelves before him, to whom he has given this world's goods, and they have not employed and improved them according to his command. His command is this: "Be ye merciful, as your Father alſo is merciful," Luke, vi. 36.

Now he that doth not this, his ſentence is already pronounced: "He ſhall have judgment without mercy, that

"hath shewed no mercy," Jam. ii. 13. Of this we read, Matt. xxv. 41, &c. There it is said; "Depart from me, "ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and "his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no "meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a "stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye cloathed "me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not."

By this we see, that we are to assist, according to the command of Christ, the poor and distressed sufferers, as far as we are able. "Give to him that asketh thee, and "from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou "away," Matt. v. 42. "Do good, and lend, hoping "for nothing again; and your reward shall be great—for "HE" (the Father in Heaven) "is kind unto the un-"thankful, and to the evil," Luke, vi. 35.

Then will that be done unto us whereof Solomon speaks, "He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; "and that which he hath given, he will pay him again," Prov. xix. 17. And that word of the Lord will be certainly verified: "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one "of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name "of a disciple," (or for this reason, because he belongs to Christ) Mark, ix. 41.; "verily I say unto you, "he shall in no wise loose his reward," Matt. x. 42.

We ought also to take good notice of the words of Jesus: "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the "maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed, "for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be re-"compensed at the resurrection of the just," Luke, xiv. 13.

Nay, circumstances may occur, when the Lord our Saviour expressly requires it of one or another, that they sell all and distribute it amongst the poor. This was his command to his disciples, unto whom he first said, "Fear "not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to "give you the kingdom. Sell that you have, and give "alms," Luke, xii. 32. When the church of Christ at

Jerusalem

Jerusalem was first founded, this was done by many of the brethren, and it was at that time necessary. See Acts, iv. But the apostles of the Lord never held this forth to the churches as a general command of Christ given to all believers, which is very plainly to be seen from 2 Cor. viii. 1, &c. For there Paul recommends it to the Corinthians to take the necessities of the church at Jerusalem upon themselves; but he does it in such a gentle manner, that we must admire it. See Rom. xii. 13.

Peter says, "Use hospitality one to another without grudg-"ing," 1 Eph. iv. 9. And the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some "have entertained angels unawares," Heb. xiii. 2. We may likewise add, "Be given to hospitality," Rom. xii. 13.

It is likewise to be attended to as a point of great importance, that the love we shew, and the good we do to our neighbour, be done cheerfully: "If any one sheweth "mercy, *let him do it with cheerfulness*," Rom. xii. 8. And "God loveth a *cheerful giver*," 2 Cor. ix. 7. The words of Christ are very express; "When thou doest alms, *let* "*not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth*, that thine "alms may be in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in "secret, himself shall reward thee openly," Matt. vi. 3, &c.

We will only add on this subject the words of Isaiah: "Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the poor that "are cast out into thine house; when thou seest the naked, "cover him, and hide not thyself from thine own flesh," (that is, from thy brother) Isai. lviii. 7. And of Christ: "Whosoever receiveth *a* child in my name, receiveth me," Luke, ix. 48.

O how highly is the love, the fidelity, and the mercy shewn to a child, esteemed by our Lord Jesus Christ. And Paul's direction to the brethren, who have this world's goods: "Charge them that are rich in this world" (that is, such as have temporal substance) "that they be not "high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the

" living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; " *that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to* " *distribute, willing to communicate*; laying up in store for " themselves a good foundation against the time to come, " that they may lay hold on eternal life," 1 Tim. vi. 17.

The example of Job doth also afford instructive doctrine to us, Job, xxix. 12, &c. But, by this occasion, it must be observed, that commonly the rich man does but give of his abundance, even though he richly administers to his neighbour's necessities. But the poor must, however, not think, that though his gift be inconsiderable, it is on that account less esteemed by God. No—for the little of a poor man, that is given with a faithful heart, is not only particularly acceptable, and welcome to the Lord our Saviour, but also to every one who are under the guidance of his spirit. See Mark, xii. 41, &c.

To mention only one passage more, Paul says, " Look " not every man on his own things, but every man also " on the things of others," Phil. ii. 4.

§ 226.

BECAUSE men are no less anxious about their good name, than about their goods and possessions, therefore does the word of God come to their aid in this respect also, by which the bearing false witness is forbidden. It may however frequently occur, that a man is divested of his property, yea, of his life or limbs by false witnesses. Therefore says the Lord, Exod. xx. 16. " Thou shalt not bear " false witness against thy neighbour."

Our Lord Jesus Christ classes a bearing a false witness with those sins which were punishable with death; namely, " Murder, adultery, and blasphemy," and which, he says, " proceed out of the heart, and defile the man," Matt. xv. 19. But a false witness is not only borne by a man in a court of Judicature (whereof Deut. xix. 18. 19. speaks), but

but also in common life. Of both the scripture says, "A "false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speak-"eth lies shall not escape," Prov. xix. 9.

For though men may not make much of it themselves, yet it is for all that an abomination in the sight of God. In the Old Testament it is said, "Thou shalt not go up and "down as a tale-bearer among thy people," Levit. xix. 16.

The scripture of the New Testament says, "Speak not "evil one of another," James, iv. 11. And, "Laying "aside all evil-speakings," 1 Pet. ii. 1. That is, do not speak evil one of another.—To this also belong the words of our Lord: "Judge not that ye be not judged—and why "beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, and "considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou "hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own "eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote "out of thy brother's eye." Paul says, "*Putting away* "*lying*, speak every man truth with his neighbour; for "we are members one of another," Eph. iv. 25. See also Col. iii. 9. and Zach. viii. 16.

Wherever the Holy Ghost has his government in the heart, there is also truth; truth being one of the fruits of the spirit, Eph. v. 9. But does not every thing, that is contrary to this, belong to those things of which it is said, "HE" (Christ) "was wounded for our transgressions, "he was bruised for our iniquities," Isai. liii. 5.

And will any man, who never can forget how much it cost our Lord to redeem us, excuse these things in himself?

§ 227.

WHOEVER liveth on the faith of the Son of God, loveth God and his neighbours, and is governed by the Holy Ghost, he doth faithfully, in prayer, interest himself in behalf of his neighbour and of his circumstances. We are expressly di-

rected to this: "I exhort, therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, giving of thanks be made "*for all men*," 1 Tim. ii. 1.

Thus in prayer the hearts of men are chiefly attended to; and that we are specially to commune with God the Lord about it; this we are taught by the words following: "For "this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come "unto the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 3. 4.

Thus are we bound to pray for all men, that God would have mercy upon them; to take their souls into his keeping; to rescue them from the power of Satan; to translate them into the kingdom of his dear Son; and to make them happy creatures. Kings, and all in authority over us, are in particular, next mentioned to us: See § 211, &c. for they have a great office, upon which many other men depend; and, if it does not go well with them, many thousand other people are often sufferers by it. The example of Jeroboam, and of the Kings of Israel, his successors, greatly illustrate this: for they having, for wicked reasons of state, fallen into the worship of the calves, and other abominations therewith connected, made all Israel to sin, and thereby drew upon their own persons, and upon the whole nation, whose shepherds they ought to have been, nothing but great afflictions.

Holy writ shews us also, that in our prayers we are with concern to remember those that labour in the word: "The "harvest truly is great," (said our Saviour to his disciples) "but the labourers are few; pray ye, therefore, the Lord "of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into "his harvest," Luke, x. 2.

When therefore the Lord sends out his servants, we are bound to pray him that he may be with them; strengthen them in his service: put his word into their mouth; and bless it. Unto this Paul frequently exhorts the churches; and when the believers at Jerusalem prayed to the Lord in

one

one spirit to grant the grace unto his servants that with all boldness they might speak the word, they were heard immediately, Acts, iv. 24, &c.

We are faithfully to bring the people to whom we belong in prayer before the Lord. Paul, who was an Israelite and testifies of himself, that "he had great heaviness and continual sorrow in his heart, on account of his own people;" acted in this manner, Rom. ix. 2.: And he further adds, "Brethren, my heart's desire, and *prayer to God for Israel*, "is, that they might be saved," Rom. x. 1.

It is also but right that we pray for the city and country where, according to the will of God we reside. God caused the Jews to be carried away captive into Babylon, and there they dwelt amongst horrible Idolators. But what did he command them? "Seek the peace of the city, whither I "have caused you to be carried away captive, and *pray* "*unto the LORD for it*; for in the peace thereof shall ye "have peace," Jer. xxix. 7. And yet this was the ungodly city Babylon.

Enormous transgressions do often draw down a judgment of God upon entire nations, to their destruction; and this becomes also a subject for our converse with our Lord Jesus Christ, and with his and our dear heavenly Father. Thus did Moses, by his intercession for the people of Israel, who had transgressed so dreadfully, that their total destruction was just ready to take place, more than once turn away the wrath and judgment of God, Exod. xxxii. 11, &c. Numb. xiv. 13, &c. Daniel sought the Lord, and confessed the sin of his people, with prayer and supplication, in the most humble manner: "*We have*" (says he) "*sinned and com-*"*mitted iniquity*, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, "even *by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments*: "*neither have we hearkened unto thy servants, the prophets*, "&c." Dan. ix. 5. And, whilst he was yet speaking in his prayer, he received a gracious answer to it. These, and many other scriptural examples, discover to us how confidently

fidently a believing heart may speak with God in behalf of other men, though the request be on account of the things of the greatest importance. We are only to see to it, that in all such prayers, we do not act according to our own conceits, but according to the impulse of the Holy Ghost.

§ 228.

But commonly when we commune with God, we first think of all those who are particularly dear to us, and whose necessities we feel as if they were our own. In this manner our Saviour prays for us, which is evident from the xviith chapter of John; thus did the woman of Canaan pray for her daughter, Matt. xv. 22, &c.: the centurion at Capernaum for his servant, Matt. viii. 5, &c.: the nobleman for his sick son at the point of death, John, iv. 47, &c.: and the distressed father for his lunatic son, Matt. xvii. 15, &c. And if the distress of our neighbour concerns us as much as our own, then will our prayer be also as earnest and persevering for him, and not remain unheard. For "the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man," (that is, of a poor sinner, who, having been washed in the blood of Jesus from his sins, has obtained the righteousness which avails before God) "availeth much," Jam. v. 16. Paul was in particular very faithful in his prayers for all the churches, and also for individuals; nor did he forget thanksgiving. See, Phil. i. 3, 4, Eph. i. 16. 1 Thess. i. 2. and 2 Tim. i. 3.

To this belongs also what James says: "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 shall save "the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and, if he "have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Con- "fess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, "that ye may be healed," James, v. 14, &c.

It is easy to see that this is spoken of sicknesses by way of chastisement, incident to those that believe in Christ; and of elders of the church, who also live in the faith of the Son of God. Wherever similar cases occur in our days, the prayer for the sick will be attended with similar consequences likewise. Oh, did but that "spirit of grace and "of supplications," which is promised unto us, Zach. xii. 10. rest upon us! Yet John's admonition in this case should be well attended to: "If any man see his brother sin a sin, "which is not unto death, *he shall ask*, and he shall give "him life for them that sin not unto death: there is a sin "unto death: I do not say, that ye shall pray for it," 1 John, v. 16.

The meaning of these words may be collected from what follows; when the members of the church of Jesus sinned, they were chastened by the Lord with sicknesses, or even with death. This was the case at Corinth, 1 Cor. xi. 30, &c. Now, if any had sinned in such a manner, that God saw nothing better for him than to chasten, and take him out of the world; then John says, in this case, we are not to pray for his life; for against the will of God we are not to pray: and this stands fast to this day.

§ 229.

IT is often necessary to find out the will of God, when we come into circumstances where we have two things before us, which are neither of them wrong in themselves; and yet, for the present we can do but one of the two; in this respect Paul gives us the following advice: "*Be ye* "*transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may* PROVE "what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God," Rom. xii. 2. David turned himself to God, and prayed unto him: "*Teach me to do thy will*, for thou art my "God, thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of up-"rightness," Psal. cxliii. 10.

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He who is with all his heart set upon it to desire to do nothing, but what is for the present the most pleasing to the Lord, will make no prayer on that behalf in vain: for God has given us the precious promise, that he will hear us graciously, and guide us with his eyes.

Of the CHURCH *of* JESUS CHRIST.

§ 230.

IT hath been already said, and proved from Scripture, § 87, &c. that, in the New Testament, God did not bind himself either to any one nation, or to any one order of men, or to any one family; but that he receives all those who are obedient to the Gospel, and believe in Jesus Christ; and adopts them for his children and for heirs of everlasting life; that he seals them with his Holy Spirit, and, through grace, enables them to serve him in holiness and righteousness, without fear, all the days of their life. Now, if we speak of the whole multitude, who thus, without any merits and worthiness of their own, are received into the covenant of grace, whereof Christ is the Mediator, then such are called the congregation, or the church of Christ.

When the congregation or church of Christ is divided into the militant, and the triumphant; we then understand by the latter, the souls that have finished their race, and are entered into that rest, which will have no end: but by the former, the children of God, who yet live in this world, and who with faith and prayer must continually be upon their guard against, preserve themselves from, and combat not only the corruption which we feel in soul and body, but the world, and also the wicked enemy. The just men made perfect, who are spoken of, Heb. xii. 23. are without doubt to be reckoned to the church triumphant. But when

Paul

Paul ſays, "I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed "my courſe, I have kept the faith," 2 Tim. iv. 7, &c. He gives us a lively idea of a genuine member of the militant church of Chriſt, of which we are now to ſpeak.

§ 231.

CONCERNING the beginning, and the firſt flouriſhing ſtate of the congregation and church of Chriſt upon earth, the Evangeliſts and the Acts of the Apoſtles give us the moſt authentic account. From the former we may ſee how our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, after John had laboured before him, and prepared the way for him, Matt. iii. 3. preached the Goſpel in Judea, Galilee, and alſo occaſionally in Samaria. Thus then it came to paſs, that many believed on him, when they ſaw the miracles which he wrought: "But Jeſus did not "commit himſelf unto them; becauſe he knew all men, "and needed not that any one ſhould teſtify of man, for "he knew what was in man," John, ii. 23. &c. But he firſt choſe twelve men for his diſciples, whom he alſo named apoſtles. See § 10. and § 21. To theſe were afterwards added ſeventy men, whom he alſo furniſhed with grace and gifts; and ſent them every where before him, to preach the goſpel. Beſides, there were a great many men and women, who were his followers, and many of them were favoured with his eſpecial love; as, for inſtance, Lazarus, Martha, Mary, Mary Magdalene, &c.: theſe alſo did not leave him, when he was rejected of all the people, and as a malefactor, who was to die upon the croſs, was led out unto the place of execution. They followed him, as he carried his croſs, bewailing him, Luke, xxiii. 27; yea, there was an awakening amongſt the very children. They believed on him, Matt. xviii. 5, 6; they were glad of him, "crying in the temple, and ſaying, "Hoſanna to the Son of David," Matt. xxi. 15. And our Saviour teſtifies concerning them, that "out of their mouth "God has perfected this praiſe," Matt. xxi. 16.

For

For the rest, how great the number of those, who were heartily devoted to our Lord and Saviour, and to his doctrine, and who loved him, may be inferred from hence, that, after his resurrection, "he was seen of above five "hundred brethren at once;" as Paul testifies, 1 Cor. xv. 6. This was therefore the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the days of his walk upon earth.

In the Acts of the Apostles we are shewed, how the preaching of the Gospel concerning Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world was begun in Jerusalem, immediately after the pouring out of the Holy Ghost, according to the word of our Saviour; and how fruitful the preaching was. For immediately upon the first sermon that Peter preached to the people of Israel, wherein he testified to them with energy, that, by wicked hands, they had crucified and slain that holy and righteous man Jesus of Nazareth, whom God had approved among them by miracles, and wonders, and signs; and that this very Jesus, whom God had raised up again from the dead, and exalted by his own right hand, had shed forth this Holy Ghost upon them, (the disciples of Jesus;) about three thousand souls were converted. Ah! what a miracle of the goodness of God was this! Here are the murderers of Christ: This sermon of Peter pierces their hearts; they ask, What shall we do? Peter replies, "Re-"pent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of "Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and so shall ye "receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."—They receive the word, they are sorry from their hearts, and believe in Christ; they are baptized; they obtain the remission of sins, and become partakers of the Holy Ghost. And all this was done on the same day on which they heard Peter's sermon, Acts, ii. 14—41. These three thousand souls were then added to that little congregation, which had before, by the preaching of the Gospel, been gathered together. Soon after, the number of *the men*, who became believers in Jesus, amounted to about five thousand, Acts, iv. 4. Thus it continued;

and

and after several years, the elders of the church at Jerusalem say to Paul, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands" (*myriads*) "of Jews there are which believe," Acts, xxi. 20. If many myriads of Jews had become believers, their numbers must certainly have increased greatly. "A great "company also of the priests were obedient to the faith," Acts, vi. 7. which is related as something very singular. Thus was the church of Christ first begun with the Jews.

§ 233.

BESIDES this, the disciples of Jesus were commanded to go into all the world, and to teach all the Gentiles. This at first seemed strange to them; for God, with the kind design of preserving the people of Israel from the idolatry of the Gentiles, and the abominations therewith connected, had so strictly forbidden the people of Israel all converse, and any kind of fellowship with the Gentiles; that an Israelite durst not even eat with a Gentile. Thus our Lord and Saviour found it necessary to deal in a particular manner with Peter, to make him willing to go to the Roman Centurion Cornelius. But when he, according to the commandment of the Lord, at last resolved to preach the Gospel to Cornelius the Centurion; the Holy Ghost fell upon all them who were assembled in Cornelius's house, and heard Peter's sermon. Whence he concluded, that no one ought to forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who had received the Holy Ghost as well as they. See Acts, x. 1, &c. But Peter, when he returned to Jerusalem, was sharply reproved on that account by those Jews, who were become believers in Christ. But when he had justified himself by relating the above, "they held their "peace, and glorified God, saying, then hath God also "to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life," Acts, xi. 1, 18.

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The persecutions of the disciples of Jesus at Jerusalem, did also occasion the believers to be dispersed abroad in Judea, and in Samaria, and among the Gentiles; and thereby the Gospel was spread farther and farther. God, besides this, sent Paul and Barnabas among the Gentiles; and their ministry was, amidst many and heavy sufferings, every where so blessed, that many of the Gentiles were converted, Acts, xiii. 1, &c. And from Rom. xvi. 1, &c. it is to be seen, that the servants of Christ among the Gentiles were many. Those believers, who dwelt in one place, were of course regulated into special congregations of Jesus, and furnished with pastors, teachers, bishops, and deacons. Yet were there also many believers scattered here and there in this and the other province, who did not live together in one place, where there was a congregation of Jesus. See 1 Pet. i. 1. But, because the Jews in those times resided in great numbers, even in the places that were yet heathen, and commonly had their synagogues there; therefore Paul, on his apostolical Journies, whenever he came into such a city, preached first to the Jews, and afterwards to the Gentiles also. The Gospel was therefore the power of God unto salvation to all those, whether Jews or Gentiles, that believed in it; and thus both the Jews and Gentiles who embraced and received the Gospel in faith, became *one* congregation of Jesus. Thus were our Saviour's words accomplished.

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold," (namely of the Jewish church) "them also I must bring, "and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold," (that is, one congregation of God) "and one shepherd," John, x. 16.

This also illustrates the words of Paul, Eph. ii. 11—18. That Christ abolished the enmity which had hitherto subsisted between the Jews and Gentiles, and of these twain made one new body. And Paul praises God, that now, by

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the prophetical Scriptures, and by his commandments, he had revealed this weighty point, respecting the call of the Gentiles, which had not been hitherto made manifest to the Jews, Rom. xvi. 25, 26.

§ 234.

LUKE relates of the state of the church at Jerusalem at that time, Acts, ii. 42. that "they continued stedfastly "in the apostles doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking "of bread, and in prayers." The meaning of which words is probably this, that they neglected no opportunity of hearing the counsel of God concerning their salvation, from the mouth of the apostles; and at the same time they were very benevolent and compassionate towards all those who stood in need of any assistance; that they also frequently visited one another; ate and drank in love together, and kept also the Lord's supper, and prayed partly each alone, and partly with each other. It is farther said, that "they had all things common; and sold their possessions "and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man "had need. And they continuing daily with one accord "in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, "did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart; "praising God, and having favour with all the people," Acts, ii. 44, &c. Likewise, "the multitude of them that "believed were of one heart, and of one soul; neither said "any of them, that aught of the things that he possessed "was his own, but they had all things common," Acts, iv. 32. "Great grace was upon them all, neither was "there any among them that lacked," Acts, iv. 33, 34.

Should any one conclude from hence, that the children of God ought to have nothing of their own, but must have every thing in common; he would conclude too much. For this neither Christ nor his apostles commanded. At

that time, it was, according to the circumſtances, good, yea, even neceſſary, that all things were in common. This mind muſt, however, be in all and each of the children of God, to lay down their lives for the brethren; how then ſhould they, in caſe of neceſſity, withhold their property from them. See § 225.

§ 235.

THE churches planted by Paul were at the beginning in a pleaſing courſe. In one place, they received his word, not as the word of man, but as the word of God; and ſuch indeed it was. In another place, they received him as an angel of God, nay, as Jeſus Chriſt; and he gives them the teſtimony, that they would have plucked out their eyes and have given them unto him. To the Corinthians he writes, "In every thing ye are enriched by Chriſt, in all "utterance, and in all knowledge, even as the teſtimony "of Chriſt was confirmed in you; ſo that ye come behind "in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jeſus "Chriſt," 1 Cor. i. 5. But when he returned with Barnabas to Antioch, ſome Jews began to teach, "Except "ye" (namely the believers from among the Gentiles) "be circumciſed after the manner of Moſes, ye cannot be "ſaved," Acts, xv. 1. Now the apoſtles had from the beginning taught, that "in the name of Jeſus, all that "believe on him ſhould receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and "ſalvation," See Acts, ii. 38. Chap. iv. 12. v. 31. x. 43; and Paul was certain, that this pretenſion of the Jews was a falſe doctrine. But for the ſake of others, he, together with Barnabas, and certain other brethren, ſubmitted to go up to Jeruſalem, and to treat with the apoſtles and elders upon this head. Here the matter was taken into mature deliberation. Peter was of opinion, that the faithful from among the Gentiles ought not to be burthened with the Jewiſh Laws. "Why tempt ye God (ſays he to the

the Pharisees, who were become believers, and who had signified, that they ought to circumcise believers from among the Gentiles, and to enjoin them to keep the law of Moses) "to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear."—— But James thought it would be however well, if the believers from among the Gentiles were to abstain from certain things, which were at that time so greatly repugnant to the people of the Jews, and to the believers from among the Jews. For Moses was however read in all cities, on the sabbath-days, in the Jewish synagogues, and had been for a long series of years preached. To these articles he reckoned in particular meats offered to idols, also the eating of blood, and that of things strangled. And whereas fornication was but too common at such feasts, as may be seen from Rev. ii. 14. 20. Numb. xxv. 1, 2.; therefore was fornication also especially mentioned. Now James having thus opened his mind, the whole church agreed with him; and thus the conclusion was made: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, "to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary "things, that ye abstain from meats offered to idols; and "from blood; and from things strangled; and from forni-"cation," Acts, xv. 28, 29. From this time, the Jews that had been baptized into the name of Christ, and who preached circumcision to the Gentiles as necessary unto salvation, ought to have changed their opinion; but many of them did not, but persisted in their own opinion, and occasioned thereby much perplexity among the souls converted from heathenism to Christ. And Paul was obliged to oppose them with great earnestness, as false teachers and lying apostles; which he also did with a godly zeal.

In the mean time, however, some of the brethren, who had been Jews before, kept their custom of giving one day a preference to another; of making a distinction between the various sorts of food, and the like. The brethren from amongst the Gentiles, to whom nothing had, by the

aſſembly of the apoſtles and elders at Jeruſalem, been commanded out of the law of Moſes, but the four above-mentioned articles, made neither between days nor food any diſtinction. All days were to them alike; and all food, that God had created for man, was alike to them. Here then Paul earneſtly exhorts his congregations to avoid the feaſts of idolators, of meat offered to idols, and fornication. But, with reſpect to days, and food, he gives them no commandment; but only admoniſhes them, who kept certain days, and did not eat one or another ſort of food, not to judge others, who thought and acted differently. But he exhorts ſuch as eſteemed every day alike, and made no conſcience of uſing ſuch kinds of food as had been forbidden the Jews, not to deſpiſe the former. But to each ſort he ſays, let every man be fully perſuaded in his own mind, and act according to his judgment. For ſhould any perſon look upon ſomething to be wrong, and yet do it; or ſhould he look upon ſomething to be right, and yet not do it; he ſins. "Whatſoever is not of faith" (in the before-mentioned ſenſe) "is ſin," Rom. xiv. 1—23.

All theſe things are of great importance; and we ſhould thank God, for having cauſed them to be recorded in the Bible for our benefit. For this is of force to this very hour, that a man ſhould not do any thing, about which he is doubtful whether it may not be ſin; or which he believes to be ſin; and, on the other hand, not to omit that which he looks upon to be right. For if he acts otherwiſe he ſins.

§ 236.

THIS therefore is an eſtabliſhed truth, that every one, in the New Teſtament, who believes in Jeſus Chriſt, let him be who he will; and if he had been one of the moſt miſerable ſlaves, becomes a member of the body of Chriſt, that is, of his church. (Eph. i. 22, 23.) The Scripture

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alſo confirms this: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, "there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor "female: for ye are all one in Chriſt Jeſus," Gal. iii. 28. "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," 1 Cor. xii. 13.

This was promiſed in the Old Teſtament, by the prophets: For inſtance, "And it ſhall come to paſs after-"ward, that I will pour out *my Spirit upon all fleſh*, and "*your ſons and your daughters* ſhall prophecy; your *old men* "ſhall dream dreams, your *young men* ſhall ſee viſions: "and *alſo upon the ſervants and upon the handmaids* in thoſe "days will I pour out my Spirit," Joel, iii. 28, 29.

But the whole multitude of ſuch who believe in Jeſus, call upon his name, and follow his doctrine and example, are in the holy Scripture repreſented to us under divers figures, which are however full of reality. For there it is, for inſtance, called,

(1.) The *Body* of Chriſt.

"The God of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt the Father of glory "hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be "the head over all things to *the church, which is his body*," Eph. i. 17. 22, 23. "*So we, being many, are one body in* "*Chriſt*, and every one members one of another," (for the ſervice thereof,) Rom. xii. 5. *He is the Head of the* "*body, the church*," Col. i. 18.

(2.) The *Houſe* or the Temple of God.

"*The Houſe of GOD is the church* of the living God," 1 Tim. iii. 15. "Ye alſo, as lively ſtones, *are built up a* "*ſpiritual houſe*, an holy prieſthood," 1 Pet. ii. 5.

The foundation this houſe ſtands upon is Jeſus Chriſt. "Other *foundation* can no man lay than that is laid, which "is *Jeſus Chriſt*," 1 Cor. iii. 11. When the Scripture ſays, "Ye are built upon the *foundation* of the apoſtles and

" prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-
" stone; in whom *all the building*, fitly framed together,
" groweth unto a holy *temple* in the Lord; in whom you
" are also builded together for an habitation of God
" through the Spirit," Eph. ii. 20, &c.

Thus the *foundation* of the apostles and prophets is nothing else but the doctrine of Christ crucified; and thus it harmonizes with the words of our Lord. " Upon this
" *Rock* I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall
" not prevail against it," Matt. xvi. 18. Peter had said,
" Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God," Matt. xvi. 16. Upon which our Saviour replied, " Upon this
" rock" (upon this confession of me that I am the Christ, the Son of the living God, or upon my self) " I will build
" my church."

(3.) The *flock of Jesus Christ*, whereof he is the chief shepherd and bishop, or overseer. In Paul's address to the elders of the church at Ephesus, the words are, " Take
" heed unto yourselves, and to all the *flock* over the
" which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers," (bishops) " to feed the *church of God*, which he hath pur-
" chased with his own blood," Acts, xx. 28.

The genuine sheep of his flock our Lord and Saviour describes himself, " My SHEEP hear my voice, and I know
" them; and they follow me. And I give unto them eter-
" nal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any
" man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which
" gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able
" to pluck them out of my Father's hand," John, x. 27, &c.

But himself he describes as the true shepherd. " I am
" the GOOD SHEPHERD, concerning whom the prophets
" have foretold," Isai. xl. 11, &c. Ezek. xxxiv. 11, &c.
" The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep," John, x. 11. And, " I am the good shepherd, and know my
" sheep,

" ſheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth " me, even ſo know I the Father; and I lay down my life " for the ſheep," John, x. 14.

When he ſays, " I know mine," it is thereby intimated, that he not only takes his flock under his general care, but that he thinks of each of his ſheep in particular, and takes ſuch care of each as its circumſtances require; as he has promiſed, in Ezek. xxxiv. 15, 16, " I will feed my *flock* — " ſaith the LORD God. I will ſeek that which was loſt, " and bring again that which was driven away, and will " bind that which was broken, and will ſtrengthen that " which was ſick;—and I will feed them with judg- " ment."

Happy are we that we have ſuch a good ſhepherd! and happy the people to whom we can boldly ſay, with Peter, " By his ſtripes ye were healed. For ye were as " ſheep going aſtray, but are now returned unto the " Shepherd and biſhop of your ſouls," 1 Pet. ii. 25. " He " is the great ſhepherd of the ſheep," Heb. xiii. 20. And, " the chief ſhepherd," 1 Pet. v. 4. Yea, " the one " (only) Shepherd," Ezek. xxxiv. 23.

§ 237.

THE church, or congregation of Chriſt is alſo called,

(4. *The kingdom of Chriſt*, but which is a kingdom of the croſs. When David and the other prophets ſpeak of the Meſſiah (and of him they ſpeak much and often), they then, among other things, deſcribe him, as a great, powerful, mighty, righteous, gracious, and very wiſe King; and to this purpoſe, make uſe of the phraſes and expreſſions at that time uſual. This may in part have given occaſion to the notion prevalent during the days of Chriſt's walk upon earth, concerning a temporal kingdom of the Meſſiah; which the Jews might alſo eaſily fall into, becauſe the promiſes, given for the time of the Old Teſtament, did almoſt

all of them imply an external ſtate of happineſs. To ſay nothing, that the natural propenſity of the Jewiſh people after worldly grandeur, and the heavy circumſtances in which they were under the Roman yoke, might eaſily ſtir up in them a wiſh after a temporal king who ſhould deliver them from it.

Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt oppoſed, both by his conduct and doctrine, theſe erroneous notions concerning a temporal kingdom of the Meſſiah. According to Phil. ii. 2. he humbled himſelf ſo deeply as to appear in the form of a ſervant: now ſervants were at that time commonly bond ſlaves. His journies he performed on foot; and when he once rode, he took the foal of an aſs, on which no man had ever yet ſat; and even that was not his own. This could make no ſplendid appearance; for he had not ſo much as a ſaddle for the purpoſe; but ſome of his diſciples, pulling off their garments, laid it on the back of the beaſt inſtead of a ſaddle. His moſt intimate friends were, for the moſt part, mean and illiterate fiſhermen; theſe were always about him, accompanied him on his journies, and were favoured with his confidence. With thoſe who were deſpiſed by men of reputation (ſinners and publicans) he had moſt willingly to do, though he knew that he ſhould be deſpiſed and reproached on that account. Obſerving once, that the people intended to make him a king by force, after his having fed ſome thouſands of perſons with a few loaves, he withdrew from them. In ſhort, he choſe a mean and low condition, and he himſelf went willingly to meet his bitter ſufferings and death on the croſs. From all which it is evident, that by his whole conduct he endeavoured to refute the erroneous notions of a temporal kingdom of the Meſſiah.

His doctrine was even as much againſt them. We need only read the fifth, ſixth, and ſeventh chapters of Matthew, and we find there a plan which is in no way ſuited to a worldly kingdom. When his diſciples, who ſtill foſtered and retained the prejudice which they had in common with other

other Jews, concerning a worldly kingdom which Christ was soon to set up, and strove with each other about the pre-eminence which one or another expected in it, he did indeed tell them, that they should meet with a great recompence after this life, and sit upon thrones; yet at the same time he also testified to them, that they should not harbour a thought of a kingdom in this world. He said unto them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, "and they that exercise authority upon them are called be-"nefactors. *But ye shall not be so*; but he that is greatest "among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is "chief as he that doth serve—for I am among you as he "that serveth," Luke, xxii. 24, &c. And before Pilate our Saviour made this explicit confession, "*My kingdom is* "*not of this world*; if my kingdom were of this world, "then would my servants fight, that I should not be de-"livered to the Jews: But now is my kingdom not from "hence," John, xviii. 36.

Now, if it be evident from hence, that the kingdom of Christ is no temporal kingdom, the question then naturally arises, Wherein does it consist? Our Saviour said to Pilate, by way of reply to his question, "Art thou a king "then? Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I "born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I "should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of "the truth heareth my voice," John, xviii. 37.

How strangely soever Pilate behaved upon this reply, and as it were in vexation, said, "What is truth?" (of which we are not now speaking), yet in this lies the whole ground-plan of the kingdom of Christ. Our Saviour preached the truth, that is, the Gospel, and he also commanded his disciples to preach the Gospel. He that receiveth the Gospel in faith, becomes a child of God, and the Father, who is in heaven, delivers him from the power of darkness, and "translates him into the kingdom of his dear Son;" according to Paul's expression, Col. i. 13. So then his sins

are

are forgiven him, the anxious fear ceases, and he can rejoice in God his Saviour. Concerning this kingdom it is said, "The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, "and joy in the Holy Ghost," Rom. xiv. 17.

Thus Jesus Christ becomes his King and his Lord; and he becomes a subject of his, serving him in the holiness and righteousness that is acceptable with him, without fear, all the days of his life. Now, if we take the whole multitude of those who have, in this way, received Christ, loving, honouring, and serving him as their Lord and King, unto whom they owe themselves with body and soul; this is the kingdom of Christ. But that this kingdom of Christ is a kingdom of the cross, is not only plain from experience, but it is thereunto appointed. Our Saviour tells his disciples, "*Ye shall be hated* of all men, for my name's sake," Mark, xiii. 13. And it is again said, "*Ye shall be hated* "of all men for my name's sake," Matt. x. 22. In another place he says, "Because ye are not of the world, but "I have chosen you out of the world, *therefore the world* "*hateth you*," John, xv. 19.

The apostles took it for granted, that "we must through "much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God," Acts, xiv. 22. See also 1 Pet. iv. 12, &c.

Indeed there are still other figures under which the church of Christ is represented. Our Saviour, for instance, compares it to a grain of mustard-seed, Matth. xiii. 31.; to leaven, Matth. xiii. 33.; to a treasure hid in a field, Matth. xiii. 44.; to a vineyard, Matth. xxi. 33, &c.; and we do well, not only diligently to search out the meaning of these characters, but also consider the cause of them. Especially we are led to observe, that the church is also called the *Bride of Christ*. Even in the Old Testament the Lord said, "At that day" (that of the New Covenant) "thou "shalt call me Ishi," (my husband) — "for I will betroth "thee unto me for ever; yea I will betroth thee unto me "in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kind-

"neſs, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto "me in faithfulneſs, and thou ſhalt know the LORD," Hoſea, ii. 16. 19, 20.

When the Lord appeared in the fleſh, and entered upon his miniſterial office, John the Baptiſt teſtified to all the people of Iſrael, that "HE was the Bridegroom, and "had the Bride," John, iii. 29. But that the church, or congregation of God, is to be underſtood by the bride of Chriſt, is plainly to be ſeen by the words of Paul, Eph. v. 23—32. where alſo this union between Chriſt and his church is called "a great myſtery." The reaſon thereof is this, the union of the Maker of every creature, who is the ſupporter and upholder of all things by the word of his power, and of poor ſinful human creatures, who have merited nothing but puniſhment, but do now believe on him through his grace, is a matter tranſcending all our comprehenſion, and cannot poſſibly be fathomed. For our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſo loved us before we loved him, as to give himſelf up unto death for us, certainly now loveth us no leſs, and retains this love towards us unto all eternity. The church, which hath in him redemption through his blood, viz. the forgiveneſs of ſins, loveth our Saviour reciprocally more than herſelf, and above all; and every member of it would rather die than let go its hold of him. If, therefore, a bridegroom loves his bride, and a bride her bridegroom, ever ſo heartily, ever ſo tenderly, yet this love is only a ſhadow, and a faint image of that intimate union of love between Chriſt and his church, which exceeds all our comprehenſion.

§ 238.

Now, though it appears from hence, that no one is, in the proper ſenſe, a member of the church of Jeſus, but he who through faith becomes a child of God, yet the Lord our Saviour plainly informed us, by a peculiar parable, in which he ſhews us beforehand how it would be with his king-

dom

dom or church for the future; that in the midſt of, and near his church, wicked and ungodly men would ariſe, through Satan's inſtigation, and would aſſume the character of members of his church. According to his own expoſition, the parable which we read, Matth. xiii. 24, &c. is to be underſtood thus: Jeſus Chriſt had a field; that was, the world, or the earth. This he ſowed with good ſeed, theſe were the children of the kingdom, or the proper members of the church of Jeſus; that is, men who live in the faith of the Son of God. Whilſt men ſlept, the devil came and ſowed tares amongſt the wheat; that is, he cauſed ſuch ſort of people to ariſe in the church of Jeſus, who not only did wrong as to themſelves, but alſo occaſioned an offence, and were hurtful to others. Children of the wicked one (wicked men). The ſervants of the houſholder (Jeſus Chriſt) aſk him, Whether they ſhould not weed out the tares? No, ſaid the Lord, leſt at the ſame time, whilſt you are weeding out the tares, ye root up the wheat alſo with them. Let both grow together until the harveſt. But how will it then be with the wheat and tares at the time of harveſt, that is, at the end of the world? The tares will be plucked up by the reapers (the angels), gathered together, and caſt into the fire, where there ſhall be wailing and gnaſhing of teeth. Which words indicate the condition of the damned; for inſtance, Matt. xxii. 13. chap. xxiv. 51. But the wheat will be gathered into our Saviour's granary; and of this ſays our Saviour, "Then ſhall the righteous "ſhine forth as the ſun, in the kingdom of their Father," Matt. xiii. 36, &c.

§ 239.

THIS has actually taken place in the church of Jeſus, as the Lord predicted beforehand. In the beginning it conſiſted of the multitude of them only who were become believers in Jeſus; and the diſciples of Jeſus watched that none

none might approach, and be joined to them; but those whose intentions were upright and sincere towards Jesus Christ, and his great work. When Ananias, and his wife Sapphira, with insincere views, acted deceitfully, and lied to Peter, they were instantly punished with death, Acts, v. 1. &c.; and by this means "great fear came upon all "the church, and upon as many as heard these things.— "And of the rest durst no man join himself to them," (for fear of a like punishment) "and believers were the more "added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women," Acts, v. 11, &c. In this manner, by the watchfulness of the apostles, were the tares at that time kept from among the wheat. Soon afterwards, Philip preached in a city of the Samaritans, and many, both men and women, believed and were baptized; amongst which there was also one Simon, who had been hitherto a sorcerer. When Peter and John came to Samaria, and prayed, with imposition of hands over these new converts, they received the Holy Ghost. Then Simon proffered the apostles money, saying, "Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay "hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said "unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou "hast thought that the gift of God may be purcased with "money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter," (the word of the Gospel) "for thy heart is not right in the "sight of God," &c. Acts, viii. 5, &c. Thus it was also at that time prevented, that this tare did not remain amongst the wheat, nor grow with it.

Had things remained in this laudable and necessary state, and had that watchfulness (which was certainly very agreeable to the Lord), been continued every where, and at all times, then the congregation of Jesus would have been preserved from the intrusion of insincere people. But when the people slept, and did not keep up this watchfulness, the devil gained his aim, that he brought people into the congregation who were not upright. Without doubt, this enemy

enemy of God and man believed, that thus he ſhould moſt effectually prevent the good, and as effectually forward the evil: and he has, alas! ſucceeded. Yet this his wicked craftineſs was not manifeſt, until the ſeed ſowed by Chriſt ſprung up, and brought forth fruit, Matth. xiii. 26.; that is, when the church of Jeſus was already grown up, and diſplayed its beauty.

Accordingly, this condition of the church of Jeſus, in which wheat and tares remained together, began as early as the times of the apoſtles. There was then, for inſtance, an Alexander the copperſmith, probably one of the falſe apoſtles againſt whom Paul complains, 2 Tim. iv. 14, 15.; and a Diotrephes, of whom John ſpeaks, 3 Epiſt. ver. 9. It certainly ſounds lamentably, when that ancient apoſtle ſays, "I wrote unto the church, but Diotrephes, who loveth to "have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not,— "prating againſt us with malicious words. And not con- "tent therewith, neither doth he receive the brethren," (who, for the ſake of Jeſus, went forth to preach the Go- ſpel freely to the Gentiles, ver. 7.), "and forbiddeth them "that would, and caſteth them out of the church." He conſequently muſt have had ſome power. It did not ſtop at individuals; but there were very many, who partly in doctrine, and partly in life and converſation, deviated, during the apoſtolic times, from the Goſpel of Chriſt. Paul was diſtreſſed, that people came amongſt the Chriſtians, who had been gathered by him from amongſt the heathen, and were regulated into little congregations, who perplexed them, perverted the Goſpel of Chriſt, and, beſide the faith in Chriſt, would introduce circumciſion, as neceſſary to ſalvation; and, notwithſtanding this, called themſelves apoſtles of Chriſt. John had people before him, who boaſted of an higher knowledge, and of a ſingular fellowſhip with God, and yet walked in darkneſs, ſlighted the commandments of God, did not love the brethren;—and againſt theſe was his firſt epiſtle principally levelled. James oppoſed perverſe people,

people, who boasted, in the church, of faith in Christ, and yet lived in scandalous sins; and testified unto them with great earnestness, that this could not be the true faith in Christ, and that, if they had not a faith, which evidenced itself by works they would certainly be lost. In brief, we see plainly by the apostolic writings, that their field of wheat was not without its tares.

§ 240.

YET we must not think on this account that the church of the apostolic times was without faithful care. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who had ordained some apostles, gave also some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, Eph. iv. 11. That which here relates to the apostles, has already occurred, § 231. The prophets had at that time still many revelations concerning things to come. And, indeed, they had a sufficient reason from the word of Christ, "When HE, the Spirit of truth is come, he will "guide you into all truth—and HE will shew you things "to come," John, xvi. 13. to expect something of this nature: otherwise their vocation was to "speak unto men "to edification, and exhortation, and comfort," 1 Cor. xiv. 3. The evangelists were the assistants of the apostles, especially in preaching the Gospel; as Timothy, for instance, 2 Tim. iv. 5. The apostles, prophets, and evangelists were to minister every where; whereas the pastors and teachers were bound to this and the other church in particular. To these were also added deacons, whose special province it was to take care of the poor, Acts, vi. 1, &c. Sometimes mention is made of the elders only, and they are also called bishops, Acts, xx. 28. and ver. 17. To these the charge was given: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the "flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you over-"seers to feed the church of God, which he hath pur-"chased with his own blood." Thus saith Peter likewise,

"The

" The elders, which are among you, I exhort, who " am alſo an elder, and a witneſs of the ſufferings of " Chriſt, and alſo a partaker of the glory that ſhall be " revealed: feed the flock of God, which is among you, " taking the overſight thereof, not by conſtraint, but wil- " lingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind: neither " as being lords over God's heritage, but being enſamples " to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd ſhall appear, " ye ſhall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away," 1 Pet. v. 1, &c.

All theſe ſervants of Jeſus in the church of Chriſt were called upon: " Has any one a miniſtry, let him wait on " his miniſtering," Rom. xii. 7. And Paul ſpeaks to all his fellow-labourers in the following words: " We then, " as workers together with him, beſeech you that ye receive " not the grace of God in vain—giving no offence," (to any man) " in any thing, that the *miniſtry* be not blamed; " but in all things approving ourſelves the miniſters of God, " in much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, " in ſtripes, in impriſonments, in tumults, in labours, in " watchings, in faſtings, by pureneſs, by knowledge, by " long-ſuffering, by kindneſs, by the Holy Ghoſt, by love " unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, " by the armour of righteouſneſs on the right hand, and on " the left, by honour and diſhonour, by evil report and " good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, " and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as " chaſtened, and not killed; as ſorrowful, yet always re- " joicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having no- " thing, and yet poſſeſſing all things," 2 Cor. vi. 1, &c.

§ 241.

FROM the Epiſtles of the Apoſtles, which are a part of the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, we can ſee beſt what was, at that time, the chief aim in the church of Chriſt of its

its servants. Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus, in particular, afford us much light in this respect: for they were written with the design of shewing both these servants, who were so intimately connected with Paul, how they were to walk in the house of God; that is, in the church of Jesus; and what they were, in all points, to observe in it. The pure doctrine of the Gospel was the first point, which the apostle so much the rather recommends to them; as even at that time many persons arose in the church, who introduced all kinds of perverse doctrines. See 1 Tim. i. 3, &c. 2 Tim. i. 13, &c. chap. ii. 2, 15, &c. chap. iii. 13, &c. A holy and godly life, in conformity to the Gospel, and to the grace of God, which bringeth salvation and happiness, which are communicated unto us in and through Christ, was the second point which was earnestly inculcated in the church. See for an example, Tit. ii. 11, &c. chap. iii. 4, &c. In a word, what Luther says; "Where the word of God is "taught plainly and purely, and we also live holily, as the "children of God, according to it; there is the name of "God sanctified." This is what they then had in view in the church. They did not content themselves with mere public preaching, but they made it their endeavour rightly to divide the word of truth, and to give to every one his food in due season. What is to be propounded in particular to the aged, what to the young, what to husbands, what to wives, what to parents, what to children, what to widows, what to virgins, what to youths, what to elders, what to deacons, what to masters, what to servants, what to subjects, what to the poor, what to the rich, what to the erroneous, what to the disorderly, &c.—all this the apostles point out, but Paul especially, not only in his Epistles to Timothy and to Titus, but also in his other Epistles to the churches.

§ 242.

IN respect to church discipline, the apostles had this prerogative, that sometimes they severely chastened persons, even by corporal inflictions. Hymeneus and Alexander, who put away faith and a good conscience, and concerning faith made shipwreck, Paul delivered unto Satan, that they might be chastened (perhaps with heavy sicknesses) and learn not to blaspheme, 1 Tim. i. 19, 20. The incestuous person at Corinth, Paul, in the name and with the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, 1 Cor. v. 3, &c. See § 108. Yea, our Lord Jesus Christ himself took it in hand, and chastened those in the church, who were refractory against his doctrine, and slighted it: for example, at Corinth, § 147. § 228. For the rest, it was an established principle with them, that "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine "of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine "of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there "come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive "him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:" (or do not greet him with the salutation of brotherly love and fellowship) "for he that biddeth him God speed, is "partaker of his evil deeds," 2 John, 9, &c. "Know "ye not, that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new "lump," 1 Cor. v. 6, 7. That is, "Put away from "among yourselves that wicked person," 1 Cor. v. 6, 7. This is explained by Paul, "If any man, that is called a "brother," (and will be a fellow member of the church) "be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, "or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one, no "not so much as to eat," 1 Cor. v. 11. "If any man "teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words;

"even

"even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the "doctrine, which is according to godliness; he is proud, "knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes "of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil "surmisings, *from such withdraw thyself*," 1 Tim. vi. 3, &c. also Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

§ 243.

FROM hence it is evident, what is signified by the Keys, which either bind or loose, and which the Lord hath given, not to Peter only, but to all his other disciples, and to their followers likewise. He said to Peter, "I will give unto "thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever "thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and "whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in "heaven," Matt. xvi. 19. The meaning of these words is to be seen by that which HE said afterwards to his disciples in general: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose-"soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and "whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained," John, xx. 22, 23. Yea, it is to be concluded from the connexion of the discourse of Jesus, Matt. xviii. 15, &c. that our Lord Jesus Christ has given this power in general to his churches upon earth. For thus he speaks: "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; 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: 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. Verily, I say unto you, "whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in "heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be "loosed in heaven."

The words of Jesus, "let him be unto thee as an heathen "man, and a publican," are of great import: for a heathen was excluded from all communion with the then church of God; and a Jew did not even dare to eat with a heathen: but the publican, who farmed the toll of the Romans, and in consequence thereof extorted more from their brethren, the Jews, than belonged to them, were looked upon as the heathen. That in the application of these words of Jesus a just distinction is to be made, we need not prove here.

§ 244.

WITH respect to the meetings, there was a difference between the congregation of Christ gathered from amongst the Jews, and that gathered from amongst the Gentiles. The Jewish converts to Christ at Jerusalem were daily and with one accord in the temple; where, every morning after nine o'clock, and every evening after three o'clock, sacrifice was made, and the rest of the divine service thereunto appertaining was performed: and in this practice, it is probable, they continued until the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the temple there, Acts, ii. 46, chap. xxi. 20, &c. But besides this, they broke bread from house to house (this was probably their Lord's supper, 1 Cor. x. 16.) and did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, Acts, ii. 46, 47. In other places, where the Jews had their synagogues, and in them held their assemblies, the Jewish converts to Christ continued to attend. But Paul, having been at Corinth, where for a while he visited the synagogue, and taught in it, and also testified publicly to every man, that Jesus was the Messiah, or Christ, and meeting with a violent opposition ("they opposed them-"selves and blasphemed") departed from them, after telling them his mind emphatically, and so began separate meetings in the house of a pious man contiguous to the synagogue, and this he continued to do for a year and six months,

Acts,

Acts, xviii. 1, &c. Afterwards he taught at Ephesus for three months together in the synagogue; but when some spoke evil before the multitude, of the way he preached (that is, concerning the faith in Christ) he withdrew from them, and separated the disciples (that is, such as having been baptized into the name of Christ, were converted to him), and began a meeting of his own, in which he daily discoursed both with Gentiles and Jews; which practice he continued for two years together, Acts, xix. 9, 10. At Troas the disciples came together to break bread, and continued their meeting all night; upon which occasion Paul discoursed to them, continuing his speech even till break of day, and then proceeded on his journey, Acts, xx. 6, &c. This was also in a private house. At Rome he was a prisoner for two whole years, that is, he was bound by a chain to a soldier, who was the guard over him; but yet in his own hired house, wherein he preached to all that came unto him the kingdom of God, and taught those things, which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no man forbidding him, Acts, xxviii. 30, 31. This was the situation and state of assemblies of the church of Christ in the days of the apostles. The promise of our Saviour, "Where "two or three are gathered together in my name, there "am I in the midst of them," Matt. xviii. 20. would be of great comfort to them. And they were exhorted to be diligent frequenters of the assemblies: "Let us consider "one another to provoke unto love and to good works; "not *forsaking the assembling* of ourselves together, as the "manner of some is; but exhorting one another," Heb. x. 24, 25. "Let the word of Christ dwell in" (among) "you richly in all wisdom: teaching and admonishing one "another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, sing-"ing with grace in your hearts to the Lord," Col. iii. 16.

But the meetings of the congregation of those days were conducted in a very simple manner. Paul writes to the Corinthians: "How is it then, brethren, when ye come

"together every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, "hath a tongue," (that is, he speaks in a foreign language) "hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things "be done to edifying. Let the prophets" (that is, such as speak unto edification, and exhortation, and comfort, 1 Cor. xiv. 3.) "speak two or three, and let the others "judge. If any thing be revealed to another," (that is, if so be that this or another thing be by the Holy Ghost made plain, or disclosed to him that sitteth by,) "let the "first hold his peace: For ye may all prophesy, one by one, "that all may learn, and all may be comforted. Let your "women keep silence in the churches, for it is not per-"mitted unto them to speak—these are the commandments "of the Lord—let all things be done decently, and in "order," 1 Cor. xiv. 26, &c.

§ 245.

AMONGST many things, which might be said of the church of Christ of that time, two points only remain yet to be observed. The first has a reference to the preaching among the heathen, and the second to the elders and teachers.

Our Saviour, even before his death on the cross, had said to his disciples; "Ye have not chosen me, but I have "chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and "bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain," John, xv. 16. And, after his resurrection, he said to them, "Go "ye into all the world, and *preach the Gospel to every* "*creature*," (that is, to all the heathen) Mark, xvi. 15. "Go and *teach all nations*—and lo, I am with you alway, "even unto the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

But this the church of Christ did not so understand, as if this had been commanded the apostles alone, to the exclusion of all other persons. Neither indeed could it be so taken, because the words are annexed, "Lo, I am with "you *alway, even unto the end of the world*." For, if the preaching

preaching among the heathen was to have ceased with the apostles, how could our Saviour have said, "I am alway "with you, *even unto the end of the world?*"

But that the church of Christ has believed, that the preaching among the heathen was to continue always (yet all in a way conformable to the mind of Jesus) the following words of John indicate: "Beloved, thou dost faithfully "whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers, "who have borne witness of thy charity before the church; "whom, if thou bring forward on their journey after a "godly sort, thou shalt do well. Because that for his "name's sake, they went forth taking nothing of the Gen-"tiles" (that is, they preached the Gospel without charge, as Paul did likewise, 1 Cor. ix. 18.) "we therefore ought "to receive such, that we might be fellow-helpers to the "truth," 3 John, 5, &c.

These were not the apostles, but other brethren, who found themselves moved to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, or Heathen. The words, "ye should shew forth "the praises of him, who hath called you out of darkness "into his marvellous light," 1 Pet. ii. 9. do certainly speak not alone concerning the ministry in the Gospel among the heathen, but neither do they exclude it. If the church of Christ, after the apostolic times, had not believed that the words of Christ, "Preach the Gospel to every "creature," were obligatory upon them; many nations, who were afterwards brought to Christ, would be yet sitting in darkness, and know nothing of Christ. And whereas there are many thousands of the heathen, who to this very day have heard nothing of the Gospel; therefore our Saviour's words, "Preach the Gospel to every creature," continues for the same reason now, as then, in great esteem in his church.

§ 246.

With respect to the elders and teachers of the particular churches, they have already been spoken of, as to their own persons, § 240. But what was expected of the churches and their members with respect to their elders, teachers, and labourers? Paul says, "Know them which labour "among ye, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish "you, and esteem them very highly in love for their "work's sake; and be at peace among yourselves," 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. "Let the elders that rule well be counted "worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in "the word and doctrine," 1 Tim. v. 17. "Obey them "that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for "they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, "that they may do it with joy, and not with grief," Heb. xiii. 17.

Paul also begged of the churches whom he served, to think diligently of him before the Lord: "Pray always "with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, watching "thereunto with all perseverance, and supplication for all "saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, "that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the "mystery of the Gospel," Eph. vi. 18, 19. See also Col. iv. 3. 2 Thess. iii. 1.

And thus the members of the church in general are to pray for their teachers. See § 227. He exhorts the Galatians: "Let him, that is taught in the word, communicate "unto him that teacheth, in all good things," Gal. vi. 6. For although he, for his own person, declares to the elders of Ephesus, "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, "or apparel: Yea, you yourselves know, that these hands "have ministred unto my necessities, and to them that "were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that "so labouring ye ought to support the weak; and to re-"member the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is

"more

"more blessed to give than to receive," Acts, xx. 33, &c.; yet did he not on that account deny, that even "the "Lord has ordained that they, which preach the Gospel, "should live of the Gospel," 1 Cor. ix. 14. But he served the Ephesians, the Thessalonians, and the Corinthians, with the Gospel freely, for this reason, that he might be the more useful to these poor Gentiles; but believed, however, at the same time, that he should not have done wrong, if he had taken of them, that which was necessary for his support. But whereas the church at Philippi assisted him, 2 Cor. xi. 9. and he himself had earned so much as to have had no occasion to take any thing at Ephesus, Corinth, and Thessalonica; it was the more agreeable to him.

§ 247.

Unto that which hath been said concerning the state of the church, or congregation of Christ, in the apostolic times, § 239, &c. we have still to add the following. John, who lived the longest of any of the apostles of the Lord, has, in his Revelation, written that, which he had received from the mouth of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the seven churches, or to their bishops, Rev. ii. 1, &c. It is now beyond dispute, that our Saviour had in these Epistles a further view than to that time; and that they were written for doctrine to us, and have been preserved for our benefit. It is however equally certain, that these seven churches, unto which Christ, by his servant John, had written, did really exist. If these letters are read with due attention, we may plainly perceive in what condition the church of Christ then was. Our Lord Jesus Christ greatly commends the Angel of the church at Ephesus, but at the same time bewails his having left his first love. Paul had been before afraid of this. For he told the elders of this church, "I know this, that after my departure shall "grievous

" grievous wolves enter in among you, not ſparing the " flock. Alſo of your own ſelves ſhall men ariſe, ſpeaking " perverſe things, to draw away diſciples after them," Acts, xx. 29, 30. And this, among other reaſons, proved an occaſion for their departure from their firſt love.—The Angel of the church at Smyrna was, with that church, under manifold ſufferings, and was forced to endure much, eſpecially from thoſe who would be looked upon as Jews; that is, confeſſors of the truth, but were not. He had beſides many ſufferings to await, but was richly comforted by Jeſus Chriſt.—The Angel of the church at Pergamus had, with that church, glorious praiſe. Yet there were people among them, who held the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to caſt a ſtumbling-block before the children of Iſrael, to eat things ſacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So had they alſo them that held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, who probably had been ſeduced by the former. This could at that time be eaſily effected. For when a perſon had been converted to Chriſt, and ſtill lived amongſt his unconverted friends and relations, it might naturally occur, that one or another of theſe friends and relations would give him an invitation to the entertainments or feaſts uſual upon the ſacrifices offered to idols; but theſe were connected with paſtimes, and ſcandalous fornication. Now this had, at the firſt ſynod of the church of Chriſt, at Jeruſalem, been expreſsly forbidden the Chriſtians from among the Gentiles. But here people were found, who, notwithſtanding that, perſiſted in it; and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was not pleaſed that they tolerated ſuch in the church.—The Angel of the church at Thyatira was alſo commended on account of his works, his love, his ſervice, his faith, and his growth in that which is good: yet, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was diſſatisfied with him, becauſe he ſuffered a certain Jezebel, who called herſelf a propheteſs, to teach; who then ſeduced the members of the congregation to commit fornication, and to eat things ſacrificed unto idols,

idols.——The Angel of the church at Sardis was in no good ſtate; for he had a name to live, and yet was dead. There were but few perſons in Sardis, who had not defiled themſelves. The reſt had either no life from God, or were like people who are ready to expire. For which reaſon an earneſt admonition and reproof is given unto him.——The Angel of the church at Philadelphia had our Saviour's complacency, and obtained glorious promiſes: But he of Laodicea is neither cold nor hot, and yet ſelf-conceited. He ſaid, I am rich, and increaſed with goods, and have need of nothing; not knowing that he was wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked. Our Saviour gave him a ſharp reproof, but ſtill afforded him and his church the hopes of much grace, if they would be converted, and hear his voice.

§ 248.

THIS was the ſtate of the church, or congregation of Chriſt, at the time when the ſervice of it by the apoſtles was nearly at an end. The wheat and the tares ſtood together; nor was it pleaſing to the Lord our Saviour that ſo little zeal for excluding the wicked out of the church, prevailed in the hearts of the elders and biſhops of it. If he could rejoice over one church, he was the more diſpleaſed at the other; and he always ſought for the chief fault in the angels of the churches.

After that the apoſtles of Jeſus Chriſt, and their faithful aſſiſtants in the propagation of the Goſpel, and in founding of Chriſtian churches, were removed into the joy of their Lord, the tares obtain an evident ſuperiority over the wheat. Many faithful and zealous men of God were found in the primitive church, who were concerned to maintain the doctrine of Jeſus, and of his apoſtles, and to withſtand the torrent of corruption which was breaking in upon it. The ſevere perſecutions alſo contributed greatly to rouſe the

Christians, from time to time, from their sleepiness, and to cleanse the churches from their false and hypocritical members. But in general we must say, that with the multitude of those who adopted Christianity, the number also of the insincere and unconverted members of the church increased: and this gave occasion to a continual increasing departure from the primitive grace, love, and simplicity, in the churches.

The teachers and overseers thereof began now to ascribe to themselves many prerogatives beyond those of the other brethren; and thus the distinction between the laity and clergy took place. Those ecclesiastics were much more set upon maintaining and exercising an external authority and state over the churches, than to serve them in humility and lowliness, to feed them with pure Gospel, to make the state of their hearts an object of their care and cure, and to approve themselves as ensamples to the flock. Amongst the ecclesiastics themselves arose envy and ambition. The dignities of bishops, arch-bishops, metropolitans, and patriarchs, which were by degrees introduced, increased this calamity, and the pride and arrogance of the more dignified clergy, proved the source of the degeneracy which prevailed every where.

By the accession of potentates and rulers, in the fourth and following centuries, this evil was not diminished but increased. The bishops endeavoured to make use of the supreme magistrates, more for the promotion of their own views and state, than for planting and establishing true churches of Jesus. Christianity, which had been persecuted hitherto, now became dominant, and many heathens of rank were obliged to confess the doctrine of Christ outwardly (and this they did, but without any conviction in their own hearts), because they would not lose their offices at court, or in the army, &c. or would obtain such offices. Whole nations were compelled, partly by force, and partly by circumstances, to become Christians; and many thousands

ſands were baptized without knowing what benefits of God were to be communicated thereby, and to what they thereby bound themſelves.

The biſhops, who ſhould have ſtemmed this torrent of corruption, fell into the moſt unhappy contentions one with another, partly about theological opinions, and partly about rank and precedency, and external prerogatives; to the greateſt offence of their congregations, they anathemized one another, and at length cauſed open ſchiſms in the church. The potentates were not able to reſtrain this miſchief; and the councils at which human ſtate and prejudices had the aſcendency, and where little room was left for the Spirit of God, contributed more to the widening the diviſions in the church, and to render its wounds incurable, than to put an end to, and heal them.

It was no better in reſpect to doctrine. Very early ſuch perſons were entruſted with the miniſtry, who ſignalized themſelves more by their gifts, than by the grace and knowledge of the ſalutary doctrine of Chriſt. Many of them had been profeſſors of rhetoric and philoſophy, whilſt they were yet Heathens. Theſe retained, if not all, yet many of thoſe maxims which they had before imbibed; and they endeavoured either to unite them with the doctrine of Jeſus and of his diſciples, or even to expound and preach the doctrine of Jeſus and of his apoſtles, according to the ſyſtems they had brought with them into the church. Whoever has read the ſo called Fathers of the church, and can judge of them, by the Bible; what has been here ſaid, will not appear at all ſtrange to him. It was alſo not unuſual with theſe people to form their diſcourſes, as much as poſſible, in the meetings, according to thoſe rules of oratory which they had practiſed as Heathens. From hence aroſe, as it has been already intimated, a great variety of unprofitable queſtions, and ſuch as engendered ſtrife, which were only multiplied at ſynods and councils; whilſt the ſimplicity reigning in the doctrine of Jeſus, and in the Scriptures of

the apostles, was at length almost lost. The doctrine of the all-sufficient propitiatory sacrifice made for us; the doctrine of the deep depravity of man, and of his total inability to deliver himself from it; the doctrine of faith in the name of Jesus Christ, whereby we receive forgiveness of sins; how, through him, we become children of God, and partakers of the Holy Ghost; how our hearts love much, because many sins have been forgiven us; how we, through him, and on account of his blood, which he shed for us, have escaped the wrath to come; how, in the knowledge of Christ, all the power requisite for a godly life and conversation is bestowed upon us; how we, in him, and by faith on him, have the sure and certain hope of everlasting life.——These are such points which stand indeed plainly in the Scriptures, but which have been gradually obscured in Christendom. Neither did they abide by the commands of Christ and of his apostles, but urged human traditions, just as the Scribes and Pharisees had done before them, Matt. xxiii. 16, &c.

That the atonement made by Jesus Christ, whereby we are made acceptable to God in his Son, the beloved, has been rendered obscure to mankind, arose incontestably from hence, that sometimes one thing, and sometimes another, has been recommended to them, to quiet their consciences, instead of directing them immediately to Christ; who thus invites us, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are "heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." "Take my "yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and "lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls," Matt. xi. 28, 29.

In this case it went just as the prophet expresses it:

"My people have committed two evils; they have for-"saken me, the fountain of living waters; and hewed "them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no wa-"ter," Jer. ii. 13.

§ 249.

§ 249.

IN the manner briefly above described, the *Christian religious constitutions*, as we see them at this day, arose out of the congregations of Jesus, which the apostles and their successors had established. But there is undoubtedly a great difference between *living congregations of Jesus*, and *Christian religions*.

It is well known, that to forming a religion, nothing is required but that the members thereof outwardly acknowledge some system of doctrine; and are agreed together about the mode of divine worship. Now, if such a company receive the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the Word of God, and own Jesus to be the Messiah and Saviour of the world; this is then a *Christian religion*. Such a religious constitution has of course more or fewer regulations tending to the promotion of truth and godliness; but we shall find amongst the most of the religious societies the following. They baptize the children of such parents as are called after the name of Christ. To these children they give afterwards, as soon as they are able to comprehend and learn any thing, instructions concerning the Christian doctrine; when their understanding becomes somewhat riper, they admit them to the Holy Communion; after they have given them some farther instructions concerning it. With all such who go to the same church, they have public meetings; in which they sing, pray, read, and discourse to them. None are excluded from the Lord's Supper, which is administered to the people, who have first signified their intention to the minister for that end, except such as are fallen into gross sins. If people choose to enter into the state of holy matrimony together, the banns are published in the churches; and after this they are given to each other in the name of God. If any person dies, he is decently buried. Each parish, according as it is larger or smaller,

ſmaller, has one or more miniſters; likewiſe one or more ſchoolmaſters. They have alſo public ſchools, wherein youth are taught and inſtructed, not only in the neceſſary parts of learning, but alſo in various uſeful languages, arts, and ſciences. There are alſo ſchools of a ſtill ſuperior kind, wherein people are trained up for the public miniſtry, and in which they receive inſtructions.

Thus it has been gradually regulated in Chriſtian countries, and the civil powers contributed greatly towards the eſtabliſhment of theſe Chriſtian inſtitutions; nor can this honour be withheld from ſeveral of the biſhops alſo. We ſee clearly, that the good hand of God has evidenced itſelf in this affair; and that, amidſt the degeneracy of the churches of Chriſt, he cauſed an external church—and religious conſtitution to take place, to prevent thereby a total falling back again into the ſtate of heatheniſm. We are therefore not to deſpiſe ſuch inſtitutions, but much rather to look upon them as a great bleſſing of God, for the benefit of mankind. However, it is not to be denied, that, amidſt theſe externally good inſtitutions and regulations, corruptions, as well in the Eaſtern as in the Weſtern churches (which have now ſeparated themſelves from each other, and formed themſelves under their ſeparate heads), gained more ground from century to century. An incredible gloom, yea, a thick darkneſs, ſpread itſelf over the doctrine of the Goſpel; becauſe the Holy Scripture was not only taken out of the hands of the people, but was alſo totally forgotten by moſt of the miniſters. In the worſhip of God, they followed, for the moſt part, human traditions, and amongſt all orders, the moſt ſcandalous ſins and vices prevailed; wherein the clergy frequently diſtinguiſhed themſelves above others. At length the judgments of God broke out, and Mahomet and his followers overſpread a great part of thoſe countries; which had enjoyed the Goſpel till that time, but had not prized it.

§ 250.

§ 250.

WE muſt not, however, think, that the church of Chriſt, to which, in the true and proper ſenſe, none but real members of the body of Jeſus, the temples of the Holy Ghoſt, belong, had ever ceaſed, at any time, upon earth. For our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, when ſpeaking of the church, which HE himſelf builds upon a rock (and HE is himſelf that rock), avers expreſsly, that "the gates of hell," (that is, the devil and his adherents, the world with all its craft, power, and rage) "*ſhall not prevail againſt it*," Matt. xvi. 18. It may indeed be, that no one can ſay, where the church of Jeſus was at ſuch a ſpecified time; and in ſuch or ſuch circumſtances. That great man of God, Elias, lived under the kings of Iſrael, who were at that time devoted to idolatry with ſo accurſed a zeal, that all the worſhippers of the one only and everlaſting God were forced either to fly their country, or to hazard their lives: and in this caſe he believed aſſuredly, that none were left of the ſervants of the true God but he himſelf alone. "Lord," ſays he, "they "have killed thy prophets, and digged down thy altars, "and *I am left alone*, and they ſeek my life." But what ſaith the anſwer of God unto him? "*I have reſerved to my-* "*ſelf ſeven thouſand men*, who have not bowed the knee to "the image of Baal," Rom. xi. 3, 4. We think in like manner of the darkeſt times; believing aſſuredly, that the church of Jeſus, the flock and ſheep of his paſture, whom he knows, and unto whom he is known, who hear his voice, and follow him, and unto whom he giveth eternal life, has never at any time been prevailed againſt, and quite extirpated. Our Saviour being aſked, "When the king- "dom of God ſhould come?" replied, "The kingdom of "God cometh not with obſervation," (with outward ſhew) "neither ſhall they ſay, Lo here, or lo there; for, behold "the kingdom of God is within you," (or even now among you) Luke, xvii. 20, 21.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, as the head of the kingdom, or of the church of God, was then standing before the Pharisees, who put this question to him. His disciples, and other Jews who believed on him, were round about him; and these were the members of his church, or of the kingdom of God. Therefore our Saviour could confidently say to them, the kingdom of God is within you, or even now amongst you. Oh, that your eyes were but open likewise to see it! But they had a temporal kingdom in their thoughts, and for this they hoped; therefore it did not occur to them, that in Christ and the few people that followed him, was the kingdom of God. But it is enough, if the members of the church be surely known unto the Lord. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this "seal, *The LORD knoweth them that are his*," 2 Tim. ii. 19. Paul says to the believing Colossians, "*Your life is* "*hid with Christ in God.* When Christ who is our life "shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory," Col. iii. 3, 4.

§ 251.

HOWEVER, this is also to be observed, that God has not only had his kingdom in secret, but that he has also from time to time set up his witnesses, who have publicly, and before every man, confessed the Gospel, and have been a light put into a candlestick, according to Matt. v. 14, 15. These then have been hated and persecuted by such, who, though called Christians, did not love the truth: yea, even those who were ordained for bishops and public teachers, but loved and sought after the world, and that which is in the world, namely, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, these acted against them in the most inimical manner. Yet has their testimony never been without fruit; but God acted according to his own promise, "My word, that goeth forth out of my mouth, shall not "return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I "please,

"pleaſe, and it ſhall proſper in the thing whereto I ſent "it," Iſa. lv. 11. Thus it has been at all times, as our Lord and Saviour has told us beforehand, Matt. xiii. 3, &c. The ſower ſowed the word, and ſome fell by the way-ſide; that is, there were people, who did indeed hear it, but having no underſtanding of it, the wicked one ſoon came, and catched away that which was ſowed in their heart, ver. 19. Some fell in ſtony places, where there was no ſufficient depth of earth: theſe were people who heard the word, and received it with joy, but the word having no root in them, they only believed for a while, and when tribulation and perſecution aroſe becauſe of the word, they were as ready and haſty in taking offence, as they had before been in receiving the word, and fell back again, according to ver. 20, 21. Some fell among thorns: theſe were people, who, having heard the word, the care of this world, the deceitfulneſs of riches, and the pleaſures of this life, choked the word, and they became unfruitful, Matth. xiii. 22. Luke, viii. 14. Some fell on good ground (that had been plowed and manured); and theſe were people, who having heard the word, and underſtood it, and kept it in an honeſt and good heart, brought forth fruit with patience, ver. 23. Luke, viii. 15.

But our Lord Jeſus Chriſt did not raiſe up ſingle witneſſes of the truth only, among whom Peter Waldo, Wickliff, John Huſs, and others, are particularly diſtinguiſhed; but did alſo often unite ſuch as were obedient to the Goſpel, in ſmaller or larger congregations, which we meet with from time to time: but in the Waldenſes, and Bohemian-Moravian brethren, we have very ſtriking examples of it. Now, when here and there, ſometimes more and ſometimes fewer, out of love to Jeſus, kept together, ſtrengthening one another in faith, and provoking one another unto love and good works, they had then the experience of that word of the Lord, "Where two or three are gathered together in "my name, there am I in the midſt of them," Matt. xviii.

20. But ſuch little churches ſeldom remained without attacks, and had, according to circumſtances, more or leſs to ſuffer, agreeable to the words that were ſpoken to ſuch churches, that "we muſt through much tribulation enter "into the kingdom of God," Acts, xiv. 22. Ah! had we but an eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, which leaving out all thoſe things that belong more to the world than to the church of Chriſt in its proper ſenſe, gave us the beſt poſſible account of the Lord's hidden ones; of the witneſſes of the Goſpel; of the little churches of Jeſus Chriſt; and how they followed in ſucceſſion; whereof we find only ſomething, now here, now there. *Such a church hiſtory* would be inestimable.

After many witneſſes of the truth had, in the preceding century, laid down their lives on account of their confeſſion, without being able to overcome the oppoſition made by the enemies of the Goſpel, God at length took pity upon the poor ſouls who ſighed under an intolerable oppreſſion of their conſciences; and awakened, at the beginning of the ſixteenth century, men, who with boldneſs ventured publicly to encounter the erroneous doctrines which had been hitherto propagated, without any ſhame; and to hazard their goods, and their lives and fortunes, in ſupport of the truth. Martin Luther, Philip Melanchton, and their aſſiſtants, in Saxony, Ulrich, Zwinglius, John Calvin, Bucer, and others, in Switzerland and France, were almoſt at the ſame time conſtrained by their conſciences, and by the love of Jeſus, to preach the Goſpel in its purity. And whereas God did alſo turn the hearts of many ſovereigns to forward this ſalutary work, and to protect the confeſſors of the truth, this gave occaſion to that great event in the weſtern part of Chriſtendom, which is called (and with good reaſon) the *REFORMATION*. For though we muſt allow, that under this Reformation, no ſuch churches were produced as the primitive Chriſtian congregations in the apoſtolic times were (which indeed

indeed was not possible, as whole countries and nations joined the Reformation at once), yet it is incontestible, that, through the grace of God, great advantages accrued thereby to Christendom in general, and even to those churches which retained their old constitution. The holy Scriptures were not only translated into the languages of each country respectively, and put into the hands of the common people, but the divine service was also performed in a language which the hearers could understand; and they sung at the same time edifying hymns. The schools and universities were reformed, and many new ones founded; and the consistories were, by the respective governments, enjoined neither to appoint nor to tolerate any ignorant teachers, or such whose walk was offensive. However, that which was of the most and greatest consequence was this, that all the reformers unanimously, and with zeal and energy, urged and inculcated the fundamental doctrines of the holy Scriptures; namely, All men are sinners, and cannot deliver themselves from this wretched condition: Jesus Christ is the one only Helper and Saviour, who can and will help all those who come unto him: All men must be directed straitway to HIM; Nothing is of any avail but his blood of atonement: He that finds forgiveness of sins in the blood of Jesus, has life and salvation, and can live holily as a child of God, according to the Gospel: When each in his calling and station, whether he be man or woman, master or servant, parent or child, &c. has God before his eyes, doing every thing he does in the name of Jesus, also loving and serving his neighbour for Jesus' sake:—This is the genuine service of God, and much superior to self-chosen acts of worship. Thus did these men of God teach; and had they not separated from each other about obscure questions, which did not belong to the essence of true Christianity, the blessing of their testimony would perhaps have produced more fruit. Yet even amidst these weaknesses God graciously owned their and their successors labours,

bours, and we, to this very day, enjoy the blessed consequences of the Reformation.

§ 252.

BUT how then will it yet go with the church of Christ, or with Christendom, as we call it? Paul writes to Timothy, "This know also, that in the last days perilous "times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own "selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobe-"dient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural "affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, "heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers "of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the "power thereof," 2 Tim. iii. 1. Peter says, "Knowing "this first, that there shall come in the last days scoff-"ers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is "the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell "asleep, all things continue as they were from the begin-"ning of the creation," 2 Pet. iii. 3. See Epist. of Jude, 18, 19. Paul testifies also to the Thessalonians, "The last "day shall not come, except there come a falling-away "first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdi-"tion (Antichrist), who opposeth and exalteth himself "above all, that is called God, or that is worshipped; so "that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing "himself that he is God—whom the Lord shall consume "with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the "brightness of his coming," 2 Thess. ii. 3, &c.

And concerning this son of perdition it is further said, "His coming is after the working of Satan, with all "power, and signs, and lying wonders; and with all de-"ceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; be-"cause they received not the love of the truth, that they "might be saved: and for this cause God shall send them "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie," &c. 2 Thess. ii. 9.

Never-

Nevertheless, the church of Christ, which he has built upon himself, the rock, shall not, even at that time, be prevailed against, and destroyed by the gates of hell. For "when the Lord shall come from heaven, and raise up the "dead, the members of his body, which are yet alive and "remain, shall be caught up into the clouds to meet the "Lord in the air, and so shall ever be with the Lord," 1 Thess. iv. 15, &c. Then shall also the parable of Christ, concerning the net which was cast into the sea, Matt. xiii. 47, &c. be fulfilled; and till that time Christendom will always remain a mixed multitude.

§ 253.

THAT Christendom, that is, the great multitude of all those who bear the name of Christ, and are called Christians, has been broken into several divisions, is evident from what has been already said. If each of these divisions that called itself a church, or congregation of Christ, was only determined to adhere closely to the truths with which it is intrusted, and to lead a life conformable thereunto, continually endeavouring to diminish errors and abuses, they might all subsist near each other, and yet not be in each other's way. But when each of these divisions of the great multitude, which is called Christendom, begins to think of itself, and asserts that it is *the* church of Christ, and the *only* church in which a man can be saved (which was indeed the claim of some in former times, and who can say that this way of thinking is laid entirely aside, without being put to shame?) then it judges itself with great lenity, and others with great severity. Yet it is incontrovertible, that one division has a preference to an other, because in one there is more of the truth of the Gospel than in an other; that more hindrances are laid in the way of the godliness that is in Christ Jesus in one than in an other; that the regulations and constitution is in the one more consonant to

the Holy Scriptures than in the other; that various errors, in oppoſition to the doctrine of Jeſus, have a freer courſe in one than in another; that a greater reſtraint can be laid upon ſcandalous vices and ſins in the one than in the other, &c. &c. However, we may hope in God that he will bring many a ſoul hungry after grace, in each of theſe diviſions of Chriſtendom, into the way of life. For who would doubt but that, as at the idolatrous times of Elias he reſerved his ſeven thouſand to himſelf, who had not bowed their knee to Baal, ſo now alſo, though the degeneracy be every where undeniable, he may not do the very ſame again; and thus, among all the diviſions of Chriſtendom have his ſheep, who knowing the voice of their good Shepherd, do follow him in ſimplicity and truth.

But this is not to be ſo underſtood, as if, under the pretext of God's having ſouls belonging to him amongſt all the ſeveral diviſions of Chriſtendom, a man is allowed to run, in levity, out of one religion into another. For if, for inſtance, a perſon, out of views which are wrong in the ſight of God, ſhould leave his religion, of the truth of which he is for the reſt convinced, and adopt another, this conduct would certainly be diſpleaſing to the Lord. Why? A perverſe intention, not derived from the love towards God, always renders an act ſinful. But to this is added, the abuſe of the name of God. For the pretence is, that it is done in the preſence of God, from the conviction of the truth of that religion to which he turns; and yet, after all, he only ſeeks to obtain by it ſome poſt of honour, or temporal advantage, or ſome ſuch emolument, by which he only means himſelf. But if any one changes his religion from the conviction of his heart, the impulſe of his conſcience, and in ſimplicity before God, we ſhould then abſtain from judging him, and leave him to God.

§ 254.

§ 254.

THE souls dispersed in all the world, whose hearts are attached to Jesus Christ, who are partakers of the Holy Ghost, and worship the Father in spirit and in truth, are properly the body of Christ, the house of God, the flock of the good shepherd, and belong to the kingdom of God. See § 236, &c. Here then the question arises, what are these dear people to do, in order to attain the views that our Lord Jesus Christ has with them? If they resign themselves as children to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, then their chief concern is, to abide, for their own persons, in the doctrine of Jesus, to understand more and more, and to obey, the truth. They adhere to Christ by faith; through him they come unto the Father, and the Holy Spirit maintains their fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. The next thing then is, that they look about them to see if they can meet with any one who is of the same mind with themselves, and who, like themselves, love our Saviour. If God helps them to a companion on the way of life, they thank him for it with all their hearts, and rejoice that they have some one with whom they can run their race in fellowship. Their hearts flow together in brotherly love; the one interests himself in the weal and woe of the other; they are helpful to each other in the growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; they comfort, they remind, they exhort, they reprove one another with all fidelity, &c. Are there still more with whom they can unite in the mind of Jesus Christ, the more pleasing it is to them; especially because they know, that our Saviour says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, "there am I in the midst of them." And, "Where two or "three are agreed together as touching any thing they "shall ask, it shall be done for them, be it what it may."

Moreover,

Moreover, they know very well, that they are "to declare "to others the virtues of him who hath called them out of "darkness into his marvellous light." Thus it is their concern to be useful to others, according to the grace and gift that is in them; and at least by their example, without many words, to shew others, that nothing is more blessed than to know that God is gracious; to live in Jesus Christ, and to be a temple of the Holy Ghost; even though for that reason we should be mocked and reproached, or to endure other still heavier sufferings for Christ's sake. Therefore if they see corruption in the constitution of the religion in which they live, it is no matter of indifference to them. O no! it is a pungent pain to them. But they bear this, which it is out of their power to alter, and which stands under the patience of God, with like patience. That which they deem to be wrong, they do not; but what they know to be right, that they do, for Christ's sake. To confess our Saviour and his word, and to suffer for it, is to them pure grace, if they consider the matter aright before our Saviour. They guard against the satirical and judging spirit, because it mends nothing; but, on the other hand, they pray, and weep, and recommend his church to him, who is the head thereof.

Should in any one or other of the Christian religious denominations, a number of people be found, who were earnestly intent upon becoming as much as possible like to the primitive churches of Jesus in all respects; and were they to unite together for this end, this would be undoubtedly an appearance in the kingdom of our Lord, at which we ought to rejoice. For why should the effort after a true fellowship of heart and spirit, such as the apostolic churches are renowned for, not take place in people who are come by faith to Jesus Christ, and have devoted themselves with all their hearts to Him? Whatsoever is written in the holy Scripture concerning the primitive churches, is certainly

written

written for doctrine and instruction for us all to this very day. This being presupposed, it will not be unserviceable to make the following observations upon this subject.

(1.) A house of God, where "living stones are" (in the language of Scripture) "built up together for a habita-"tion of God through the Spirit," that is, a congregation of God, whose members are, through the Holy Ghost, baptized unto one body, is, as well as the creation of the world, a work of God, and does not depend upon any man's willing or running.

(2.) Who would doubt that God is able to collect such churches at all times, and even in this last lamentable time, and to make them a city set upon a hill? Surely his hand is not shortened. But whether he will likewise do it, no one can maintain beforehand. Might our eyes be only open to observe it, when it takes place!

(3.) We ought not to despise the small beginnings thereof, as they discover themselves, on account of the imperfection which plainly appears to attend them. A fine kernel is often in a rough and tasteless shell.

(4.) Does it actually happen, that people, through the grace of God, unite in the faith of Jesus Christ, and in the love to him, and to one another, upon the doctrine of Jesus and his disciples, and in this way become a congregation of Jesus Christ; this must not be looked upon as a new sect.

(5.) To such a little congregation of Jesus belongs certainly the rights which every laudable community, or society, every where enjoys, under the approbation and protection of their civil magistrates: that is, the society regulates every thing amongst themselves in such a manner as they find fitting. And these privileges even heathen emperors have not refused to Christian churches heretofore.

(6.) All and each of the members of a church of Jesus are loyal, faithful, and obedient to the higher powers, under whose government they live, and as far as relates to civil life, remain gladly upon a level with all the rest of

the ſubjects; and a good and wiſe magiſtrate leaves them, on the other hand, in an unreſtrained participation and enjoyment of all thoſe rights and immunities which all ſubjects do otherwiſe, without any difference, enjoy.

(7.) If the civil magiſtrate be a fellow-member of a living congregation of Jeſus, he has of courſe as much to ſay as any other fellow-member in this community. But he has no power, merely as a civil magiſtrate, to govern this congregation, in reſpect to its *internal* courſe: for in this, the doctrine of Jeſus and of his apoſtles are the rule.

(8.) No teacher, no, nor even a fellow-member, can be obtruded upon ſuch a congregation; neither has any miniſter of it any further power than the congregation itſelf has inveſted him with.

(9.) But if a congregation, which is eſtabliſhed according to the mind of the Lord, and by his own hand, cannot be refuſed the rights and immunities which are uſually granted to every ſociety, in due order; yet it muſt always conſider, that, through the grace of God, it ſhould make the right uſe of them. For if this be not done, if it does not abide by the doctrine of Jeſus and of his apoſtles, if the mind of Jeſus does not rule in it, if, without any reſpect of perſons, it does not put away that which is evil, then it deviates from its path of grace, and falls in the ſame manner as others have done before it.

(10.) A wiſe civil magiſtrate always conſiders, that he is the miniſter of God. Therefore he, with all diligence and fidelity, and for God's ſake, to whom he is amenable for all his conduct, maintains the doctrine, the order, and conſtitution of the religion, whoſe guardian he, as it were, is. But ſhould any thing diſcover itſelf, in the country under his juriſdiction, which ſeems to vary from the common courſe, in this caſe he needs every precaution, and all carefulneſs, that, on the one hand, nothing may ſpring up of a pernicious nature; or, on the other hand, that no work which God intends, in Chriſtendom, may be hindered;

"leſt,"

"lest," according to Gamaliel's expression, "*he may haply* "*be found to fight against God*," Acts, v. 39.

§ 255.

THAT, by occasion of the emigration of some of the posterity of the ancient Bohemian-Moravian brethren from their native country, some new places have been built, where many persons, concerned for their salvation in Christ, through a wonderful leading of God, met together, united with each other upon the doctrine of Jesus and of his apostles, as contained in the holy Scripture, and delivered in the confession of Augsburg, and agreed together stedfastly to maintain good order and discipline;—this, according to our judgment, must be reckoned among the extraordinary works of God in our time. They regard themselves as a small part of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ on earth; and, under the protection of the governments under which they live, make use of that freedom which our Lord Jesus Christ purchased for them at so dear a rate, and which he bestowed upon them without any merit or worthiness of their own, to improve and edify one another, in such a manner as is agreeable to the word of God. And as they hold one and the same doctrine with the Protestant church, as far as it steadily adheres to the confession of Augsburg; so they find no reason to depart from it: and they believe, that they cannot with justice be separated from it, since the confession of Augsburg teaches expressly, that the difference of rites and ceremonies doth not dissolve the union and communion of the church. Now, the question is, How are congregations of the Brethren to be looked upon; and how do they look upon themselves?

If the Brethren are looked upon as so many institutions of our Lord Jesus Christ, raised up in his church, with a view of restraining, by them, the present rapid torrent of degeneracy in doctrine and practice, it would not be wrong.

Whoever

Whoever looks upon them as an infirmary, into which our Lord Jesus Christ, as the only physician of the Soul, has collected a number of his poor patients which are in his cure, that he may attend them himself, and that they may be nursed by his servants; he has sufficient reason to think thus.

§ 256.

If it be asked now, What is to be said in reference to these little congregations of Christ? possibly the following may afford such enquirers some satisfaction; namely,

(1.) Amidst the good found in the congregations of the *brethren* (to which belongs the following in particular, that they endeavour to take special care of every individual soul belonging to them; by good order to prevent that which is evil; to grow and increase continually in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and at the same time daily to get a deeper insight into their own misery and corruption, and to preserve themselves against it in Christ; to put off the old man with his deeds, and to put on the new man, who after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; and to be diligent in good works) they are always to remember that it is mere grace. For what would they be, if the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ did not keep them?

(2.) They are never to forget how greatly deficient they still are, and how much is expected of them in consequence of the grace God hath already, and doth still daily shew them.

(3.) They are, at the hazard of lives and fortunes, faithfully to maintain the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the crucified, in whose sacrifice and offering alone grace and freedom from all sins is to be found for all the world.

(4.) They must not be led away, in any wise, from that good order and discipline, which through the grace of God they

they have among them; but are to exercise it without any respect of persons.

(5.) They ought to make it their zealous endeavour to the utmost of their power, to be in love and peace, and in a fellowship of heart and spirit with all the children of God, who do not belong to their constitution: for this is required by the testament of Jesus, John, xvii.

(6.) What, before their times, has been spoken, written, and done for the good of the church, by many men of God who had at heart that part of the reformation which Luther had in view, but could not bring to bear; this the congregations of the Brethren are to acknowledge with thankfulness: for it is certain, that they now enjoy what such servants of Jesus have so faithfully laboured to prepare for them; and also the grace of their having attained to a more clear insight into the Gospel, than we meet with in the ancient Moravian Brethren, is a fruit of the reformation.

(7.) They must be at the same time courageous, and be afraid of no man; for who can hurt them, if they be followers of that, which is good, and if the Lord be with them?

(8.) The reproach on account of Christ, and of his Gospel, they are not to shun: for to us it is given, not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his name's sake; and this ought also to be their joy and honour.

(9.) Their call is not to disturb the constitutions of the religions; and much less to make any person scrupulous about his own religion; but rather to lead all souls to Christ, not only with words, but also by their lives and conversation.

(10.) At such times, when they have rest from without, they are to see to it with prayer and supplication, and by a faithful observance of his grace, that that may be verified in them also, which is written in Acts, ix. 31. "Then had "the churches rest, walking in the fear of the Lord; and, "in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were edified."

(11.) They

(11.) They are to seek the peace and benefit of the country, where the Lord has planted them; and to pray for it, and to approve themselves as useful and obedient subjects of the government under which they live.

(12.) And, as the Lord hath deigned them worthy, and ordained them to go to the heathen also, and to bring forth fruit, and that their fruit abide; so this, their vocation, ought therefore to be important to them, to humble them in the dust, and they should account themselves happy, if the Lord grants unto them the grace of dying amidst the occupation of gaining souls for the Lamb of God, who bore the sin of the world.

(13.) Ah, could we but say with bowedness, "*None of us* liveth to himself, and *none of us* dieth to himself! For "whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether "we die, we die unto the Lord." But because we know, that many a one is still amongst us, who cannot affirm this boldly of himself, this should not allow us to be unconcerned; but we will pray, and intreat, and labour, that there may not be one single person left amongst us, who does not prosper for the Lord.

(14.) Their thoughts should only be employed by day and night, that our Lord Jesus Christ, and his holy and good spirit, may rule unrestrained among them; and that his œconomy of grace among them may be carried on, without any interruption, to the glory of their Father, who is in heaven.

(15.) As to the churches, which have been ministered unto by the apostles, the congregations of the brethren ought to consider that a very great preference belongeth to them. For they not only had many gifts of the Spirit, which are withdrawn from us in our times, but they were also deigned worthy to be the first fruits of the new covenant, and to break the ice: and this is a matter, which produces much experience, because faith and patience are often put to the test on this account. Moreover they had more, and greater

ſufferings, and therefore experienced alſo more conſolations: And O, how glorioufly will they ſhine in the kingdom of their Father! The verbal inſtructions they enjoyed, they had from the mouths of men, who received from the mouth of Jeſus what they afterwards communicated to them; and unto whom our Saviour had imparted unto them a greater meaſure of his Spirit, becauſe he placed them as the firſt perſons in his church.

§ 257.

THIS only is to be ſtill mentioned, that in ſuch churches which, as Luther expreſſes it, "will work out their own "ſalvation in right good earneſt," there are, and may be, ſome things which are peculiar to them. Under this head belong, for inſtance, The Foot-waſhing, the Kiſs of Love, and the Uſe of the Lot.

(1.) Our Saviour waſhed his diſciples feet, and ſaid to them expreſly, John, xiii. 14. "*Ye alſo ought to waſh one* "*another's feet*:" And this he repeats with the words, ver. 15. "I have given you an example, *that ye ſhould do* "*as I have done to you.*" That his meaning was to bring them from the vain thought, which aroſe continually in them anew, "But who ſhall be the greateſt among us?" and to ſhew them, that the greateſt among them ſhould be as the ſervant of them all, is plainly to be ſeen from the explanation which he gave them after the foot-waſhing: For there, he ſays, ver. 13. "Ye call me Maſter and Lord; "and ye ſay well, for ſo I am: If I then, your Lord and "Maſter, have waſhed your feet, ye ought alſo to waſh one "another's feet." That is, none among you are to think it beneath him to waſh the other's feet. For were he even the greateſt among you (but ye are all brethren, and none among you ſhall be as the Father, or Maſter, or let himſelf be called ſo) yet he is not greater than I. Certainly I am your Lord and Maſter; and if I condeſcend ſo

far as to wash your feet, ought not ye much more to do the same.

But that our Lord and Saviour would say something more by this foot-washing, is to be concluded from his conversation with Peter. For when he would not admit his Lord and Master to wash his feet, Jesus answered him, ver. 8. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me:" And, when Peter would hereupon have his hands and his head also washed, Jesus said to him, ver. 10. "He that is "washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean "every whit; and ye are clean, but not all." John subjoins, ver. 11. "For he knew who should betray him; "therefore, said he, ye are not all clean." He that can find nothing further in these words, but an external washing the feet, who would dispute with him? Indeed we find nothing in the Scriptures of the New Testament, that the disciples of Jesus had in this particular followed the word and example of Christ. But who will for this reason be hardy enough to pronounce peremptorily, that they did not practise it? Certainly they loved the Lord Jesus, and he said, "He that loveth me will keep my sayings."

For the rest, it must not be forgotten, that this feet-washing, which Christ transacted with his disciples, was different from that washing of the feet, which was a common custom among the Jews: for the Jews used to wash their feet before their sitting down to their meals; because, not wearing shoes, as we do, much dust would of course cleave to their feet. Wherefore our Lord Jesus Christ reminds the Pharisee that when he came into his house, he had not given him any water to wash his feet, before they sat down to eat, Luke, vii. 44. But Jesus riseth from "supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel, "and girded himself. After that, he poureth water into a "hason, and began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe "them with the towel wherewith he was girded." And John intimates a circumstance, that this was done, "Sup-

"per being ended," and that twice, one after another, John, xiii. 2. & 4. without doubt for this reason, because it is upon this occasion to be particularly attended to.

(2.) Paul writes to the Romans, chap. xvi. 16. "Salute "one another with *an holy kiss*." See also 1 Cor. xvi. 20. 2 Cor. xiii. 12. 1 Thess. v. 26. And Peter, 1 Epist. v. 14. "Greet ye one another *with a kiss of charity*," (or Love).

This act must certainly have been of importance to the disciples of Jesus, as it is repeated by them more than once. Not amongst the Jews only, but amongst other nations also, it was customary for one man to testify the love and regard he had for another by a kiss. Our Saviour, therefore, reminds the Pharisee, who had invited him to eat with him, that he had not received him with a kiss, Luke, vii. 45. Of consequence our Lord Jesus Christ would have accepted a kiss from the Pharisee. But it is however probable, that in the apostolical churches, besides the kiss usual in common life with which one man received or dismissed the other, this kiss was made use of in their meetings. But that the kiss of brotherly love was denied to persons, who did not abide in the doctrine of Jesus, and were besides pernicious to others, may be well concluded from the Second Epistle of John, ver. 9, &c.

(3.) Concerning the Lot we read, Act, i. 15, &c. that it was made use of by the apostles, after an ardent prayer, in a meeting consisting of one hundred and twenty persons; this was after the ascension of Christ. Our dear Lord and Saviour, who had spent forty days upon earth after his resurrection, and, during that interval, conversed much and often with his disciples, might certainly have himself nominated some person for an apostle in Judas's stead; but he left it to his disciples, and thus was Matthias numbered with the eleven apostles by lot. Now, as the lot was made use of by men of God under the Old Testament in the most important affairs which respected life and limb; so did God also himself during that œconomy with the people of Israel,

command it: for instance, at the dividing the land of Canaan, Solomon says,

"The *lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing* "*thereof is of the Lord,*" Prov. xvi. 33.

Thus there is no doubt, but that the lot may be made use of in a church of Christ: and all depends upon this, that we know *when* and *how* it is to be used.

To make use of the lot in a matter which is already determined in the Holy Scripture, would be undoubtedly wrong. But when the elders of a congregation, who are to take the good of the congregation in general, and of every fellow-member thereof in particular, under their consideration are to form a conclusion upon some case, which is not decided in the Holy Scripture; and they wish for nothing more than to know the mind of their Lord and Saviour, not trusting their own powers and insight, as they are very liable to err, this is a very different affair. For if, in such circumstances, they in confidence look up to the Lord, who is so willing to direct us aright, and pray to him from their hearts, that he will be pleased to let them know, *that* which is agreeable to his mind; he will not put them to shame. But it is to be understood, from the very nature of the thing, that they, to the utmost of their power, be obedient to the direction they receive from him, in this way.

Of DEATH, *and the* DEPARTURE *of the* FAITHFUL *to the* LORD.

§ 258.

HAVING treated so fully of the life of men, we will now speak of their death; that is, the end of their life, which we call death. That men must once die, whether

whether they will or no, is evident to every man. But the Holy Scripture alone informs us of the cause of this. That tells us, that "through one man sin entered into the "world, and death by sin." See § 52, &c. But why must all men die? "For that all have sinned," Rom. v. 12. Therefore, it is now according to the order established by God, that man should die; for he would not that man should have eaten of the tree of life, and live for ever; and for that reason he drove him out of Paradise, Gen. iii. 22, 23. Why? God found it good, and that is a sufficient reason. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after "this the judgment," Heb. ix. 27.

Moses, the man of God, bemoaned the death of 600,000 persons, who died in the wilderness in the space of forty years on account of their sins, as it may be plainly seen in the xcth psalm, "The days of our years are threescore "years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be four-"score years, yet is their strength, labour and sorrow; for "it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knoweth the "power of thine anger? Even according to thy fear, so is "thy wrath. So teach us to number our days," (to reflect upon death) "that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom," ver. 10, &c.

Here the death of the Israelites in the wilderness was a particular chastisement and punishment of God, (they did not reach the term of life to which they might have attained) and therefore the heart of Moses, the man of God, was so deeply affected by it.

Hezekiah having been sick unto death, the Lord informed him by Isaiah the prophet, that he should then die; whereupon he wept and prayed, for he very was anxiously concerned to obtain comfort, and his sins oppressed him. This his prayer was heard. God shewed tender compassion to his soul, forgave him all his sins, and added unto his days fifteen years, Isai. xxxviii. 1, &c.

§ 259.

HENCE it is clear, that although God has indeed fixed a term of life for man, yet he may, by his sins, as the Israelites did, cause it to be shortened: and that on the other hand this term of the life of man may, for special reasons, as in the case of Hezekiah, be lengthened by God. Thus much we may always certainly believe, that no child of God, nor any servant of Christ, ever loses his life by chance: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And "one of them shall not fall on the ground without your "Father" (without his will). "But the very hairs of "your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, "ye are of more value than many sparrows," Matt. x. 29, &c.

But on this occasion we are to observe, that a man ought not to shorten the term of his life, which is certainly done by self-murder. Seeing that murder (whether committed upon ourselves, or upon others) is a manifest work of the flesh, excluding us from any inheritance in the kingdom of God, according to Gal. v. 19, &c. therefore each should pray to God to be kept by his grace from this, as well as from all other sins. But a man may also in another way shorten life. Paul says, 2 Cor. vii. 10. "The sorrow of the "world worketh death."

How many have shortened their lives by this means; how many by other violent passions; how many by intemperance; how many by shameful impurities, and by other wicked things? Did not many in the church at Corinth shorten the term of their lives by sinning at the Holy Supper of the Lord; having been on that account chastened of God partly by sicknesses, and partly by death? 1 Cor. xi. 28, &c. See § 147. And did not Moses and Aaron die before their time, because they had transgressed against the Lord amongst the children of Israel? Deut. xxxii. 50, 51.

§ 260.

§ 260.

BUT what then is properly the death of a man? When, in the body of man, which is mortal (Rom. vi. 12. chap. viii. 11.), the circulation of the blood is totally stopped, and thus he ceases to breathe; then the body ceases to live. But the soul, which dwelt in the body, leaves its late house, and now lives out of the body. That the soul, when the body is killed, doth not lose its life, is plain from the words of Christ, "Fear not them which kill the body, *but are not* "*able to kill the soul*," Matt. x. 28.

That which our Lord Jesus Christ says concerning the rich man, and poor Lazarus, Luke, xvi. 19, &c. likewise confirms this. The poor man died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; that is, into a place where he lived in fellowship with Abraham, in peace and joy. The rich man died also, and was buried; but came into a place of torment, where he suffered pain. This could not be the case as to his body, for it was buried, and not yet raised up again from the dead. But the soul of Lazarus lived, and enjoyed in Abraham's bosom, that is, in his fellowship, peace and joy. The soul of the rich man lived also, was in a place of torment, and felt much suffering and pain. Should it be objected, but this was only a parable! This we may grant; and the position that the soul dieth not, when the body dies, will be only thereby rendered the more certain. For it is indisputable, that the meaning of our Lord Jesus by this parable was, that men were not to look for their happiness in riches and the pleasures of this life; for when a man dies, he reaps immediately the fruits of his walk and conversation upon earth. Therefore we are to take care of our souls; and for this reason, he says, "What is a man profited, if he should "gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what

"shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matt. xvi. 26.

When God calls himself the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and he himself gives himself this name, Exod. iii. 6. Our Saviour draws from thence this inference, "God is not the God of the dead, "but of the living; for all live unto him," Luke, xx. 38. How do they all live to him? The soul lives to him. And our Saviour, at the same time, testifies, that the bodies of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, could not remain in death; but must rise again, because God is, and is called, their God; and they, as to the soul live already unto him.

Our Lord Jesus Christ said to the malefactor upon the cross, who owned and confessed his sins, and clave in faith to him, as to the Messiah, "To-day shalt thou be with "me in Paradise," Luke, xxiii. 43. How so? This could not be the case of the body, that having been put to death. Our Lord Jesus cried with a loud voice upon the cross, "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit," Luke, xxiii. 46. Thus he was put to death in the flesh, as to the body, but his soul could not be put to death; that went the same day into Paradise, and he took the soul of the malefactor with him. When Stephen was stoned on account of his testimony, he turned in prayer to Jesus Christ, and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," Acts, vii. 59. "And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, "Lord lay not this sin to their charge" (that is, to the charge of the Jews who stoned him); "and having said "this, he fell asleep." Thus was his body put to a violent death; but his spirit, his soul, was received by Jesus Christ; the soul could not be put to death.

"Then shall *the dust* return *to the earth*, as it was, and "*the spirit shall return unto God*, who gave it," Eccles. xii. 7.

§ 261.

§ 261.

By the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, death, with respect to those who, by faith, are children of God, becomes greatly different from what it was in itself. Else it can be regarded in no other light but as the penalty for sin; ("the wages of sin is death," Rom. vi. 23.) but the children of God may now esteem it as a favour and benefit. The reason of which is, that our Lord Jesus Christ has suffered death, as the penalty of sin, for all mankind, because they had all sinned and deserved the penalty of death: and in this view the Scripture says, "If one died for all, "then were all dead," 2 Cor. v. 14.; it being as much as if all had been executed on account of their sin. (See § 76, &c.) Therefore is the death of those, who believe in Jesus, and obtain an interest in his death; no longer to be taken as a punishment, but as a preparation and ordinance of God for our consummation and entrance into everlasting happiness. If we premise this, then are the following words very intelligible, 2 Tim. i. 10. "Our "Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death," (or taken out its sting, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56.) For it now hurts us no more, nor can it hurt us: "For we which have be-"lieved, do enter into rest," Heb. iv. 3. By what means? By death. Therefore, says Christ, "Verily, "verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall "never see death," John, viii. 51.

What death shall he not see? that death, which is the penalty of sin, of which all the world is so much afraid;—that death, of which the Jews had universally at that time such a dreadful notion; and which, only a Simeon, and those like him called "a departing in peace," Luke, ii. 29.

In our Saviour's discourse with Martha it is said, "He "that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he "live:

"live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall "never die," John, xi. 25, 26.

What kind of dying is here meant? That which men suffer as a punishment of their sins;—that dying which is a proof of the displeasure of God;—when by death, men are plunged into more horrible woe and misery. This manner of dying is certainly very different from the death of such as believe in Jesus. But this becomes clearer by the following words of Jesus. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that "heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, "hath everlasting life, and shall not come into con-"demnation; but is passed from death unto life," John, v. 24.

What can this otherwise imply, but that the life, which is from God, and which springs up with faith, never ceases in the children of God, even though the soul departs from the body.—This life is eternal; and we are not to wait for it, until we come to Heaven, but we have it already in this world. Wherefore, to those who believe, that which is termed death, is no death, but the genuine, the true, the everlasting life;—the life that comes from God continues in them. Thus then he that "dieth to the Lord," according to Rom. xiv. 8. "he that dieth in the Lord," according to Rev. xiv. 13. such a one liveth, although he dieth; nor will his life ever end. And this is particularly the case, should any one, like Peter, "glorify God by his death," according to John, xxi. 19.; that is, should any one, for Christ and his Gospel's sake, lose his natural life. See Rev. xx. 4. Therefore, the death of the faithful is only called, "A putting off this tabernacle," in which their soul dwelleth, 2 Pet. i. 13, 14. In other places it is termed "A falling asleep. A coming into peace, a resting "in the chambers, a going home unto the Lord."

If, agreeable to this, we are able to say with Paul, "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we "die,

"die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore or "die, we are the Lord's," Rom. xiv. 8. Then we may be happy and confident even in our death, according to Prov. xiv. 32. "The righteous hath hope in his death."

In this sense Paul says, "We are confident, I say, and "willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be "present" (or at home) "with the Lord," 2 Cor. v. 8. And, "I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ," Phil. i. 23.

O how sweet are the thoughts of death unto us, and how do we long for the last hour in this vale of tears, if the death of Christ for us is manifested to our hearts by the Holy Ghost; and our hearts burn with love to our Lord Jesus Christ.

But how wretched is the state of those unhappy men, who refuse to receive the grace of God in Christ, which is offered to us all in the Gospel, who spurn at this grace, choosing rather to live in sin, than to be redeemed and set free from it, to these death is actually death, and a passage out of one distress and misery into another far greater; and this misery is the more lamentable, because they wilfully and with malignity plunged themselves into it. This is, I say, the dreadful end they have to await; and this end is, alas! certain, Psalm, xlix. 14. Rom. vi. 23. Chap. v. 12.

Of

Of the APPEARING *of* JESUS CHRIST, *and the* RESURRECTION *of the* DEAD.

§ 262.

OUR Lord and Saviour, a few days before his death upon the crofs, fpoke much with his difciples of the end of the world. He told them, that the coftly temple at Jerufalem, which they admired fo much, would be totally demolifhed, and not one ftone left upon another. Then fome of his difciples afked him, Mafter, When fhall thefe things be done, and what will be the fign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? The reply he made to this, we find particularly taken notice of in Matt. xxiv. 1, &c. Mark, xiii. 1, &c. and Luke, xxi. 5, &c.; and we ought well to diftinguifh between that which refers immediately to the deftruction of Jerufalem, and the circumftances therewith connected, and the words which relate to the end of the world. Although we might not be much miftaken, if we applied much of it to the one as well as to the other: becaufe it is probable that the deftruction of Jerufalem was figurative of the end of the world. For inftance, "Take heed to yourfelves, left at any time your hearts be "overcharged with furfeiting and drunkenneffs, and cares "of this life; and fo that day come upon you unawares," Luke, xxi. 34. Likewife,

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be "accounted worthy to efcape all thefe things, that fhall "come to pafs," ver. 36. This is as applicable to the one as to the other. But the following paffages out of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, above cited, refer, without doubt, to the end of the world.

"There fhall be figns in the Sun, and in the Moon, "and in the ftars:—the Sun fhall be darkened, and the

"Moon

"Moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from "Heaven.——And upon the earth shall be distress of na- "tions with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; "men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after "those things which are coming on the earth. For the "powers of Heaven shall be shaken. And then shall ap- "pear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven. And then "shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see "the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven, with "power and great glory. And then shall He send his an- "gels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall ga- "ther together his elect from the four winds, from the one "end of Heaven to the other. But of that day, and of that "hour knoweth no man, no not the angels who are in "Heaven, neither the Son, but my Father only.—There- "fore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, "the Son of Man cometh. Watch ye, therefore, for ye "know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, "or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morn- "ing, lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And "what I say unto you, I say unto all; watch."

Whilst our Lord Jesus Christ was ascending up into Heaven, and his disciples were looking stedfastly after him, they were admonished by the angels in this manner, "This "same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, "shall so come, in like manner as ye have seen him go into "heaven," Acts, i. 11.

This remained deeply impressed upon the hearts of the disciples. And Paul says, among other things: "Our "conversation is in Heaven, from whence also we look "for the Saviour, the LORD Jesus Christ," Phil. iii. 20.

§ 263.

THUS did they wait for him. Peter said, "The end of "all things is at hand," 1 Epist. iv. 7. And John, "It "is

"is the last time," 1 Epist. ii. 18. And Paul, "The "Lord is at hand," Phil. iv. 5.

By which occasion Peter however exhorts us, "Beloved, "be not ignorant of this one thing, That one day is with "the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as "one day," 2 Pet. iii. 8.

Paul had written to the church at Thessalonica, "But "of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that "I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly, that "the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night," (that is, at a time when we do not expect it) "for when "they shall say, peace and safety!—Then sudden destruc-"tion cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with "child; and they shall not escape.——Therefore let us "not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober," 1 Epist. v. 1, &c.

As the church at Thessalonica had conceived upon this occasion, by means of various discourses and epistles, that this would come immediately to pass; Paul wrote the second time to them, and explained it to them.

"We beseech you, brethren, by" (or touching, G. T.) "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering "together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, "to be troubled, neither by spirit," (that is, by pretended revelations) "nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as "that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive "you by any means: for that day shall not come, except "there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be re-"vealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth "himself above all that is called God, or that is wor-"shipped; so that He as God sitteth in the Temple of "God," (the church, or congregation of Jesus) "shew-"ing himself, that HE is God," &c. 2 Thess. ii. 1, &c.

And upon this he speaks further and more fully afterwards.

§ 264.

§ 264.

The resurrection of the dead is connected with the coming of Christ. Whoever, according to the Scripture, believes that God governs all things, and that men are especially objects of his attention; and that under this government of his, nothing but wisdom, loving-kindness, holiness, and righteousness prevail; it is not possible that such can doubt of a future life immediately after this; and will therefore believe with all his heart, all that which our Saviour and his apostles tell us concerning the resurrection of the body. For, whereas men have here either served the Lord, with soul and body; or, with soul and body have sinned against him; therefore will the recompence also, which is certainly to be expected, according to the Scripture, relate to body and soul. Our Saviour has illustrated this by the example of the rich man, and of poor Lazarus;—and how many of each kind do we not meet with at present. But as the heathen philosophers, when they heard of the resurrection of of the dead, scarce thought it worthy the least attention; (Acts, xvii. 32.) so neither had the Sadducees, who, however, made no small part of the Jewish church, any liking to it, Acts, xxiii. 8. Matt. xxii. 23. Although they could not make any reply to the arguments our Lord Jesus Christ opposed to the irrational scruples which they advanced; yet they after all retained their own ideas. But we need not be surprized at this. For men, who are in love with sin, and yet believe, that God hates evil, and will once punish it, wish that there may be no resurrection; and endeavour to persuade both themselves and others, that there is none, in order to get rid of the fear of it.

However, this must take its own course: we will only keep to that, which the Holy Scripture teacheth us on this head. Our Saviour says, "I am the Resurrection, and "the life." (That is, he who raises the dead.) John, xi. 25. "The hour is coming, in the which all that are "in

" in the graves shall hear his" (that is, the Son of Man's) " voice; and shall come forth, they that have done good, " unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done " evil, unto the resurrection of damnation," John, v. 28, 29. Paul testifies, " I have hope towards God,—that " there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just " and unjust, Acts, xxiv. 15. Further, " We know, " that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise " up us also by Jesus," 2 Cor. iv. 14. " 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," Rom. viii. 11.

Hence it appears, that the resurrection of the dead is a work of God; and that Christ, by whom all things are created, that are in Heaven and on earth, visible and invisible; Christ, who upholdeth all things by the word of his power; Christ, who gave himself a ransom for all, Christ, in whom dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily,—is also He by whom the dead shall be raised up again.

§ 265.

But yet there are some particular words of our Saviour upon this head, which are to be taken notice of. For example, " This is the will of him that sent me, that " every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him, " may have everlasting life, *and I will raise him up at the* " *last day*," John, vi. 40. Again, " No man can come to " me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him, " *and I will raise him up at the last day*," John, vi. 44. Likewise, " Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my " blood, hath eternal life; *and I will raise him up at the* " *last day*," John, vi. 54.

Here the resurrection of the faithful is promised as an especial privilege and prerogative; and yet, the unjust and

will there will be also raised up from the dead. How are we to take this? and, in what doth the privilege and prerogative of the faithful consist? First in this, that they will rise first, and be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. For so speaks Paul: "This we say unto you by the word of "the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the "coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are "asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with "the trump of God; and *the dead in Christ shall rise first.* "Then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught "up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in "the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord," 1 Thess. iv. 15, 16, 17. "For, as in Adam all die, even so in "Christ shall all be made alive: but every man in his own "order, *Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's* "at his coming. Then cometh the end," 1 Cor. xv. 22, 23.

Secondly, The privilege and prerogative of the faithful consists in this, that they shall be all made like unto Christ, as well those who rise again from the dead, as those who shall still be here on earth at the time of his coming, and shall be changed. Of this it is said, "The Saviour, the "Lord Jesus Christ, *shall change our vile body, that it may* "*be fashioned like unto his glorious body*, according to the "working whereby he is able even to subdue all things "unto himself," Phil. iii. 20, 21. "Behold, I shew you "a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but *we shall all be* "*changed*, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the "last trump," &c. 1 Cor. xv. 51. Thus then "*shall this* "*corruptible put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on* "*immortality*;" according to ver. 53, &c. "Beloved, "now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear "what we shall be, but we know, that when HE shall ap-"pear, *we shall be like him*; for we shall see him as he is," 1 John, iii. 2. They obtain "*the resurrection of life*; and

"those that have done evil the *resurrection of damnation*;" according to the words of Christ, John, v. 28, 29.

Thirdly, That the faithful abide with Christ for ever, and shall become partakers of his glory. "We shall *be* "*ever* with the Lord," 1 Thess. iv. 7.

This includes all happiness, and is the sum of all glory, that we shall see him, and be with him. If, for the rest, we combine and compare the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, and the twentieth chapter of the Revelations of John, the one will illustrate the other.

Of the General Judgment.

§ 266.

AFTER the resurrection of all men will be the general judgment, when, in the Scripture, it is said, "*GOD will render to every man according to his deeds*; "namely, to them who by patient continuance in well-"doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, "eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do "not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation "and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of "man that doeth evil, of the Jew first," (as greater despisers of grace) "and also to the Greek," (or Gentile), Rom. ii. 6, &c.

This must be explained by other passages of Scripture. Thus it is said, "*The Son* quickeneth whom he will. For "the Father judgeth no man, but *hath committed all judgment* "*unto the Son*: that all men should honour the Son even as "they honour the Father," John, v. 21, 22. "The Fa-"ther hath given him *authority*" (*to the Son*) "to execute "judgment

"judgment also, because he is the Son of Man," John, v. 27. Thus the apostle also speaks: "God shall judge the "secrets of men *by Jesus Christ*," Rom. ii. 16. "*Jesus* "*Christ* is ordained of God to be the *Judge of quick and* "*dead*," Acts, x. 42. See also chap. xvii. 31. 2 Tim. iv. 1.

This his judgment will be very glorious; for, "*HE* "*will come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him; then* "*shall He sit upon the throne of his glory*," Matt. xxv. 31. "*He shall come to be glorified in his saints*, and *to be admired* "*in all them that believe*," 2 Thess. i. 10. "He cometh "*with ten thousands of his saints to execute judgment*," Jude, ver. 14, 15. As Paul also says, "Do you not know that "the saints (believers) shall judge the world.—Know ye "not, that we shall judge angels?" 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. See 2 Pet. ii. 4. Particularly shall the twelve apostles of the Lord, "when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of "his glory, sit also upon twelve thrones, judging the "twelve tribes of Israel," Matth. xix. 28.

Concerning this glorious majesty of Christ, John speaks likewise: "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on "it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, "and there was found no place for them," Rev. xx. 11. And Peter testifies of that day of the Lord, "in the which "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the "elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and "the works that are therein, shall be burnt up," 2 Pet. iii. 10. Adding farther, "Seeing then that all these things "shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to "be, in all holy conversation and godliness; looking for "and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein "the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the "elements shall melt with fervent heat," 2 Pet. iii. 2, &c.

§ 267.

Now, as all the bodies of men ſhall be raiſed up again from the dead, whether they have died upon, and been ſunk into the ſea, or whether they have been interred in the ground; and as all ſouls return each of them out of the regions wherein they have been, either at reſt and in peace, or in pain and torment, into their own body, in which they have dwelt heretofore; ſo ſhall all men likewiſe appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt. As is manifeſt from the following paſſages of Scripture: "*We ſhall all* ſtand be-" fore the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt," Rom. xiv. 10. "*We* " *muſt all* appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that " every one may receive the things done in his body, ac-" cording to that he hath done, whether it be good or " bad." 2 Cor. v. 10. "He ſhall ſit upon the throne of " his glory, and *before him* ſhall be gathered *all nations*," Matt. xxv. 31, 32.

However, believers, although they ſhall appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, will not be condemned. For Holy Writ ſays expreſsly, "He that believeth on the Son of God " is not condemned," John, iii. 18.

And this our dear Lord and Saviour repeats, "Verily, " verily, I ſay unto you, he that heareth my word, and be-" lieveth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and " *ſhall not come into condemnation*," John, v. 24. And how could he be condemned? "Are not his ſins all forgiven " him for Jeſus' name's ſake?" 1 John, ii. 12. He, through faith, is become a child of God, and an heir of everlaſting life; and the Holy Ghoſt was within his heart, the earneſt of this inheritance.

The words of Jeſus are particularly applicable in this place: "Whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my " words, of *him* ſhall the Son of Man be aſhamed, when " he ſhall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and

" of

"of the holy angels," Luke, ix. 26. "Whosoever shall "confess me before men, *him* shall the Son of Man also "confess before the angels of God," Luke, xii. 8.

§ 268.

As all things are naked and open before the eyes of our Lord Jesus Christ, therefore no man that ever did, or doth or shall hereafter exist in the world, can be hidden from him. To speak after the manner of men (for the Holy Ghost condescends to lay the divine transactions before us in such a manner, that they be, as much as is necessary, intelligible to us), it is thus expressed, "The books were "opened, and the dead were judged out of those things "which were written in the books," Rev. xx, 12.

And whereas the Lord our Saviour is so righteous and holy, that it is impossible for him to pronounce any other judgment but such as is in the most perfect manner conformable to righteousness and holiness, every one will therefore be undoubtedly convicted in his own conscience that no wrong is done him.

In general it is said concerning his judgment, Rom. ii. 12. "*As many as have sinned without law,*" (that means the Gentiles, who had indeed no written law, but who, however, felt and knew within their own hearts, that which they should, and that which they should not do), "*shall* "*also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the* "*law*" (those are the Jews, unto whom God gave the written law, thereby plainly informing them, as well what they were to eschew, as what they were to pursue) "*shall* "*be judged by the law,*" Rom. xi. 12. Likewise, "*He* "*will take vengeance on them that know not God,*" (that means, such Jews, Turks, and heathen, who have heard the Gospel, but who are not faithful to that which they knew concerning God and his will, or might know; but act against better knowledge), *and that* "*obey not the*

" *Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (That points at such as hear, or may hear and read, the Gospel; but abide in their unbelief, choosing rather to serve sin, than to be redeemed and freed from it), 2 Thess. i. 8.

But especially at the judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ, both the counsels of the heart, and the words and works, will be brought into remembrance. Of this the Scripture thus speaks: " Judge nothing before the time, until the " Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden " things of darkness, *and will make manifest the counsels of* " *the heart*," 1 Cor. iv. 5. " I say unto you, *that every idle* " *word* that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof " in the day of judgment," Matt. xii. 36. " For the Son " of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his " angels, and then *he shall reward every man according to his* " *works*," Matth. xvi. 27.

§ 269.

According to the words of Christ, Matt. xxv. 31, &c. the issue of this judgment will be this, namely, that (besides the saints, and all the believers who come along with Christ),

(1.) All nations will be gathered together before him, our Lord Jesus Christ.

(2.) Among these a division will be made, when the sheep will be set at his right hand; but those who do not belong to the sheep will be placed at his left; and, according to Matt. xiii. 49. this will be executed by the angels.

(3.) Then will our Saviour first address the sheep in a very friendly and consolatory manner: " Come ye blessed " of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from " the foundation of the world," Matth. xxv. 34.

At the same time, he will bring into remembrance the good which they have done unto him, when he was either hungry or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison. But these will not recollect any good they have

ever

ever done out of love to this great King, who is sitting upon the throne of his glory. But he will answer them, "Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto *one of the least of these my brethren*, ye have done it unto "*me*." He at the same time will own all his believers, in presence of all the holy angels, and before all men, that they are his brethren, and joint heirs with him.

(4.) Then will he address those who are placed at his left hand, in a way suitable to his righteousness and holiness; saying to them, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

On which occasion, he will remind them, that they have not observed and improved the opportunity they once had of shewing love and kindness to him. "I was an "hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and "ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took "me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in "prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also an-"swer, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or "a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not "minister unto thee?" But he will answer them, "Verily "I say unto you, in as much as ye did it not to one of the "least of these, ye did it not to me."

(5.) The issue then is, "They shall go away into ever-"lasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

§ 270.

If we now take all this together, three sorts of men appear at this great judgment. For first, there are those who rose first from the dead, and are caught up to meet him in the clouds (see § 265.), coming along with him to the judgment, whom our dear Saviour openly confesses as his brethren; and who are in so close a connexion with him, that every thing which befell them he looks upon as if it had been done to himself in his own person. Secondly, The

sheep set at his right hand, who are known to none but him. Thirdly, Those who are set at his left hand, and go into everlasting punishment. Upon this head we have only to take notice of the following, namely,

(1.) The men who stand at his right hand, and inherit salvation, have not obtained it by the merit of their works, but for Jesus' sake, who became a sacrifice likewise for them.

(2.) The good which these people have done, flowed from a faith, according to Heb. xi. 6. and from a love which they had not in themselves, but by the grace of God. To them that word is also applicable: "It is God "who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good "pleasure," Phil. ii. 13.

As certain as this is, so sure it also is, that God will judge men according to their works; the Scripture plainly attesting as much, when, for instance, Rom. ii. 5, 6, after the just judgment of God has been spoken of, it is said, "Who will render to every man *according to his deeds*." Again, "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, "even *to give every man according to his ways*," Jer. xvii. 10. "To thee, O LORD, belongeth mercy, for *thou* "*rendereſt to every man according to his work*," Psal. lxii. 12. "The Son of Man *will reward every man according to* "*his works*," Matth. xvi. 27. "*Every man shall receive* "*his own reward according to his own labour*," 1 Cor. iii. 8. "*Every one shall receive the things done in his body*, accord-"ing to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," 2 Cor. v. 10. "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, *to give every man according as his work shall be*," Rev. xxii. 12.

Upon this head it is still to be observed, When our Saviour sent his twelve apostles out unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel, he said, among other things, unto them: "Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, "when ye depart out of that house, or city, shake off the "dust

"dust of your feet. Verily, I say unto you, *it shall be* "*more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day* "*of judgment*, than for that city," Matt. x. 14, 15.

From whence it is evident, that one man transgresses more than another. The sins of Sodom and Gomorrah were sins that cried unto heaven; on which account these cities were destroyed by fire and brimstone. The Israelites, unto whom the Gospel was preached, and who despised and spurned at it, transgressed, as our Lord testifies, still much more. Wherefore they have also to expect a more heavy and severe punishment at the last day than that of Sodom and Gomorrah. It is certain, therefore, according to the word of God, that HE will punish every man according to his deserts. He that heaps up sin, thereby heaps up punishment. He that transgresseth with horrible sins will have horrible punishments to undergo: and in particular, "*He* "shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed "no mercy," Jam. ii. 13.

Of EVERLASTING LIFE, *and* DAMNATION.

§ 271.

CONCERNING the everlasting torments of those who are banished from the presence of God, and the eternal life of those chosen by God, the holy Scripture speaks indeed much which is profitable to us for doctrine; but we must, however, confess, that the greatest part of it remains obscure to us: although it is not to be denied, that many whose consciences are awakened, and who do not at the same time know our Saviour, may even here feel something of that torment in which the damned will remain eternally; so it is, on the other hand, the case,

that God, according to the riches of his grace, gives a poor man, who is converted to him, a foretaste of that happiness which he shall enjoy with him to all eternity.

Of whom then does the Scripture say, that they shall not inherit life everlasting, or come into the kingdom of God, but shall be damned? In the first place, It mentions to us, those who live in manifest works of the flesh, who do not turn from them to God, do not receive JESUS in faith, but die in their sins. Thus Paul says, "The works of the flesh are "manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, unclean-"ness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, vari-"ance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, en-"vyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like; "of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in "time past, that they *who do such things shall not inherit the* "*kingdom of God*," Gal. v. 19, 20, 21. "The Son of "Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out "of his kingdom all things that offend," (children of the wicked one, who ensnare and offend others) "and them "who do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of "fire," Matth. xiii. 41. See ver. 49, 50. "Know ye "not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom "of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor ido-"laters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of "themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor "drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit "the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. See Rev. xxi. 8. "Without" (out of the city of God, Rev. xxi. 10, &c.) "are dogs and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, "and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie," Rev. xxii. 15.

Secondly, The Scripture mentions those who are like trees, which do not bring forth good fruit; who know how to do good, and yet do it not; who proceed in this wicked course; casting from them the faith in Christ, and therefore do not become new creatures, or, such trees as bring

forth good fruit. This is the language of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting "fire; for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I "was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, "and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; "sick and in prison, and ye visited me not," Matt. xxv. 41. 43. "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is "hewn down, and cast into the fire," Matt. vii. 19.; and see Matt. xxv. 30. "Every branch in me, that beareth "not fruit, he" (my Father) "taketh away," John, xv. 2. "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, "and is withered, and men gather them," (such withered branches) "and cast them into the fire, and they are burn-"ed," John, xv. 6. "For he shall have judgment without "mercy that hath shewed no mercy," Jam. ii. 13. See Matt. xviii. 23, 24.

In general, the Scripture declares, that all such shall be damned, who having heard the Gospel concerning Christ, yet do not receive it by faith, and who are therefore not clothed on with Christ, whom we put on by faith (Gal. iii. 26.), and therefore cannot stand before God. "He that "believeth not, shall be damned," Mark, xvi. 16. "He "that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath "not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of "God," John, iii. 18. See ver. 36. "And when the "King came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which "had not on a wedding garment. And he saith unto "him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, *not having a* "*wedding garment?* And he was speechless. Then said "the King to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and "take him away, and cast him into outer darkness," &c. Matt. xxii. 11. &c.

We must still add to this class those in particular who have tasted of the heavenly gift, and been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, (having received the know-

ledge

ledge of the truth) if they ſhall fall away, ſin wilfully, and, as much as in them is, crucify the Son of God afreſh, and put him to an open ſhame, tread under foot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were ſanctified, an unholy thing, and have done deſpite unto the Spirit of grace. See Heb. vi. 4, &c. chap. x. 26, &c. For perſons of this ſtamp have no more any ſacrifice for ſin, but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation which ſhall devour the adverſaries, Heb. x. 26, 27. But why ſo? Not becauſe their ſin was greater than the grace of God; but becauſe they reject Chriſt, in whom grace and forgiveneſs of ſins are alone to be found, and do deſpite unto the Spirit of Grace, reſiſting him, when he would bring them back again to the knowledge of their ſin, and to the faith in Chriſt: for he that rejecteth Chriſt, has no other propitiation; and the wrath of God abideth on him, John, iii. 36. See alſo Rev. xiv. 9, &c.

§ 272.

CONDEMNATION, or damnation, as has been ſaid already commences even in this life, with ſuch who either wilfully and wantonly ſpurn at the counſel of God concerning their ſalvation, or act in oppoſition to that inſight and knowledge of God, and of his will, which is beſtowed upon them by God. The Lord our Saviour ſays, "*He that* "*believeth not is condemned already*, becauſe he hath not be-"lieved in the name of the only begotten Son of God," John, iii. 18. & v. 36. "He that believeth not the Son "ſhall not ſee life; but *the wrath of God abideth on him*."

He that is already condemned, and upon whom the wrath of God abideth, is certainly in a damnable ſtate. To this that word of Jeſus is applicable: "Whoſoever committeth ſin *is the ſervant of ſin*," John, viii. 34. As alſo that ſentence of John: "He that committeth ſin, *is of the* "*devil*," 1 John, iii. 8. And of Paul: "To be carnally "minded

minded is *enmity against God*; yea, to be carnally minded "*is death*," Rom. viii. 5. but they who are carnal, are also carnally minded.

Now is any one a servant of sin, is he of the devil, is he an enemy of God, is he in death? then is he also a lost man, and his own heart condemns him. If his conscience should be awakened, then he also feels his misery and wretchedness, and can have no rest day or night.

But many men are like those who are drunk; and indeed they shout aloud, like drunkards, in the chains of sin, with which they are fast bound. Others are like men, who are sleeping in their misery; who are occupied with a dream of happiness, but upon their awaking find themselves in the most dismal condition. Again, others are like people that are insane, the one conceiting this and the other thing, and many a one imagines that he is such or such a great king. In a word, such men as have no life from God, do not either reflect at all upon the lamentable condition they are in, or when they see and feel it, stupify themselves with the things of the world, to which their heart is attached, making farther and farther advances every day on the broad road of sin. Here then one aspires to high things, and his thoughts are like the wheels of a clock, which never stand still; for it is always in his mind, day and night, how he may be, or become great. Another wishes to earn something, and amass wealth in this or the other way; and having proposed a certain goal to himself, which he would be glad to attain, then he has no rest day or night till he obtains what he has in view; and when this is brought about, he is still not satisfied, but his insatiable desire leads continually farther again: another seeks to feast the lusts of his flesh, and is in this quite insatiable. All his schemes and efforts are bent upon that only, which gratifies his flesh; nor is it possible to enumerate every particular which the natural man, sold under sin, makes the scope of his actions,

actions, and after which he runs with eagerness; and yet after all finds no true contentment in it. See § 167.

§ 273.

When the souls, who have spent here such a life of wretchedness, are separated from their bodies, they take all the corruption which was in them here, with them into eternity. Their idolatrous self-love, their conceit of themselves, their enmity against God, their contempt and aversion to his commandments, their discontent in his ways, their love to evil things, their resentment against this and the other person, their wrath, and hatred, and envy, their unmercifulness and implacableness, their blindness and folly, their erroneous sentiments and false judging, their impure fancies and unclean dreamings, and all else of this kind, are and remain in them. They cannot of themselves shake them off, and yet they do not come to Jesus Christ, who has alone the power to save and deliver us from our sins: their worm which gnaws, and plagues, and devours, and torments them; that is, their evil conscience dieth not. And this our Lord Jesus Christ probably means by the words thrice repeated in one discourse: "That thou mayest not "go to hell into the fire that never shall be quenched; "*where their worm dieth not*," Mark, ix. 44, &c.

There is moreover added to this their misery and wretchedness, which is already in them, and is even here an hellish torment, that they see themselves eternally deprived of all that happiness, in which the faithful through Christ have an interest. They have no comfort in Jesus Christ, and in the sacrifice he has made for us; they do not taste how gracious the Lord is; they have no feeling of the peace of God, which poor sinners enjoy, and which is incomprehensible to all creatures: they are separated from the joy in the Holy Ghost, with which the blessed of the Lord are everlastingly replenished,

replenished; of the beauteous light, and the glorious lustre, in which they would have dwelt, had they not despised the grace of God, they are eternally deprived; for they are cast out into outer darkness, Matt. viii. 12. They have no share in the praises of God with which the blessed of the Father in Heaven employ themselves unweariedly (Rev. vii. 9, &c.); for in the place where they are, there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, Matt. xxv. 30. chap. xiii. 42. They have no fellowship with God and his children, neither with the Holy Angels: for they are in the lake of fire, into which the devil, who deceiveth the whole world, is cast, Rev. xx. 10. In brief, they must give up for ever all that good which they would have possessed, if the grace of God had not been tendered to them in vain, and which is the portion of the children of God. (See Rev. vii. 14, &c.)

Thus they are in the most deplorable state, and, besides this, the Scripture says, "That the damned must go into "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt xxv. 41. That they will "have their part in the "lake, which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is "the second death," Rev. xxi. 8. "That they shall be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of "the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Thess. i. 9.

§ 274.

According to the Scripture, it is incontestible, that everlasting life doth already commence here in this life. Our Saviour says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that "heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, "*hath everlasting life*," John v. 24. "Whoso eateth my "flesh, and drinketh my blood, *hath eternal life*," John, vi. 54. "*This is life eternal*, that they know thee the only "true God" (in contradistinction to idols) "and JESUS

"Christ, whom thou hast sent," John, xvii. 3. "And "this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, "and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son of God "*hath life*," John, v. 11, 12. See John, iii. 36.

For when, through faith in Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven, a quiet conscience and an heart appeased are also given unto us. See § 127. The anxious fear, or dread of God ceases, and we, on the other hand, become disposed towards him as children; the galling yoke of sin and the devil is broken, and we are set free from the slavery of it: the Holy Ghost takes up his abode in us, replenishing us with love, peace, joy, and other good fruits: we come into a confident converse of the heart with our Lord and Saviour, and HE gives us daily fresh proofs of his love and friendliness: Are we in want of any thing, are we oppressed with any thing? In all such cases we may boldly draw nigh to Him, through Him, to our dear Father; and we may be assured, (the Holy Ghost gives us this assurance) that our prayer does not remain unheard: at the same time he gives us in our heart, the hope of our future happiness. Whoever understands and experiences all this, (but who is able to describe it all?) he also knows, that we have in a certain measure, even in this vale of tears, life everlasting.

§ 275.

BUT yet there are some, yea, many things, which, amidst all the grace we partake of, still oppress us: such as,

(1.) That sinfulness in soul and body, which we still retain, as long as we are in this tabernacle, even though sin hath not the dominion over us.

(2.) The constant danger to which we are exposed, of being tempted and overcome by that wicked enemy, who, like a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour.

(3.) The

(3.) The wicked world, with which the children of God have an intercourse, and which omits no methods of either enticing us to its own ways, or to disturb us in ours.

(4.) The weakness of the soul and body, which, though not sin in itself, doth often hinder us in the service of God and our neighbour, and causes us much pain.

(5.) Various other circumstances, which are combined and connected with the poor life, we now live in this world; all of which we cannot specify, but which often prove a burden to us.

Now, all these things, which, notwithstanding our state of grace, hinder us whilst we are in this world, from enjoying fully all blessedness, will cease as soon as we shall be eternally with the Lord: For,

(1.) Our Lord Jesus Christ, as soon as the world is ended, will make all things new, Rev. xxi. 5. And Peter says, "We, according to his promise, look for *new* heavens and a *new* earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," 2 Pet. iii. 13.

Then, when all things shall become new, and when righteousness shall dwell in the new heavens, and upon the new earth, then will he also in grace deliver our souls and bodies from that sinfulness which is still in us. This does not imply so much as that we shall be deified. No, for we shall always remain creatures. But that we shall be set free from that sinfulness, which still weighs us down, is also evident from the declaration of our Saviour, when he says, "That at the Resurrection, we shall be as the Angels of God in Heaven," Matt. xxii. 30. Luke xx. 36.

(2.) From the devil and his angels we shall have nothing farther to fear: for the devil, who deceiveth mankind, will be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, and will, without cessation, be tormented there for ever and ever, Rev. xx. 10.

(3.) The wicked world will have no intercourse with us, nor we with it; for they will be banished from the presence

of our Saviour into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels; they shall go into everlasting punishment, Matt. xxv. 41. 46.

(4.) When we shall be as the angels of God in Heaven, and when our bodies shall become like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ, then the weakness both of soul and body, and all the pain arising from thence will also be at an end.

(5.) The wretched circumstances connected with the poor life we now live in this world, will also cease; for we shall be for ever with the Lord; and, together with him, inherit all things. "We shall be heirs with God, and "joint-heirs with Christ," Rom. viii. 17. "And have an "inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth "not away reserved in Heaven for us," 1 Pet. i. 4.

What more can we then want? What can give us the least pain and sorrow? In a word, "God shall wipe away "all tears from their eyes," (the eyes of his children) "and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor "crying; neither shall there be any more pain: but "the former things are passed away," Rev. xxi. 4. See chap. vii. 15, &c.

Neither indeed will the things exist any longer, which cause sorrow, pain, crying, tears, &c.

§ 276.

FOR the rest, the believers, who now see the Lord face to face, shall not only retain there all the blessings with which they were favoured in this vale of tears; but they shall also be incredibly increased. For example, Paul was possessed of an excellent knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, he says, "We know in part, and "we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is "come, then that which is in part, shall be done away.— "For now we see through a glass, darkly, but *then face to* "*face.*

"*face.* Now I know in part, but *then I shall know, even as* "*also I am known*;" that is, as our Saviour now knows me, so shall I then know him, and every thing that is conducive to my happiness.

John says likewise the same, "Now are we the sons of "God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but "we know, that when HE shall appear we shall be like "him; for we shall *see him as he is*," 1 John, iii. 2.

Having this knowledge, when we have every thing before our eyes, which we have hitherto believed; faith ceases, that faith by which we adhered to that which we did not see; moreover, that prophesying, by which we "speak to one another to edification and exhortation, and "comfort," (according to 1 Cor. xiv. 31.) will also cease; but love (or charity) will, according to 1 Cor. xiii. 8. not only not fail, or cease, but continue with an ardour like unto the love of God and of Christ.

§ 277.

BUT when we speak of the glory and salvation, which shall be the portion of believers in life eternal, though we have indeed many an intimation of it in the Holy Scripture; yet it is always agreeable to what is said by St. Paul, "Eye "hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into "the heart of man, the things which God hath pre-"pared for them that love him," 1 Cor. ii. 9. See Isai. lxiv. 4.

For even that, which God sometimes permits his children to know of his glory, (as indeed the Scripture speaks of persons, "who have tasted of the powers of the world to "come," Heb. vi. 5.) and Paul says, "But God hath "revealed them unto us by his Spirit that, which neither "eye hath seen, nor ear heard," 1 Cor. ii. 10. yet it is only a reflection of it; and it remains beyond our reach in this time: neither could we be able to bear it. All the

glory we shall have with Christ, will cause us great joy; but at this we shall rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; that, according to 1 Pet. i. 8. we shall see with our eyes our Lord Jesus Christ, whom, though not having here seen, yet believing, we love, though now we see him not. For "We shall be ever with the Lord," 1 Thess. iv. 17. "We shall see Him as He is," 1 John, iii. 2.

We poor sinners, unto whom it is given, by grace, to believe in Jesus Christ, to love him, and to serve him, shall in truth experience what He has said, John, xii. 26. "*Where* I am, there shall also my servants be." Also, what he has obtained for us by prayer. "Father, I "will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with "me, where I am, that they may behold my glory," John, xvii. 24.

All this glory and bliss will be our portion, not for our own merits sake, not for our own worthiness sake, but out of pure grace for Christ's name's sake. "By grace are ye "saved (says Paul) through faith; and that *not of your-* "*selves*; *it is the gift of God, not of works*, lest any man "should boast," Eph. ii. 8, 9. And, God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation *by our Lord Jesus Christ*, 1 Thess. v. 9. The same is confirmed by the following words: "Though He were the Son of God, "yet learned He obedience by the things he suffered; and "being made perfect," (he said, *It is finished!*) "*He* "*became the author of eternal salvation* unto them that obey "Him," (in faith) Heb. v. 8, 9.

With which the following passages of Scripture harmonize: "This is the will of Him that sent me, that "every one that seeth the Son, and *believeth on him, may* "*have everlasting life*," John, vi. 40.

Having laid down his life for his sheep, it is now said of them: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, "and they follow me; and *I give unto them eternal life*," John,

John, x. 27, 28. Yet all in this ſenſe, "He that believeth "on the Son, *hath everlaſting life*," John, iii. 36.

From the words of Paul, "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; "ſo alſo is the reſurrection of the dead," 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42. It is clearly deducible, that, even in the reward of grace, which God will beſtow upon his children in eternal life, there will be a difference. They will all inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world, as the bleſſed of the Father, Matt. xxv. 34. Moreover, they will be *all* of them for ever with Chriſt, and Chriſt will change and glorify their vile bodies, that they may be like unto his glorious body: and all this by grace for Chriſt's ſake. Yet will a greater glory be given to one than another; perhaps with a view to his more and greater ſufferings, which he has undergone in this world, for the ſake of Chriſt and his Goſpel; as alſo with a view to his greater fidelity in the improvement made of the grace and gifts beſtowed upon him. See Matt. x. 41, 42.

Finally, the words, Gal. vi. 7, &c. are to be taken due notice of; "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for "whatſoever a man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap. For "he that ſoweth to his fleſh," (that is, doeth the will of the fleſh) "ſhall of the fleſh reap corruption: but he that "ſoweth to the Spirit," (that is, acts according to the mind of the Spirit) "ſhall of the Spirit reap life everlaſting." "And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due ſea-"ſon we ſhall reap, if we faint not."

The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt be with us all.

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