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THE

L O R D ' S S U P P E R

FULLY CONSIDERED,

IN A

R E V I E W

OF THE

HISTORY OF ITS INSTITUTION.

WITH

MEDITATIONS and EJACULATIONS suited to the
several Parts of the Ordinance.

To which are prefixed

Three DISCOURSES delivered at the LORD'S TABLE.

2 Vols. in one

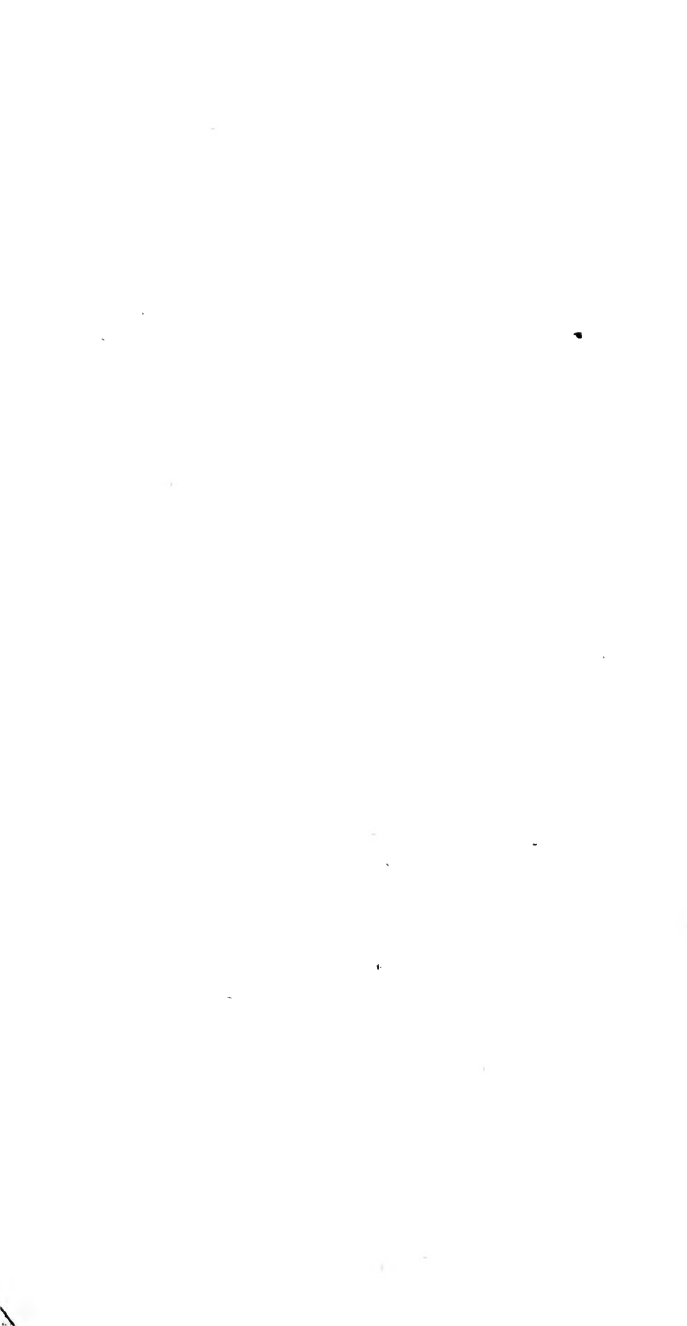
BY THE LATE REV. JOHN OWEN, D. D.

Vol I.

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1798.



TWO TREATISES

BY

D R J O H N O W E N .

VIZ.

T H E L O R D ' S S U P P E R .

FULLY CONSIDERED.

AND

TWENTY FIVE DISCOURSES

ON THE

L O R D ' S S U P P E R .

DISCOURSE I.

June 8. 1673.

FAITH is bounded in every ordinance by its objects and acts.

The general object of saving faith respecting God is the truth of his word and promises, Rom. xviii. 8. The special object of our faith in this ordinance, is the death and sufferings of Christ. Herein he is "evidently set forth crucified before our eyes." And we must act faith upon three things with respect to his death.

First, The personal love of Christ to our persons; from whence it was that he died for us, so saith the apostle "who loved me and gave himself for me," Gal. ii. 20. Were we helped to raise up our hearts by faith to apprehend Christ's love to our persons, it would greatly help us in this ordinance. The Lord lift us up above our fears, and give us a view by faith, not only of the love of Christ in general, but that he personally loved us, even this whole church.

Secondly, The sufferings of Christ. In this ordinance we are to act faith upon his death, as therein undergoing the punishment due to our sins. It is to mind us that "he made his soul an offering for sin, that he suffered the just for the unjust, bearing our sins in his own body on the tree," that they should not come into judgment.

Thirdly, The effects of Christ's death, which was the making an atonement for all our sins, the making peace between God and our souls, bringing in everlasting righteousness. Under the law we find, that "the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctified to the purifying of the flesh," and the people were thereby legally cleansed; "How much more

shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself to God, purge our consciences from dead works to serve the living God," Heb. ix. 13, 14.

The acts of faith in this ordinance are,

First, Recognition. That faith which is exercised on the death of Christ that is past, is to call it over, and make it present to the soul. It is to realize it, and bring it before us. It is not a bare remembrance of it, but such a one as makes it present. And where there is faith there is the same advantage to a believing soul in the participation of this ordinance, as there could have been if we had stood by the cross.

Secondly, Faith works by reflecting to humiliation. "They shall look on him whom they pierced, and mourn" for all their unkindness and unthankfulness to their Saviour. And when we come to this work in this ordinance, self-abasement, self-abhorrence, and brokenness of heart will be acted, and flow forth in abundance of love to Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, Another act of faith in this ordinance is, Thankfulness to God for his wisdom and grace, in contriving this way of our salvation, and thankfulness to Christ, in whom was this mind, that "being in the form of God, and thinking it no robbery to be equal with God, he took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," that he might save us from our sins. If the Lord be pleased to lead us to act faith in any of these things, in some signal and eminent manner, we shall find an advantage in this ordinance.

DISCOURSE II.

July 6. 1673.

To help you in the exercise of faith in the administration of this ordinance, I would briefly shew what it is to have a sacramental participation of Jesus Christ.

When the world had lost the understanding of this mystery, for want of spiritual light, they contrived a

means to make it up, very easy on the part of them that did partake of it, and very prodigious on the part of the priest. For he, in a few words, turns the bread into the body of Christ, and the people had no more to do but to receive it, as such, into their mouths. It was the loss of the understanding of this mystery that put them upon that invention.

There is indeed a figure or representation in this ordinance, but that is not all; when the bread is broken it is a figure, a representation that the body of Christ was broken for us. But there is also a real exhibition of Christ unto every believing soul. This is distinct from the tender of Christ in the promises of the gospel. In the promises, the person of the Father is particularly looked upon as proposing and tendering Christ to us. In this ordinance, as God exhibits him, so Christ makes an immediate tender of himself, and calls our faith to have respect to his grace, to his love and to his readiness, to unite and spiritually incorporate with us. He tenders himself to us not in general but under a special consideration, *viz.* as having made an end of sin, and done all that was to be done between God and sinners that they might be at peace.

Christ made a double presentation of himself. *First*, As the great mediator, when he offered himself a sacrifice on the cross for the accomplishing the work of man's redemption. *Secondly*, He presented himself to God in heaven, there to do whatever remained to be done with God on our behalf by his intercession. The intercession of Christ is the presentation of himself to God upon his oblation and sacrifice. He presents himself to God to do with him what remains to be done on our part to procure mercy and peace for us; and he presents himself to us in this ordinance (which answers to that intercession of Christ above, and is a counterpart of it) to do what remains to be done on the part of God; to give in peace, and mercy, and the sealed covenant to us.

There is this special exhibition or tender of Jesus Christ; and this directs to a special exercise of faith, that we may know how to receive him in this ordinance. *And First*, Let us receive him as one that hath actually accomplished the great work of making peace with God

for us; blotting out our sins, and bringing in everlasting righteousness. *Secondly*, As one that hath done this work by his death. It is a relief when we have an apprehension that Christ can do all this for us: But he does not tender himself to us as one that can or will do it upon such and such conditions as shall be prescribed, but as one that hath done it, and so we must receive him, if we intend to glorify God in this ordinance, *viz.* as having blotted out all our sins, and purchased for us eternal redemption.

Let us act faith on Jesus Christ, as one who brings along with him mercy and pardon, procured by his death: all mercy and grace that is in the heart of God and in the covenant. To have such a view of him, and so to receive him by faith is the way to give glory to God, and to have peace, and rest in our own bosoms.

DISCOURSE III.

Aug. 10. 1673.

To a due attendance on this ordinance it is requisite, not only that we be in a spiritual frame, but that we endeavour to bring and fix our hearts to some special thoughts with respect to this special ordinance; wherein the principal act on the part of God, and the principal act on our part, with respect to Christ, are gloriously represented.

The great act of God, with reference to Christ, is the exhibiting of him. God did two ways exhibit Christ.

First, There was, as I may call it, on the part of God, a legal exhibition of Christ, mentioned by the apostle, Rom. iii. 28. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins, that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." This I call God's legal exhibition of Christ, when he set him forth to undergo the curse of the law, that we might be blessed. This setting forth of Christ is here represented in this ordinance when the bread is

broken. And this is that which you may exercise your faith on in this ordinance, that as the bread is here set forth to be broken, so God, to declare his own righteousness, hath set forth Christ to be bruised and broken, to undergo the sentence of the law. Thus we have a gracious sight of God's holiness in this ordinance.

Secondly, He doth exhibit Jesus Christ in the promises of the gospel. And it might be with some respect to this ordinance, that the gospel invitations, which have the nature of promises, were in the Old Testament set forth by eating and drinking. Isa. lv. 1. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." God having provided Jesus Christ to be the food of our souls, he doth propose and exhibit him in the gospel as such. And what a blessed representation is there hereof in this ordinance? Here God makes a visible tender of Christ, as exhibited in the promises of the gospel for the life, food, and strength of our souls. To answer the promises, he here makes this tender unto us.

Thus you see the principal act of God in this ordinance, is the exhibiting of Jesus Christ unto us. The great act on our part, with respect to Christ, which is also represented in this ordinance, is the reception of him by faith. It is not enough that God hath set forth Christ to declare his righteousness, and in the promises of the gospel. Unless we receive Christ, we shall come short of all the design of grace and mercy therein. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; even to them that believe on his name," John i. 12.

If there be any thing that is brought and tendered to you, unless you receive it, there is nothing done. Things are but in the same state wherein they were. Notwithstanding all the tenders that God makes of Jesus Christ in both the ways mentioned, if there be not an act of faith in receiving him, we shall have no benefit by it. Now can any thing be more lively represented to us with respect to Christ, who is tendered to us, than our receiving of the bread in this Sacrament. But if we act not faith therein, it will be but a bare representation. There-

fore, if we believe that God is in good earnest with us in the tender that he makes of Christ, let us not be backward on our part, that the sacramental rites may not be empty signs to us.

R E M A R K S

ON THE

PLAIN ACCOUNT, &c.

I AGREE with the author of the plain account of the sacrament, in the following propositions, which he lays down as the foundation of his work.

“ I. The partaking of the Lord’s supper is not a duty of itself, or a duty apparent to us from the nature of things ; but a duty made such to Christians, by the positive institution of Jesus Christ.

“ II. All positive duties, or duties made such by institution alone, depend entirely upon the will and declaration of the person who institutes or ordains them, with respect to the real design and end of them, and consequently to the due manner of performing them.

“ III. It is plain, therefore, that the nature, the design, and the due manner of partaking of the Lord’s supper, must of necessity depend upon what Jesus Christ, who instituted it, hath declared about it.

“ IV. It cannot be doubted that he himself sufficiently declared to his first and immediate followers, the whole of what he designed should be understood by it, or implied in it.

“ V. It is of small importance, therefore, to Christians, to know what the many writers upon this subject, since the time of the evangelists and apostles, have affirmed ; much less can it be the duty of Christians to be guided by what any persons, by their own authority, or from their own imaginations, may teach concerning this duty.

“ VI. The passages in the New Testament, which re-

“ late to this duty, and they alone, are the original ac-
 “ counts of the nature and end of this institution, and the
 “ only authentic declarations, upon which we of latter
 “ ages can safely depend; being written by the imme-
 “ diate followers of our Lord; those who were witness-
 “ es themselves to the institution, or were instructed in
 “ it, either by those who were so, or by Christ himself:
 “ and consent in delivering down one and the same ac-
 “ count of this religious duty.

“ VII. The writers of the New Testament give an
 “ account of the institution of the Lord’s supper, in the
 “ following passages; which therefore are principally to
 “ be regarded: *viz.* St Matthew, chap. xxvi. ver. 26;
 “ &c. St Mark, chap. xiv. ver. 22, &c. St Luke,
 “ chap. xxii. ver. 19, &c. And St Paul, 1 Cor. chap.
 “ xi. ver. 23, &c.”

And after this author’s example, I have made it my
 care to explain these passages that give us the account of
 this institution, that all who are concerned may be led
 into a right way of judging about it, and be directed
 to the whole of their duty in observing it: For I think
 with him, that this method of examining into the na-
 ture and end of this ordinance, must needs recommend
 itself to every one who has “ a sincere desire that the
 “ doctrine of Christ alone should prevail in a matter,
 “ which must depend upon his will, and can depend up-
 “ on nothing else.” Plain account, preface, p. 8. O&A-
 vo edition.

I cannot therefore but fancy, that we are like two
 friendly travellers, who being bound to the same place,
 set out together, and are taking the same road; but alas!
 before we are got half way to our journey’s end, I am
 forced to leave our author, and go on by myself, because
 he sits down and will go no farther.

This “ the sitting down in the way,” seems to me to
 be a just representation of their case, who take up with
 the religion of the means as sufficient to answer all the
 purposes of being religious, and neglect the religion of
 the end; who think that reading and hearing of the word,
 praying to God, partaking of the sacrament, &c. are all
 to which they need attend, and are unconcerned about
 being truly pious.

I do not speak this with the least design to reflect up-

on the supposed author of the plain account; a friend to the right and liberties of mankind; a person of a fair reputation, and one whose piety I have no reason to call in question: but were his character the very reverse of all this, I have nothing here to do with it; for all my concern is with his book. And when I consider him purely as a writer of that, I cannot but think that he comes under this censure. For such is his manner of treating the Lord's supper, that it may justly be said of him, that he leaves out the religion of the end of this institution, and takes up with the religion of the means, as answering all the good purposes that are to be served by the ordinance.

That which I call the religion of the means, is the observing the rites which our Lord has instituted, and commanded us to observe in remembrance of him, and the being serious in remembering him: and that which I speak of as the religion of the end, is the being found in those duties to which the Sacramental rites are directing us; and for the sake of which Christ hath commanded us to observe these rites in remembrance of him.

It cannot be justly said of the plain account, that it takes no notice of the religion of the end; for it tells us "that the nature of the thing itself, (this holy institution) considered in all its circumstances, directs the mind of a Christian to many thoughts, which are of the greatest importance to himself, and may thus prove, by its own tendency and good effect upon a moral agent, not only an act of obedience to his Lord's command; but a mean leading to his own greater increase in all that is worthy of a man and a Christian." p. 106. and several other passages there are in this book to the same purpose, particularly p. 156, 181.

But after all so much is said of the remembrance of Christ, and so little of the end of this remembrance, that it is not at all to be wondered at, that the admirers of the plain account should take up with the notion, "that the serious remembrance of Christ is all that about which they need to concern themselves, when they are at his table."

And indeed this is the very doctrine that the author is teaching us: For he tells us, that the important thoughts to which the institution may direct the mind of

a Christian, “ are not absolutely necessary to the performance of the duty, p. 106. That the essence of this duty consists in the remembrance of Christ, p. 103. That to eat this bread, and drink this wine, as becomes Christians, in a religious remembrance of Christ’s death, is truly and sufficiently to answer the end of the institution, p. 117. That at the time of your own partaking of the bread and wine, the great point (and indeed the only point essential, or absolutely necessary,) is the attendance of the mind upon that remembrance of Christ, which distinguishes the eating this bread, and the drinking this wine, from common eating and drinking, Page 118. And that, the minister’s putting you in mind of your duty of eating and drinking in remembrance of Christ’s death, at the instant of delivering the bread and cup, secures you from all such deviation of thought or improper behaviour, as can affect the essence of this religious action; and directing you to the remembrance of what was designed to be now religiously remembered, makes it impracticable for you, if you are truly serious, and in earnest, to eat or drink *unworthily*. Page 120.”

This doctrine having a natural tendency to make as many as receive it careless or rather wholly unconcerned, about the religion of the end, when they are at the Lord’s table, is likely to have so ill an effect upon communicants, that I think it necessary to examine it, and shew that it has no good foundation to support it.

The author supposes that he finds this doctrine in the history of the institution of the Lord’s supper: For having given us this history, in the words of three of the evangelists, and St Paul, under his 7th proposition; he thus proceeds,

“ VIII. It appears from these passages that the end for which our Lord instituted this duty, was the remembrance of himself.

“ IX. Whoever therefore in a serious and religious sense of his relation to Christ, as his disciple, performs these actions of eating bread, and drinking wine in remembrance of Christ, as of a person corporally absent from his disciples, most certainly performs them agreeably to the end of the institution declared by Christ himself, and his immediate disciples.”

But what is the point to be proved? Not that the remembrance of Christ is one end of this institution, for that I readily grant; but that this remembrance is the *sole* or *chief* and *ultimate* end of it. And I deny that this appears from any of the passages referred to.

It is plain indeed that the remembrance of Christ, is the only end of the institution, that is spoken of in express words. For he did not say, "This do that you may be found in this or that duty, as that you may love me, for instance;" but only, "This do in remembrance of me:" But may not more be implied in his words than they express? Is it not thus in several instances of the same nature with this? How frequently are hearing, knowing, considering, &c. the only things mentioned; and with a design to put us upon those duties, and that carriage to which these acts should in reason be leading us? Nay, thus it is as to the remembrance of God. For the words of Solomon, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth," Eccl. xii. 1. are readily understood as meaning the same as if he had said, "Fear God, keep his commandments, in the days of thy youth," ver. 13. For it cannot be thought that he recommends this remembrance, as what alone and by itself, will be of any service: No, but as a means leading to such an end. And by a parity of reason we may say, that Christ did not institute such rites, and command us to observe them in remembrance of himself, and so recommend this remembrance to us, as what alone, and by itself will be of service to us; no, but as proper to lead us to such duties as are agreeable to the nature of this remembrance.

It appears from the account that St Paul gives us of the behaviour of the Corinthians, 1 Cor. xi. 20, &c. that they did not go so far as this, the serious remembrance of Christ at his table. For, not discerning the Lord's body, that is, not considering the sacramental bread and wine, as signifying his body and blood, they did eat and drink as at a common meal, or as if this were only the continuation of a foregoing entertainment, and even without observing the rules of temperance; and, eating and drinking thus unworthily, they were guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, or, of an high offence.

and indignity against his body and blood; and so were eating and drinking damnation, or judgment to themselves; that is, profaning this ordinance, they laid themselves justly open to the displeasure of Almighty God, p. 64.—67.

And it must be owned, that we are not to think, that they who eat this bread, and drink this wine in a serious remembrance of Christ, do act so unworthily, and so unsuitably to the institution, as these Corinthians. And, as they are not, like them, profaning this ordinance, they have not the least cause to fear “any of those threatenings of St Paul, which belong only to those who do so” profane it, p. 122.

But I cannot see the force of our author’s reasoning, *viz.* “That he who does truly discern the Lord’s body, “by remembering it in the most serious manner, has therefore performed this one duty in a proper manner,” p. 88. He has not indeed been eating and drinking unworthily, in the apostle’s sense of the phrase; but, as the not being as wicked as some other men are, is no proof of a person’s being righteous, so his not behaving at the Lord’s table as the Corinthian sinners behaved themselves, is no proof of his performing the duty in a proper manner, so as to answer the end of it.

There are degrees of unworthy receiving, and they may eat and drink unworthily, though not in St Paul’s sense, who do not imitate the Corinthians in “the one particular instance of their indecency. Whatever temper or behaviour, at the time of eating and drinking, “is utterly unsuitable to the design of the duty, must, “in its degree, come under the censure of this passage,” p. 85. Supposing therefore that there be a serious, and in this sense, a religious remembrance of Christ, that is, there is some regard to his institution, yet if this remembrance has no good effect upon us, and does not lead us to those duties to which in reason it should lead us, as we have a temper and behaviour unsuitable to the design of the duty, so we are in some measure, unworthy receivers, though not in that degree, as the Corinthians were.

Besides, “to perform the duty so, as that it may be

“ of advantage to us, is, in other words, to perform
 “ it worthily ; or in a manner suitable to the nature and
 “ end of it,” p. 79. And from this it follows, by the
 rule of contraries, that to perform the duty so, as that it
 cannot be of any advantage to us, is to perform it un-
 worthily, or in a manner unsuitable to its nature and end.
 And from these things we may argue the necessity of
 being found in other duties besides a serious remembrance
 of Christ, when we are at his table : For a remembrance
 of him that is alone, and has no good effect upon us, like
 a faith that is alone without works, is dead, and cannot
 profit us, James ii. 17, &c.

It is true, as the author speaks upon another occasion,
 “ We are not to confound duties ; and make that pecu-
 “ liar to the holy communion, which was never made pec-
 “ culiar to it by Christ, or his apostles ; which is proper
 “ for every season of our time, and every part of our life,
 “ and which would have been equally a duty, whether
 “ it had pleased our Lord to institute the holy commu-
 “ nion or not,” p. 76. But what is peculiar to the ho-
 ly communion ? Nothing, as I see, but the obeying the
 command of Christ, in observing the rites which he has
 instituted, *viz.*, the breaking of the consecrated bread, and
 the taking and eating of it, as the symbol of his body,
 given and broken for us, together with the receiving and
 drinking of the consecrated cup, as what he gives us as
 the symbol of his blood, “ the blood of the new covenant,
 “ shed for us and for many, for the remission of sins ;”
 and as being the token and seal of this covenant, both on
 God’s part, and on our’s. For, as to even the remem-
 brance of Christ, in which the essence of this duty is made
 to consist, p. 103. it cannot justly be said to be peculiar
 to the holy communion : for since whatever we do in
 word or deed, we are to do all in the name of the Lord
 Jesus, Col. iii. 17. we are certainly to remember him in
 all we do.

The very same duties may be suitable to different or-
 dinances, which are not peculiar to any one of them.
 Thus it is as to the duty of preparation for the worship
 of God, which our author justly speaks of as not pecu-
 liar to the holy communion. For though not peculiar
 to it, yet, as he rightly observes, “ it is and must be, al-

“ways of great use to Christians,” p. 76. And it suits all other ordinances as well as this. The same may be said of that faith in Christ, and that covenanting with God, of which I speak in the review. These are duties, which “may be done every day, and every hour,” p. 176. when we are praying to God, or reading or hearing his word, as well as when we partake the sacrament: But it must be owned, that they are suitable, though not peculiar to this ordinance, because its rites, as we shall see, direct and encourage us to these duties in particular; suitable, did I say, nay, they are necessary to render it useful and advantageous to us: for then, and then only, when the remembrance of the benefits of Christ’s body broken, and blood shed, is the mean of leading us to these duties, it is one mean of procuring these benefits, p. 159.

I agree with our author, that there is a mistake in calling the “Lord’s supper a renewal of the new covenant on our part,” p. 164. For we cannot infer, from our partaking of this sacrament, that we have been covenanting with God, and that he is our God, in covenant with us. And the like we may say of faith, or believing in Christ; we cannot conclude, that we have been found in this duty, from our having been eating and drinking at his table.

But it may reasonably be thought, that as the sacramental cup is always to be considered, as will be shewn, as the seal of the new covenant, on God’s part, so, answerably to this, we are always to receive it in token of our hearty and thankful acceptance of this covenant, and of our giving up ourselves in covenant unto God in return. It may likewise be thought, that as Christ is always set before us, in the sacrament, as having given his body to be broken for us, and as having shed his blood for us, so it is always our duty to look to him by faith, for the benefits of his body broken, and blood shed, whenever we partake of this bread and this wine.

And where we are found in these duties, when observing the sacramental rites, we not only remember the benefits flowing from Christ’s sufferings and death, but actually partake of them; not all indeed, but some of these benefits, and those so considerable, as that we may look upon them as the pledge and earnest of the rest.

“ To say that this communion is the actual partaking of all the benefits of Christ’s body broken and blood shed ; or in other words, of his living and dying for our good, is to put that upon one single act of religious obedience, which is by our blessed Lord made to depend upon the whole system of all virtues united,” p. 158. But this no ways affects me ; for I do not say, that this communion is the actual partaking of these benefits : And I do not put this partaking of them, upon this one single act of obedience, the observing the sacramental rites, no ; but upon that which the gospel puts it upon, *viz.* That faith in Jesus Christ, which constrains us to give up ourselves in covenant unto God as his servants ; and where there is this faith, there is the whole system of all virtues united.

It is the same, as to the remission of our past sins through Jesus Christ. “ If it be asked, (says our author page 144.) do we not partake of this benefit, by our partaking of the Lord’s supper worthily ? I must answer, no ; if the gospel be true.” This also is no good objection to any thing that I assert. For I do not say that we partake of the remission of sins, by partaking of the Lord’s supper, no ; but that on supposition that we do believe in Christ, and covenant with God, when we partake of the Lord’s supper, we then partake of this benefit : and thus it evidently is, if the gospel be true ; for “ he that believeth on him is not condemned,” John iii. 18. And the covenanting with God, being the same with yielding ourselves to him as his servants, supposes, or includes the “ forsaking our wicked ways and unrighteous thoughts, and the returning to the Lord.” And as to every one who does this, he may be fully assured, that God has “ mercy on him, and abundantly pardons him,” Isa. lv. 7.

It follows, “ For in that, (the gospel,) no pardon of past sins is promised, or given, unless to those just converted, renouncing their sins, and baptized into the Christian faith ; or to those, who have sinned after baptism, actually amend their lives,” page 144. But it ought to be observed, that wherever there is that faith in the Lord Jesus, which leads us to the covenanting

with God, there is a real conversion, and amendment ; not only a foundation laid for this amendment, and a disposition towards it, but the beginning of it.

I cannot, therefore, but think there is a mistake in this that is added, “ A disposition towards the amendment of our lives, and a resolution to amend, are very good steps ; but neither this disposition, nor this resolution, let them be never so sincere, are themselves actual amendment.” Page 145. This holds true, indeed, of our carriage to our fellow creatures, but not of our carriage to God. That which makes the difference in the two cases, is the different nature of the law of men, and the law of God. For as the law of men respects only the outward actions, so it is not broken, but by some overt-act ; but the law of God respecting the heart, as well as outward actions, may be broken by a disposition, or resolution, that is contrary to it, as well as by an outward action : and from this it evidently follows, that such a disposition or resolution, as is agreeable to this law, may be justly called an actual amendment.

This, properly and strictly speaking, is the amendment of the heart, which is often considered as different from the amendment of life : but when it is said, “ that the forgiveness of sins is promised to those who amend their lives,” to speak according to the gospel, we must understand the proposition, as taking in the amendment of the heart. And, indeed, this amendment is the first and great thing in religion ; and as where there is this it will shew itself in the amendment of the life ; so all amendment of the life is no better than hypocrisy in the sight of God, where that of the heart is wanting.

Supposing, therefore, that “ actual amendment is so necessary a qualification, that there is no forgiveness of sins after baptism promised without it : and that no act of religion, without this, can be a title to such forgiveness, and that it cannot be obtained without a practice, conformable to the laws of the gospel.” Page 145. This is no ways inconsistent with saying, “ that we partake of this benefit when at the Lord’s table, we believe in Christ, and covenant with God ;” because when we are found in these duties, there is an actual amendment ; and as a good foundation is then laid for a

practice conformable to the laws of the gospel, so there is the beginning of such a practice.

But our author thinks it evident, from what he has laid down, “that the proper and consistent way of expression upon this subject, is this,” page 179. “That partaking worthily of the Lord’s supper is one particular duty of a Christian; that this partaking of it worthily is no more than the performance of one duty, in a manner, and with dispositions suitable to the design and nature of it: and therefore ought not to be accounted of any more importance towards the securing our acceptance with God, than the performance of a single duty of this sort can be.” To which I answer, That if by partaking worthily of the Lord’s supper be meant the partaking of it with a serious, but inefficacious remembrance of Christ, it can scarce be said to be so much as the performance of one duty, for it is far from being the whole of it, and it is of no importance at all towards the securing our acceptance with God: but if by this partaking worthily be meant the partaking of the Lord’s supper, in a manner, and with dispositions suitable to the design and nature of it; (which I think is the right notion of partaking worthily,) if it may be said to be but one duty; yet it is a duty of such a sort, that like the fear and love of God, it gives us reason to conclude that they are accepted of him, through Jesus Christ, who are really found in it. As therefore all they, who when partaking of the Lord’s supper, do believe in Christ, and covenant with God, performing the duty in a manner, and with dispositions suitable to its design and nature, do partake of it worthily; so we may be assured that they all enjoy this blessedness.

There is nothing contradictory to this in the author’s following words, “that every Christian is obliged not only to perform this duty worthily, but every other duty of his religion, upon principles suitable to its nature; and as to final acceptance with God through Christ, ought to have his eye constantly, and particularly, upon the whole system of moral duties, upon which, throughout the New Testament, his acceptance is constantly put; and upon those catalogues of vices, which are as constantly there declared to exclude all who practise them from the kingdom of heaven, let their religious

“performances in other respects be what they will,” page 180. And I shall not digress from the subject I am upon, to make any remarks on this passage; but join with the author in recommending to communicants the two things that are here mentioned.

The one is their being concerned about the worthy performance of every duty of our religion; every ordinance of divine service, as well as the Lord's supper, as prayer to God, the reading and hearing his word, &c. To be trifling and careless in these, is likely to have a bad effect upon us, and to make us the same in this duty; but to perform these upon principles, and in a manner suitable to their nature, with such dispositions and affections of soul, as they may call for, so as that they may be really useful to us, is a proper mean to prepare us for the worthy partaking of this ordinance, and to quicken us to our duty in all other instances.

The other thing above mentioned, is the having a regard to all moral duties, as well as positive institutions. This is the same as to say, that we should do our duty at all other times, and in all other places, as well as when we are at the Lord's table, or attend on any ordinance of divine service, whether in the church, or in the closet. And as to this, communicants stand upon a level with all others. They can have no acceptance with God, either here or hereafter, without a sincere and hearty concern about moral duties, or in other words, without “a respect unto all God's commandments,” Psal. cxix. 6.

Our blessed Saviour, the Judge of all the world, has expressly assured us, That “not every one that saith unto him, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he alone that doeth the will of his Father which is in heaven,” Mat. vii. 21. And that it will not at all avail us, to plead at the last day “we have eaten and drunk in thy presence;” for if found among the “workers of iniquity, he will answer, and say unto us, I know you not whence you are, depart from me,” Luke xiii. 25, &c.

Moral duties are constantly recommended to us, as “the weightier matters of the law;” as far beyond any positive institutions; as what we are in the first place to be the doers of, though we are “not to leave the other undone,” Mat. xxiii. 23. These are duties of the utmost importance; and communicants, as well as others

cannot easily be too often put in mind of them. These duties, the ministers of the word are to teach ; to the practice of them, they are to exhort their people, 1 Tim. vi. 2. "These things they are to affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works : These things are good and profitable unto men," Tit. iii. 8.

But alas ! how many persons may we meet with, who spend a great deal of time and pains in this and the other religious service, and are serious in what they do, when they are so far from having a regard to the whole system of moral duties, that they practise one, or more of the vices which the New Testament does evidently speak of, as excluding men from the kingdom of heaven. They can have no peace in their minds, if they do not read so many chapters, and say so many prayers every day, and hear so many sermons every week, and partake of the sacrament at all opportunities ; but it gives them not the least uneasiness to neglect the duties of their places and relations ; to be "lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God ;" to be "covetous, unrighteous, fornicators, adulterers, drunkards." &c. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

Do not speak peace, or prophesy smooth things to such persons. "O my soul come not thou into their secret." "Such a doctrine as this," that leads Christians to think, that if they have but a regard to this and the other religious performance, they may partake of all the benefits of Christ's life and death, although they neglect moral duties, and live in the practice of vice, "would, in my opinion, be inconsistent with the plainest declarations of the gospel, and not only inconsistent with, but directly contrary and destructive to the main design of it," p. 144.

I have here made use of our author's words, because none can better express my sense, But whereas he speaks of that passage of St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 16. "in which the partaking of the cup and of the bread at the Lord's table, is said to be the communion of the blood and of the body of Christ ;" and tells us, that he had shewn that the words do not signify "an actual partaking of all the benefits of his sufferings and death for our sakes :?" and whereas he asserts, "that this one single instance of obedience to the will of God, how-

“ ever worthily performed and suitably to its nature
 “ and end, cannot be the partaking of these benefits,
 p 144 ; It may be proper to observe, that although there
 may be this instance of obedience to the will of God
 where we do not partake of these benefits, yet, if it be
 so worthily performed, and so suitably to its nature as to
 lead us to, and be attended with faith in Christ, and the
 covenanting with God, we are certainly partakers of
 them.

I hope the reader will not forget that which was be-
 fore observed, *viz.* that faith in Christ and the cove-
 nanting with God are of such a nature as to lead us to
 all other duties ; so that the saying, that where found in
 these, we are partakers of the benefits of Christ’s death,
 is not to put this partaking of these benefits upon one
 single instance of obedience to the will of God. And I
 should not have mentioned it here, but for the sake of
 this useful inference that flows from it, *viz.* that he, and
 he only, may be justly said to be found in these things at
 the Lord’s table, and to be a partaker of this blessedness
 who is led to the sincere “ practice of his whole duty,
 “ and of that universal holiness, without which no man
 “ shall see the Lord, p. 179.

If therefore a wicked or unrighteous person, at his
 coming from the Lord’s table, should speak after this
 manner, “ Now it is well with me, my sins are all par-
 “ doned ; my salvation is secured ; for by faith I have
 “ received Christ as my Saviour, when receiving the
 “ symbols of his body given and broken for me, and of
 “ his blood shed for the remission of my sins. Now I
 “ may look on all the blessings of the new covenant as
 “ mine, for I have been drinking of the sacramental cup,
 “ the token and seal of this covenant, both on God’s
 “ part and on our’s.” If this, I say, be the language of
 a wicked and unrighteous communicant, we may thus an-
 swer ; “ But what is thy faith in Christ ? If it be of the
 “ right kind, that which is justifying, and will be saving,
 “ shew it by thy works : “ Wilt thou know, O vain man,
 “ that faith without works is dead,” James ii. 20.
 “ Why shouldst thou please thyself with the thoughts
 “ that the blessings of the new covenant are thine, when
 “ thou art not God’s covenant servant, devoted to his
 “ fear ? the most that can with reason be said of what

“ thou hast been doing, is, thou hast paid some outward re-
 “ spect unto God, but thy heart was far from Him. Why
 “ shouldst thou think that thou hast said unto him with
 “ thy soul, I am thy servant, when thou art not for serv-
 “ ing him? why shouldst thou fancy that thou hast any
 “ part or lot in his favour, when thy heart is not right
 “ in his sight, sound in his statutes? repent therefore of
 “ all thy wickedness, and pray God that it may be for-
 “ given thee. How reasonable is this advice! how
 “ suitable to thy case! for it is easy to perceive that
 “ thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of
 “ iniquity,” Acts viii. 21, &c.

The author observes, that we are not to “ think it a-
 “ ny exaltation of Christ’s Institution, to magnify it in-
 “ to what he never designed it to be,” p. 181. But since,
 as will appear from the review, the sacramental rites are
 in their nature proper to direct and encourage us to
 faith in him, and the covenanting with God, how can
 we think any other than that they were instituted with
 a design, not only to keep up the remembrance of Christ,
 but to lead us also to the doing of these duties. And to
 say, that when found in them at the Lord’s table, we
 partake of the benefits of his sufferings and death, is not
 to magnify this institution, because, as we have seen, it
 does not put the partaking of these benefits upon the
 observing it; but it is rather to magnify these duties;
 or to speak more properly, it is to magnify the riches
 of the grace of God, in his kindness towards us through
 Jesus Christ, in promising those benefits to all such as
 are found in these duties.

These duties, indeed, as has been said, “ are not pe-
 “ culiar to the holy communion, but may be done every
 “ day and every hour,” p. 176. when we pray to God,
 or read, or hear his word, or meditate on what we have
 read or heard, as well as when we are at the Lord’s ta-
 ble: and since the benefits of his sufferings and death
 are promised to all who are found in these duties, the
 attending on this ordinance cannot justly be said to be
 absolutely necessary to our enjoying these benefits: but
 we ought to consider, that that may be of great service
 to us that is not absolutely necessary to our blessedness.

And, to reason a little with my reader on this head,

how canst thou answer it to God and to thine own conscience, to live in the neglect of any ordinance of divine appointment? Has our blessed Lord and Saviour said, *This do*, and wilt thou not do it? Has he commanded us to observe certain rites in remembrance of himself, he who has given us the most amazing proof of his love, and wilt thou not readily, cheerfully observe them? Why shouldst thou think that thou art his disciple indeed, when thou dost not walk in all his commandments and ordinances?

Besides, it ought to be considered, that some duties are of such importance and consequence, that as we should be sure not to fail of being found in them, so it will be good for us often to repeat them; the oftener the better; the more holy we are like to be in all manner of conversation; the greater and more continued comfort and joy we may look for in this world; and the more reason we shall have for the fullest hopes, that an "entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Of this nature is faith in God, faith in his promises, the love and fear of him, &c. And the same may be said of faith in Christ, and the covenanting with God that we will be his servants. And as there are several ordinances of divine service, to each of which every one of those duties is suitable and seasonable; so they all agree in this, the being means proper to put us upon the repetition of them: And on this account it is our wisdom to attend on each of these ordinances as often as the season for observing them may return.

To this I may add, that the attending on one ordinance with dispositions and in a manner suitable to the design and nature of it, is the way to prepare us, as was before hinted, for other ordinances, and to render them the more useful to us. And from this it follows, by the rule of contraries, that the neglect of any one ordinance, or the being careless in observing it, is the way to unfit us for others, and to hinder us of that benefit we might otherwise have received from attending on them.

But alas! so many are kept off from the Lord's table by their fears, lest not exercising that faith in Christ, which constrains them to yield themselves to God, as his

servants, they should eat and drink damnation to themselves, that it will be necessary to offer something for their relief.

And since the fears of these persons are occasioned by the threatenings of St Paul to the Corinthians, it may be proper to remind them of that, which was before observed, *viz.* that as they do not, like these sinners, profane the institution, so it cannot be justly said that those threatenings belong to them.

But why should they fear incurring the displeasure of God, and drawing down his judgments upon themselves, by going to the Lord's table, who are really concerned to be found in the duties to which the institution directs and encourages them? With how much more reason may they hope that all the good ends of the ordinance will be answered; and that their observing of it will be for their comfort, as well as quickening in the service of God?

It must be owned that it is very desirable indeed for every communicant to be assured of this, that he has received Christ Jesus the Lord by faith in him, and given up himself in covenant unto God, as his servant. The more he is assured of this, the more likely he is to have all such dispositions and affections of soul, when he is at the Lord's table, as are suitable to the nature of the institution: But we are not to look upon this assurance as absolutely necessary to fit us for this ordinance; so that if the attending on it be not our sin, yet it is at best, unprofitable and in vain, where this assurance is wanting.

Supposing therefore that thou canst not say how it has been with thee, as to these duties, in time past, yet if it be now thy heart's desire and prayer to God, that thou mayst be found in them, it will be reasonable for thee to conclude that he invites thee to his table, who calleth on the simple in this manner; "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled: forsake the foolish, and live, and go in the way of understanding," Prov. ix. 5, 6. Surely it will be good for thee to accept of his kind invitation.

"Fear not then, neither be discouraged, but arise and be doing: May the Lord be with thee! Blessed are

they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled," Mat. v. 6. "The meek shall eat, and be satisfied: They shall praise the Lord, that seek him; your heart shall live for ever," Psalm xxii. 26.

A
R E V I E W
O F T H E
HISTORY of the Institution of the
LORD'S SUPPER.

C H A P I.
O f t h e B R E A D.

THE account which the writers of the New Testament have given us of the institution of this first part of the Lord's supper, we have in the following passages :

St. Mat. xxvi. 26. *As they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, take, eat this is my body.*

St. Mark xiv. 22. *As they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed and brake it, and gave to them and said, take, eat, this is my body.*

St. Luke xxii. 19. *He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, this is my body, which is given for you : This do in remembrance of me.*

St. Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 23, 24. *The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread ; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for you : this do in remembrance of me.*

These passages may be thus disposed in the order of an harmony :

The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, as they were eating, took bread; and when he had blessed it, and given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, This is my body which is given and broken for you : This do in remembrance of me.

SECTION I.

The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed, as they were eating, took bread.

1. The Lord's supper was instituted by our blessed Saviour, when he knew that the dreadful hour of his sufferings was at hand; but a little before he went into the garden, where such terrors set themselves in array against him, that "being in an agony, his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground," Luke xvii. 44. and not many hours before he was crucified, and "gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God."

2. This circumstance of the institution of this ordinance may lead us to think that our Lord did not command us to observe it, merely to display his own authority, and do honour to himself; but from a concern for our good, and because he knew that the right observance of it would be very much for our advantage.

3. Christ had been eating the Paschal supper with his disciples, and it may be, they had a piece of the Lamb in their mouths, which was to be their last morsel *, and were just about to swallow it, when he took the bread; and if so, they had reason to attend to what he was doing; for they knew that he did not design it for their use in that supper, but for some other purpose.

4. The bread which Jesus took, was unleavened: It was necessary that he should make use of such bread, because

* See Ainsworth, on Evol. x'l. 8.

no other was to be found in the houses of the Jews at that time, Exod. xii. 19. But as we are not under the same necessity; so, for all that appears in Scripture, we may use that which we can most conveniently come at, whether it be leavened or unleavened, and whether it be made of wheat or rye, or any other grain.

5. We do not find that any thing was said before the prayer of our Lord to let the disciples know the meaning of his taking the bread; but it is reasonable to suppose that he took it in such a manner, as to let them see that he had some extraordinary purpose to serve by it. Probably, they were thinking that he designed to make use of it for the conveying to them some divine instruction, as he had done but a little before this, by the washing of their feet*.

6 But it may be thought that the prayer of Christ, or however that which he did and said immediately after he had ended his prayer, fully satisfied all, who were present, that his taking of the bread was the separating of it from that which was common, and consecrating of it, or the setting it apart to a sacred use.

7. And as this is the meaning of our taking bread for the Lord's supper, so it may be observed that, as soon as ever it is set upon the table, we are to put a difference between that and common bread. The nature of it is not indeed altered, either by setting it upon the table, or by the minister's taking it into his hands, or by any words he may pronounce over it, no; it is as much bread, and the same bread it was before; but we are then to look upon it as holy to the Lord, set apart for his worship.

* See Doddridge's harmony on John xiii. 4. &c.

SECTION II.

And when he had blessed it, and given thanks, he brake it.

1. St Luke and St. Paul tell us, that Jesus took bread, and gave thanks, St. Matthew and St. Mark say that he blessed it; but they all mean the same action, *viz.* the prayer that our Lord made upon this occasion. And it is natural to think that as in this, he blessed the bread which he had taken; so in this also, he gave thanks, that is, in other words, he prayed to God with thanksgiving for his blessing upon it.

2. Prayer to God with thanksgiving is our reasonable service, and never more necessary, and seasonable, than when we are entering on this solemn ordinance. No wonder, therefore, that our Lord should here recommend it to us by his own example; and from this it follows, that it must certainly be very proper for us to consider what those things are, for which we are here to pray and give thanks; but this may be learnt from the meditations and ejaculations in the last part of this book.

3. The breaking of the bread, is taken notice of by each of the sacred writers, who speaks of the institution of the Lord's supper, and they all place it in the same order, *viz.* just after his praying to God, with thanksgiving, for his blessing upon it.

4. Our Saviour took, as we may think, but one of the loaves or cakes which lay upon the table, and he brake it, not only that he might divide it amongst his disciples, who were to take and eat of it, and to teach them to do the same in after times, in the celebration of this ordinance; but that it might the better serve for that which, as we shall see, he designed it for, *viz.* to be the symbol, or sign of his broken body. One of the loaves, while whole and unbroken, might have served for a symbol of Christ, "the bread of life." John vi. 35. that "bread which came down from heaven,"

ver. 32. But it must be broken, to be the proper symbol of his body broken for us on the cross.

It is next observed, that our Lord gave his disciples the bread which he had broken, and commanded them to take and eat ; but that we may see the reason of these things, it will be proper for us to consider, first, some of the words that he spake as he was putting it into their hands.



SECTION III.

This is my body.

1. The Papists tell us that these words are to be taken literally, and that as soon as ever they are pronounced by the priest, if with a proper intention, a substantial change is made of the bread into the natural body of Christ ; that very body which was born of the Virgin Mary, and which was nailed to the cross ; as the like change is also made of the wine in the cup, upon the priest's saying over it, this cup is my blood ; this they call transubstantiation.

2. But how is it possible that I should look on that as the body of Christ, which I see, and taste, and feel to be bread, and which has the smell, not of flesh, but of bread ! Is it said, " That I must not give credit to my senses, but believe the words of our Lord Jesus," I may very well ask, " why then should the apostles have given credit to their hearing ? might not that single sense more easily have deceived them than all the rest of their senses ? and if so, how could they have been satisfied that Christ said of the bread, this is my body ? Besides, if I am not to believe my senses, how can I be satisfied that there is such a book as that we call the New Testament ; and that such words are to be found in it ? or how can I be certain as to any fact whatsoever, that is said to have been done by another as for instance, the miracles said to have been wrought by Jesus, and that grand fact, in particular, on which Christianity is founded, the resurrection

“ of Christ ? 1 Cor. xv. 17. For, if no credit is to be given to the senses, they who have written of these things, and who, as they tell us, were eye-witnesses of them, 1 John i. 1. might have been deceived, and have only fancied that they saw them done ; or I may be mistaken, and only dream that I read of them in their writings.”

3. But granting that our Lord said of the bread, this is my body, and allowing the truth of the scripture history in all other particulars ; yet we may be very sure that he did not in the least design to contradict the evidence of sense, and that he was far from desiring his disciples to believe that to be his natural body, which, as far as they could judge of it by their senses, was no other than bread ; because within a few days “ shewing himself alive to them after his passion, he appealed to their senses, and called on them to make use of their senses, in order to their being satisfied that his body was raised from the dead, and that they were not deluded by a ghost and apparition : For he spake to them in this manner, “ why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts ? behold my hands and my feet, that that it is I myself ; handle me, and see, for a spirit has not flesh and bones as ye see me have.” Luke xxiv. 38, 39. And agreeably to this, “ when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet,” ver. 40. and his side also, John xx. 20. And a little after he took the like method for the conviction of St Thomas, who was not then with the disciples, ver. 27.

4. But is not this acting a very inconsistent part, for Christ, at one time to tell his disciples that that was his natural body, which to judge of it by their senses they could look upon as no other than bread ; and a few days after, to desire them to make use of their senses to satisfy themselves that it was a real body, and not a mere ghost, or phantom, that stood before them ?

5. St Luke speaks of these proofs of the resurrection of Jesus, that the apostles had from their senses, as infallible, Acts i. 2, 3. And is it not evident to a demonstration that our Lord also had the same notion of these proofs, since he left it altogether to the senses of those, who doubted of it, to give them full satisfaction concern-

ing it : here, therefore, we may rest the matter, and say, “ That as the apostles had infallible proofs from their senses, that Christ was really risen from the dead, so we have infallible proofs, from our senses, that that which we take and eat at his table, is not his body, but bread.”

6. Is it said, “ But what account then can be given of his thus speaking of the bread, this is my body ? or what is the meaning of his words ?” It may be answered, “ That the name of a thing is frequently given to that which is the sign of it. Thus the seven kine, and seven ears of corn, are said to be seven years, Gen. xli. 26, 27. And thus circumcision, had the name of the covenant, and the sign was called what literally it was not, but what it really and truly exhibited by divine appointment *. And the like it is here : our Lord speaks of the bread as his body ; not because of its being transubstantiated, or changed into his body ; but because he had appointed it to be the symbol or token of his body, and would have us to consider it under this notion, when taking and eating of it.”

SECTION IV.

This is my body, which is given and broken for you.

1. St Matthew and St Mark say nothing of Christ's body being given, and broken ; but as the former of these things is taken notice of by St Luke, so the latter is mentioned by St Paul, and the silence of some of the sacred writers, as to any thing that is spoken of by another, is no argument against it.

2. The body of our blessed Saviour was first taken, that it might be given, and then given, that it might be broken ; and the meaning is, that he freely consented to the breaking of it. His body was broken by the nails, that were driven through his hands and feet, to fasten it to the cross ; and by the spear with which they pierced his side. First, “ He took upon him the form of a servant, and was

* See Waterland's review of the Eucharist, Chap. vii.

made in the likeness of men, and then being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, the death of the cross," Phil. ii. 5, 6. So that the bread broken, as signifying his body broken, sets him before us as crucified.

3. Do any object, "But Christ had not been crucified, and consequently his body had not been broken, when he thus spake." It may be answered, "That his words are to be understood, not in a literal, but figurative sense, and they are, as if he had said, "That which I do now put into your hands, is no other than bread, but I call it my body; because I have appointed it to signify my body; and because I would have you to consider it under this notion, as often as you shall eat it at my table. And having broken this bread, to lead your thoughts to the breaking of my body, I now speak of it as my body, which is given and broken; because I now appoint it to signify my body, considered as given and broken. You now hear me speaking to you, and know that I am alive, and you cannot but be sensible that my body neither is, nor has been given and broken; but thus I speak of it, and thus I would have you to consider it both now, and whenever in time to come, you shall observe this ordinance which I now institute."

4. The giving of Christ's body to be broken, may be said to be not only his own act, but the act likewise of God and our father. For all that which our Saviour did in this, was according to his will. Gal. i. 4. "God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up" to suffer and to die. Rom. viii. 32. And Christ offered a "sacrifice to God," that very body which he had prepared him, Heb. x. 5. And because "he humbled himself, and became obedient to the death of the cross; God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name; that at that name of Jesus every knee shall bow, Phil. ii. 9, 10.

5. The body of our Lord is all that which he here speaks of as given; but as God "gave his Son," John iii. 16. so Christ gave himself, his whole man, "for our sins." Gal. i. 4. And although the breaking of his body, is all that is here taken notice of, yet this was far from be-

ing the whole of his sufferings ; and it is not fit that we should pass over those of his soul.

6. The death of the cross, was not only a lingering and painful, but a most ignominious death. It was rarely seen that any other than slaves, and the basest malefactors, were punished in this manner : Besides it was looked upon, in common, as a token of a person's being under the curse of God for his sins. Deut. xxi. 23. Gal. iii. 13. Well therefore, may it be said, that " God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ thus died for us." Rom. v. 8. And well may we look on this as an amazing instance of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he should be willing for our sakes to suffer such a death as this. And yet we may say that there were other parts of his sufferings, which were far beyond the pain and shame of the cross.

7. Thus we may speak of what he suffered in the garden, the night in which he was betrayed, when he himself complained to his disciples, " My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death," Mat. xxvi. 38. when he prayed again and again, " Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," ver. 39, &c. and when, although an angel appeared to him from heaven to strengthen him, he was in such an agony, that " his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground, Luke xxii. 44 ; an agony that, had it continued but a little longer, must needs have dissolved the earthly house of his tabernacle ; and if he had felt such a violent perturbation and distress of soul as that occasioned, after his enemies had apprehended him, we cannot conceive it possible for him to have behaved with a proper calmness and composure of mind under all their insults.

8. But " when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death," which this agony had well-nigh brought upon him, " he was heard in that he feared," Heb v. 7. and his heavenly Father did again speak peace and comfort to him. However, there is some reason to think, that our blessed Saviour was not wholly free from all sufferings of this nature, when he was upon the cross, but that his sorrow and distress of soul had re-

turned upon him, though not, it may be, to so high a degree. Thus it seems to have been, when he cried with a loud voice, saying, My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me? Mat. xxvii. 46.

9. They who were crucified with Christ, like him, were "made a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men," 1 Cor. iv. 9. and might feel as much pain in their bodies as he suffered. But what was all this to the "Father's bruising him?" Isa. liii. 10. and to the distresses and terrors of his soul? With an eye to these, he might with reason be saying, "Is it nothing unto you, all ye that pass by; behold and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me; where-with the Lord hath afflicted me, in the day of his fierce anger?" Lam. i. 12. These sorrows and sufferings of our Saviour are indeed of such a nature as that they cannot in any manner be represented by the breaking of the bread: But, as they were the principal part of his sufferings, it must be owned to be highly reasonable to give them even the chief place in our meditations, while observing that rite which seems appointed to lead our thoughts to this subject.

10. We must not fail to take notice of the concern or interest that we have in the giving and breaking of Christ's body, and by a parity of reason in all his sufferings. It was "given and broken for us. As he gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world," Gal i. 4. so God "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up to suffer and die for us ALL, Rom. viii. 32. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all," Isa. liii. 5, 6.

11. "As God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life: and sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him, might be saved," John iii. 16. 17. So we may say, that Christ so loved us, as to give his body to be broken for us, that whosoever believeth in

him should not perish, but have everlasting life : and he suffered and died, not to condemn us ; but that we through him might be saved : and it is necessary for every communicant to be sensible of this ; this he should consider, and with application to himself, that he may be encouraged to look to him by faith for all the blessed fruits of his sufferings and death *.



SECTION V.

And gave it to the disciples, and said, take, eat.

1. That which our blessed Saviour had taken, he brake ; that which he had broken he gave to his disciples ; and that which he gave, they did take, and eat : and this as we have seen, (*Sec't* 3.) was no other than bread. But forasmuch as he has appointed the broken bread to signify his body given and broken for us, we may reasonably consider his giving us this bread as the giving us his body ; and agreeably to this, our taking and eating it is to signify our taking and eating his body. So that while taking the broken bread with our hands, and eating it with our mouths, we are by some act of our minds to receive and eat Christ's body as given and broken for us.

2. We may therefore say of sacramental eating as is said of circumcision, Rom. ii. 29. " It is that of the heart ; in the spirit, and not of the letter ; whose praise is not of men, but of God." There ought to be a decent and reverend behaviour in all who do observe this rite : and where there is this, we may gain the good opinion of our fellow communicants. But we have not the least

* " The special object of our faith in this ordinance is the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ ; and the first thing that we are to set faith upon, with respect to his death, is the personal love of Christ unto our persons. So saith the apostle, " Who loved me, and gave himself for me," Gal. ii. 20. The Lord lift us up above our fears, and give us to view by faith, not only the love of Christ in general, but that he personally loved us, even this whole church." *Dr Owen's discourses at the Lord's table.*

reason to think that God will approve and accept of what we do, and that it will be to the advantage of our souls, unless we are found in that which this taking and eating the broken bread is to signify; that is, unless we take and eat the body of Christ, as given and broken for us: And this is to be done no other way than by faith in him, as having been crucified for us.

3. This language of our Lord, "This is my body, take, eat;" with that which follows in the institution, "This cup is my blood, drink ye all of it," is of the same kind with that which we have in St John, chap. vi. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day: For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed," ver. 53, 54, 55. And the only difference between his doctrine in that chapter, and this, which is represented and inculcated in the sacrament, is this; that whereas this ordinance sets the sufferings and death of Christ before us, as past, he there speaketh of them, as to come; telling his hearers, not that he had given, but "would give his flesh for the life of the world," ver. 51.

4. The Lord's supper not having not been instituted when he spake in this manner, we cannot suppose that he had any reference to it; but when at the institution of this ordinance he made use of the like language, we may reasonably put the same construction upon it. As therefore the words that he then spake were "spirit and life," ver. 63. and are to be spiritually, and not literally understood; so the same we are to think of his words in the sacrament: For, although it may be said that here, as well as there, he speaketh of his natural body, that very body which was in the womb of his virgin mother, and of his natural blood, that very blood which circulated in that body, yet eating his body, and drinking his blood, are figurative expressions.

5. There is, indeed, in the literal sense of the words, an eating and drinking in the sacrament; but as that which we put into our mouths is bread and wine, and not the very body and blood of our Lord, so bread and

wine are all that, literally speaking, we can be said to eat and drink.

But the broken bread which we eat at his table, being made the figure or sign of his body, considered as given and broken for us, and the wine in the cup, which we there drink being also made the figure of his blood, which he shed for us, our eating this bread is likewise the figure of our eating his body, and our drinking the wine the figure of drinking his blood. But how can we eat the flesh, or body of the Son of Man, and drink his blood? not surely by putting them into our mouths; no, but only by some act of our minds, that is, as was observed, by faith in him, as having offered up himself on the cross, as a sacrifice to God for us.

7. The body or flesh of our blessed Saviour, as given and broken for us, and his blood, as shed for us, may with reason be presented to us, under the metaphors of meat and drink, because no meat and no drink can be of such service to us, in respect of this temporal life, as those may be, in respect of the spiritual and eternal life. And the receiving his body and blood by faith in him crucified, may well be spoken of as the eating and drinking them, because it is by this faith that they are made useful and serviceable to us, just as our common food is by our eating and drinking it; for then, and then only, when we truly believe in Christ, his passion is our redemption; by his death we live, and shall live for ever.

8. The great design of our Lord, in John, Chap. vi. ver. 27, &c. is to shew us the necessity of faith in himself. There is no reason to think that he said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," ver. 53. meaning by this, that all must unavoidably perish, who do not receive the sacrament, because many of his hearers might have been in their graves before his institution of this ordinance. Besides, it is not true of all who partake of the sacrament, that, as he speaks, ver. 54. "They have eternal life." But we may reasonably say to all who have the gospel, and can understand it, and to communicants, as well as others, "Except ye believe in Christ, ye have no life in you," ver. 53. And that whoso believeth in

him, "hath eternal life; and he will raise him up at the last day," ver. 54.

9. This then, the believing in Christ, is the great work to which we are to attend, when taking and eating the sacramental bread. He who hath a right faith in the Lord Jesus, and so eateth him, "even he shall live by him, ver. 57. But we may as reasonably expect that the natural bread should nourish and strengthen our bodies without taking and eating it, as that the crucified body of our Lord, this spiritual bread, this food for our souls, should give us eternal life, without receiving and eating it by faith in him, crucified for us. What is bread to us, if we do not eat of it? No more is the Saviour of the world to us; no more are his sufferings and death, if we do not believe on him. But what is this faith or believing in Christ? This is so important a question, and it is so very necessary to give a full and clear answer to it, that I shall make it the subject of another section.



SECTION VI.

Of that faith by which we are to eat Christ's body and drink his blood in the sacrament.

1. There is no plainer notion of faith or believing on Christ than that which St. John gives us; who speaks of it as being the same with receiving him, as in ch. i. ver. 12. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

2. Faith in Christ supposes some knowledge of the gospel of God concerning his Son; for we may well be said to "believe in him of whom we have not heard," Rom. x. 14. as to believe in him of whom we are wholly ignorant.

3. It also supposes an assent to the truth of the gospel: for the clearest and fullest notions of it will not at all profit us, unless we look upon it as true, Heb. iv. 2.

4. This knowledge of the gospel, and assent to the

truth of it, must lead us to the receiving of Christ: for what reason can we have to think that he is ours, and to lay claim to the blessings that come by him, unless we receive him?

5. When we speak of faith in Christ, as the receiving of him, we must consider him as set before us, and offered to us in the gospel.

6. The principal, if not the only notion of Christ, which is given us in the sacrament, is that of a Saviour. And we need not view him under any other notion, provided we observe that he came into the world not only to deliver us from the guilt of sin, but also to bless us, "in turning away every one of us from his iniquities," Acts iii. 26. And that he "gave himself for us, to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," Titus ii. 14. But, forasmuch as there are many who trust in Christ as a Saviour, while they have no concern about being his people, and "obeying his gospel," 2^d Thess. i. 8. the scripture speaks of him as a prince or Lord, as well as a Saviour, Acts v. 31. 2 Peter i. 11. and plainly teaches us, that we must receive and own him as our Lord, or we can have neither part nor lot in him as a Saviour.

7. That which is meant by the receiving of Christ, is an hearty and unfeigned consenting to this, that he shall be ours, that is, agreeably to what has been said, our Saviour, in the fullest sense of the word, or, if you will, our Lord, as well as Saviour.

8. Then it may be said that we consent to this, that Christ shall be our Saviour, when we look to him, and trust in him for salvation in all its parts and branches. To this we are led by the fear of the wrath of God, due to us for our sins; by the high thoughts that we have of that salvation that comes by the Lord Jesus, and by the sense of this, that in him alone is our help found, and that, as he is able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by him, so he calls on us to look to him, that we may be saved.

9. And then it may be said that we consent to this, that Christ shall be our Lord as well as Saviour, when we own and submit to his authority, or yield ourselves to him as his subjects and servants, at the same time that

we look unto him for salvation. This supposes that we chuse his service above all other service; and that we are fully determined to forsake all that service which is contrary to, or inconsistent with his.

10. But it should be carefully observed, that this receiving of Christ, or consenting that he shall be ours, is not a sudden flash of passion, which, how violent soever it may be for the present, is soon over and gone, but a fixed and abiding principle in the soul, that brings forth fruit to perfection, Luke viii. 14.

11. Some will have it that faith is an habit begun; and others contend that is an act beginning an habit*. But, not to dispute about words, it may be sufficient to say, that we can have no certain evidence of our receiving Christ Jesus the Lord, or believing on him, to the justifying and saving of our souls, where our faith does not work in us as the principle of our actions.

12. The scripture expressly tells us, that *not the bearers of the law are just before God, but that the doers of the law shall be justified*, Rom. ii. 13. And hence it follows, that no faith in Christ can justify us, but what makes us doers, the sincere doers of the law of God. And whereas we read, that the wicked “shall go into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal,” Mat. xxv. 46. we may be very sure that there is no faith that can save us, but what makes us righteous.

13. Agreeably to these things, we find that faith is used in scripture, as being to the same sense with the new creature; Gal. vi. 15. chap. v. 6. and that it is said to “work by love,” chap. v. 6. to “purify the heart,” Acts xv. 9. to “overcome the world.” 1 John v. 4. And because it makes such a wonderful change in our souls, and produces such effects, the power which God has employed upon those who believe, is spoken of as exceeding great, and as corresponding to that mighty power, which he exerted in the raising of Christ from the dead †.

14. It may be said indeed, that a man is justified, and

* *Dices fidem primo instanti est habitus inchoatus; responeo nequaquam sed est actus habitum inchoans.* Limborch Theol. Lib. V. Cap. XL. Sect. 6.

† Locke's paraphrase on Eph. i. 10

in a state of salvation, as soon as ever he heartily consents that Christ shall be his Lord and Saviour; but then it ought to be observed, that as he is justified, so he is also sanctified by the faith that is in Jesus, Acts xxxvi. 18. The spiritual life, a life of holiness, and a life of happiness, is begun in him, the very moment of his receiving Christ Jesus the Lord; and as he is every day and in every ordinance, to be repeating his faith in him, or to be anew receiving of him; so the life begun in his soul is to be maintained by fresh acts of faith. Every true believer therefore may say, with the apostle, "The life which I now live in flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me," Gal. ii. 20.

Thus I have given you a brief and plain account of faith in Christ, that faith which justifieth and saveth, and that faith by which alone we can be said to eat his body and drink his blood at his table. If any look on this as a digression from my subject, the only apology I shall make for it is this, "that nothing is more necessary than "to have right notions of faith in Christ."

And now I have considered every thing that we meet with in the history of the institution of the Lord's Supper, relating to the bread, excepting his words, This do in remembrance of me. But as the same words were also spoken on his giving of the cup to his disciples, I shall consider them in their proper place, in the next chapter.

CHAP. II.

Of the CUP.

THE history of the institution of this part of the Lord's supper is as follows :

St Mat. xxvi. 27, 28. *And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it ; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins.*

St Mark xiv. 23, 24. *And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank of it ; and he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.*

St Luke xxii. 20. *Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.*

St Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 25. *After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood ; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*

These four accounts may be thus digested into one :

*And after the same manner he also took the cup, after supper, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it ; for this is my blood of the new covenant *, and this cup is the new covenant * in my blood, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. And they all drank of it. This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*

* I have here put covenant instead of testament, which seems the proper meaning of the original word in this place, because the old dispensation, to which the new is opposed, had nothing in it of the nature of a testament, but was purely a covenant, or stipulation between God and his people the Jews promising mercies to them, and requiring duties of them. See Hammond on the New Testament, p. 1, 2. Peirce on Heb. ix. 16, 17.

SECTION I.

And after the same manner he also took the cup, after supper, and gave thanks.

1. The cup, as well as the bread, was taken in such a manner as to lead the disciples to think that some special and extraordinary purpose was to be served by it. And, considering that which our Lord had done and said, with respect to the bread, they might well look upon his taking of the cup as the consecrating of it, or the setting it apart to a sacred use. And the paschal supper being then fully ended, they must needs be sensible that the cup was not taken with a view to that ordinance.

2. But we may say of the cup as was said of the bread (Chap. i. Sect. i. 7.) that it is to be considered as holy to the Lord, set apart for his worship, as soon as ever it is set upon the table; so that the minister's taking it into his hands, or laying his hands over it, is to be looked upon as no more than a recognition of its consecration.

3. The wine, we may suppose, was in the cup when our Lord took it: and as that signifies his blood, as we shall see presently, so it sets it before us shed. But forasmuch as nothing is said of his pouring the wine into the cup from another vessel, I see no reason to consider this as a rite signifying the shedding of Christ's blood, and designed to teach us, that while this is doing, we should view him as bleeding on the cross. And indeed, when by the bread broken, he had represented his body as given and broken, or in other words, had set himself before us as crucified; and when, in fact, his blood was shed at the same time that his body was broken; why should we think that he hath instituted another rite, the pouring the wine into the cup, to direct our thoughts anew to him, as yet alive on the cross, shedding his blood and suffering for us?

4. It must be owned indeed, that it is very fitting for every communicant to make the sufferings of our blessed Saviour, in part, the subject of his meditation, when he

is at the table : but the bread signifying his body, the breaking of the bread must signify the breaking of his body, and so it naturally directs our thoughts to his sufferings. While therefore the bread is breaking, we may with great propriety meditate on Christ's sufferings for us. But when we come to this part of the sacrament, the taking of the cup, we are not to consider our Saviour on the cross, but as having been crucified ; we are no longer to view him as suffering, but as having suffered ; not as shedding, but as having shed his blood for us ; and then our business is to attend to the blessed and glorious fruits of his sufferings and death.

5. When our Lord had taken the bread, he blessed and gave thanks, that is, he prayed to God with thanksgiving for his blessing. And as we cannot but suppose that he did the same upon his taking of the cup, so it is highly reasonable, that in this also, we should follow his example. For now another and a glorious scene opens to our view ; new wonders of grace are set before us ; and as this demands our thanksgivings and praises, so it likewise calls for our prayers to God, that we may be aright affected with a sense thereof, and make answerable returns of love and gratitude for such a favour. But this will more fully appear from considering the words which our Lord spake upon this occasion, when his prayer and thanksgiving was ended.



SECTION II.

This is my blood.

1. Can it be thought, that on the pronouncing of these words, the cup was transubstantiated or changed into blood ? “ No, say the papists, not the cup but the wine. “ The cup is the same as it was before the words were “ spoken, but the wine is no longer wine, but the very “ blood of Christ.” And, according to the doctrine that they teach us, as in the former part of the sacrament, the disciples had been eating Christ's body, that very body which they might have seen standing, sitting, or lying before them, all the while they were eating it ; so

when he had spoken these words, they were likewise drinking his blood, that very blood which was then running in his veins.

2. When the protestants do object, "But is it possible to bring any shew of reason for things so absurd as these?" The papists answer, "Yes, the words of the Lord Jesus are plain, this is my body, and this cup is my blood. We do not act like Christians, if we deny the truth of all that he has said *." But to this it may be replied, "That we are indeed to believe the words of our Lord; but they are not to be understood in a literal, but a figurative sense. And, as when he said of the bread, This is my body, he designed no more than to lead his disciples to consider it as signifying his body; so we are also to think, that in saying of the cup, This is my blood, he meant no more than if he had said, Look on this as signifying my blood.

3. The papists admit of one metonymy in the words, that of the cup, for the wine contained in it; and we plead for another, that of the sign for the thing signified; and it is hard to say which of these figures of speech is the most common. The plain absurdity that there is in the literal sense, that is, the absurdity of supposing that the cup becomes blood, and that we are to drink the cup, forces them to give up that, and fly to the figurative sense. And in like manner, the plain absurdity of supposing that a wafer or a piece of bread may be the body of a man, and a little wine his blood; and the plain absurdity also of supposing that we may eat his body and drink his blood, while we see him alive, whole and unbroken before us, and while, as I may add, agreeably to what has been said, our senses assure us that that which we eat and drink is no other than bread and wine: These plain absurdities, I say, force us to give up the literal sense of Christ's words, This bread is my body, and this cup, or this wine is my blood, and to fly to their figurative sense, and understand them as meaning

* "It is not meet for any Christian to appeal from Christ's words to his own senses or reason for the examining the truth of what he has said, but rather to submit his senses and reason to Christ's words in Obsequiousness of faith." *A Papist misrepresented and represented.*

no more than that the bread and the wine are to be considered as symbols or tokens of his body and blood.



SECTION III.

The Blood of the New Covenant.

1. First, our blessed Saviour teaches us by the bread broken, that he suffered and died for us; then he repeateth and confirmeth the same by the wine in the cup, the symbol of his blood, which he shed for us: and here he leadeth our thoughts to the new covenant, as the grand fruit of his sufferings and death. And we are now to observe that God so loved the world, as to give his Son to offer up himself a propitiatory sacrifice “to declare his righteousness, that he might be just,” Rom. iii. 25. and yet make a covenant of peace and friendship with such sinful creatures as we are, even every one that believeth in Jesus.

2. Christ’s blood being shed for this purpose, “according to the will of God and our Father, Gal. i. 4. and agreeably to his compact with him, Heb. x. 5, &c. we may reasonably look upon it as the basis or foundation of God’s covenant with us. And since that which our Saviour has done is sufficient to answer this end, (as appears from his raising of him from the dead, and receiving him up into glory) we may justly say, that the foundation of this covenant is sure. And for this reason we may also speak of his blood as the seal of this covenant. And it is certain that no signing and sealing of a deed can do more to ratify and confirm it, or to satisfy those to whom it is given, than the blood of Jesus does to assure us that God will act in every respect agreeably to his covenant. For this our blessed Saviour may claim as a debt due to him on the account of his sufferings and death. This therefore the faithfulness and justice of God may encourage us to look for. See 1 John i. 9.

3. Many are the blessings spoken of in this covenant; but I shall only observe, in the general, that the exceed-

ing great and precious promises, which God has given us in his word, are as so many articles in his covenant, to the performance of which he is binding himself: and that from considering their nature and extent, we may see the blessedness of those who have him in covenant with them. And well may it be said, "Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea happy is that people whose God is the Lord," Psalm cxliv. 15. "For what shall we say to these things, if God be for us, if the Almighty hath made a covenant of peace and friendship with us, who can be against us?" Rom. viii. 31. What need they fear who have "Him for their sun and shield; and are assured that he will give them grace and glory, and withhold no good thing from them?" Psalm lxxxiv. 11.



S E C T. IV.

And this Cup is the New Covenant in my blood.

I. If some of the sacred writers had told us that our Lord had said, "This cup is my blood of the new covenant," and others, that he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant," and, if they had added no more, there would not have been the least colour of reason for thinking any other than that he delivered both these propositions. But "this is my blood of the new covenant, and this is the new covenant in my blood," being much the same words, in a different position, several considerable authors* have taken it for granted that but one of these was used, "since they both tend to the same end, and design the same thing." But I cannot be of their mind, because these two propositions seem to me to give us different notions of the cup, and to answer very different purposes: For in the former our Saviour directs us to consider the cup as his blood, "This cup is my blood;" and in the latter he speaks of it as the new

* Hammond's works, Vol. I. p. 176. Patrick's *Mensa Mystica*. p. 75. Plain account, p. 16. Doddridge's harmony, Vol. I. p. 445.

covenant, "This cup is the new covenant:" and in that his blood is represented as the foundation of the new covenant: but in this he leads us, as we shall see, to look upon the cup as the token and seal of this covenant.

2. The cup is here declared to be the new covenant as expressly as the bread is declared to be Christ's body, or the wine his blood*. And yet it is allowed by all not to be in itself the new covenant, nor to be transubstantiated or changed into the new covenant. In this case we have free liberty given us to understand the words of our Lord in a figurative sense, to avoid the absurdity of their literal sense. And for the same reason we should take the like liberty as to other expressions: for it is not more absurd to suppose that the cup is changed into the new covenant, than to say that the bread is changed into the very body of Christ, or that the wine, literally speaking, is his blood.

3. When God instituted circumcision, he spake of that ordinance in this manner, "This is my covenant," meaning that it was the token and seal of his covenant, as is plain from Gen. xvii. 10, 11. Rom. iv. 11. And when our Lord said of the sacramental cup, "This is the new covenant," why should we not put the like construction upon his words, and suppose that they are as much as to say, "This is the appointed token and seal of the new covenant. And as God first spake of establishing his covenant with Abraham and his seed, and then took notice of the seal of his covenant, so our Saviour does the like, for he first directs his disciples to consider the new covenant as the fruit of his blood, and then lets them know that he had appointed the cup to be the token and seal of it.

4. The cup may well be called the token of the new covenant, because it is set before our eyes to present the new covenant to our minds. And this being, as we have seen, no other than the promises of God or the gracious declarations of his word, the cup, as the token of the new covenant, is to lead our thoughts to these things. When therefore it is about to be presented to us, it will be proper for us to make such of the promises the subject

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* Plain Account, p. 17.

of our meditation as are most suitable to our circumstances.

5. And as the sacramental cup should lead our thoughts to the promises and gracious declarations of the word, which set before us the blessings of the new covenant, so we should also consider it as serving like a seal to assure us that every article of this covenant shall certainly be made good. For although the new covenant is in Christ's blood, and his blood as shed for us (or in other words, his sufferings and death) is the seal, as well as the foundation of this covenant, yet as the cup is here called the new covenant, because it is appointed to be the token of the new covenant, so it may also be called the seal of this covenant, because it is also appointed to be the token of that blood which is the seal of it.

6. Is it said, but what occasion was there for instituting a rite to satisfy us that God will make good all the promises of his word, when we may depend upon his veracity? "faithful is he that promised, Heb. x. 23. who also will do it, 1 Thes. v. 24. He cannot deny himself," 2 Tim. ii 13. It may be sufficient to answer, that knowing and pitying our weakness, and being willing more abundantly to shew us the immutability of his counsel, that they might have a strong consolation whose chief concern it is to enjoy the blessings of the new covenant, He makes use of this as a means to help our unbelief and encourage our faith and hope in his word. See Heb. vi. 18.

7. As every communicant is to look upon the blood of Jesus as the seal of the new covenant, and to think that his blood being shed, "all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen," 2 Cor. i. 20. and as he is to consider the cup, the token of this blood, as the appointed seal of this covenant, that is. as confirming these promises, or as designed to give us full satisfaction that every one of them shall certainly be performed, so it ought to be observed, that there is no other sense in which any of the communicants are to think that the cup is the seal of the new covenant.

8. Some may suppose that the speaking of the cup as the seal of the new covenant to all the communicants, gives encouragement to the vain hopes of those among them, who are wicked, and who conclude with them-

selves that they are in a state of grace and salvation, because in receiving the sacrament they receive the seal of the new covenant. But, I think, I have sufficiently guarded against this, by observing, that the promises of the word are all that God seals in the sacrament. For unless you suppose that these promises have a tendency to encourage such hopes in the wicked communicants, the sealing of them, or assuring us that God will act agreeably to them, cannot justly be said to have any such tendency. And indeed it had effectually prevented their falling into this dangerous and often fatal mistake, if they had but seriously considered, that as the plain language of God in his word, "There is no peace to the wicked," Isa. lviii. 21. is no ways contradicted by his promises; so there is no colour of reason for fancying that the cup in the sacrament speaks any thing contrary to this language, because it only serves to confirm the promises.

9. And as this notion of the cup gives no encouragement to the vain hopes of the wicked communicants, so it is certainly very proper to give the truly pious all the comfort they can reasonably desire. For as the promises of the word do assure them that the Lord is their God, and that all the blessings of the new covenant are theirs; so the cup, as the seal of this covenant, does aptly serve to encourage their faith and hope in these promises, and may well be considered as giving them the same assurance.

10. Let every communicant therefore take to himself that portion of the word and promise that belongs to him, and no ill consequence will follow from his looking on the sacramental cup as the seal of it. So far from this, that the considering it under this notion may be of great service unto all: for instance, it may invite and encourage a wicked person to forsake his evil "way and unrighteous thoughts, and return unto the Lord;" and it may also shew him the necessity of this, to observe, that as God calls on him to act in this manner, so he assures him, not only in his word, but by the sacramental cup, that thus doing "he will have mercy upon him, and abundantly pardon," Isa. lv. 7. And what can do more to fill the soul of a pious communicant with love

to God and zeal for his service, than to think, as he declares in his word that he has made with him an “everlasting covenant,” Isa. lv. 3. so he also sets the cup before him, and presents it to him as the seal of his blessedness? and surely the amazing love and grace of God that is herein displayed, should in reason constrain us all to enter into, or renew a covenant with him, that we will be his people and servants.

II. But this leads me to observe, that a covenant being a mutual engagement between the parties concerned, who enter into bonds or come under an obligation to each other, the signing and sealing of the covenant is to be considered as the act of these parties. As therefore the giving of the cup is to be looked upon as the token and seal of God’s covenanting with us, so our receiving of it is to be considered as the token and seal of our covenanting with God, that is, as the token and seal of our solemnly engaging, that we will be his, and will live in his service.

21. I only add, that it is with great propriety that the giving of the wine as the symbol of the blood of Jesus, is made the seal of God’s covenanting with us; and that our receiving of it under this notion, is to be the seal of our covenanting with God. For as this tends to raise in us a full persuasion of his acting agreeably to his covenant with us to make good our engagements unto him, “can any thing be conceived more “awful and binding than a covenant so transacted *?”

SECTION V.

My blood, which is shed for you and for many.

I. As the wine in the cup, the symbol of the blood of Jesus, presents it to our minds as shed, so it ought to be observed that the shedding of his blood was so remarkable a circumstance of his sufferings and death, that, like the breaking of his body, it may very well be put for

* *Groves on the Sacrament.*

the whole. We may therefore say that this, as well as that, sets Christ before us as crucified.

2. And as when our Lord gave the bread to his disciples, he took notice of the interest or concern that they had in his broken body, of which it was the appointed sign, observing, that it was broken for them; so he does the like on his giving them the cup, the symbol of the blood which he shed; for he tells them, that it was shed for them; and not for them alone, but for many others; for Gentiles as well as Jews, even to all that shall believe on him, John xvii. 20. "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 16.

3. As therefore Joseph spake of the kine and ears of corn in Pharaoh's dream as being one, Gen. xli. 26. so we may speak of the bread and the wine in the sacrament; thus far they are both one; both tend to the same end, and answer the same purpose. Both are the symbols of a crucified Jesus. Both set him before us as crucified for us; and both are given us to invite and encourage us to look to him, and depend upon him for all the blessed fruits of his sufferings and death.

4. And if it be said, "But why should the symbol of one and the same thing be doubled? why should our Lord set it again before us? why should he speak of it a second time?" it may be said in answer, "That this may be done to lead us to consider it as a matter of the utmost importance to us, and to shew us that he would by all means engage our attention to it." And indeed, what is there of greater concern to us than this, that Christ gave himself to suffer and die for us, that believing in him, we may have life through his name? Well may he, once and again, call and invite us to faith in himself, when, as was observed, this faith is absolutely necessary, as to the right receiving of the sacrament, so likewise to our eternal blessedness.

5. Besides, there is no method more proper than this, which our blessed Saviour has taken to remove all our doubts and fears as to his love to us and our interest in his sufferings and death, and to lead us to look on this as a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that he came into the world, and was crucified for us that

we might be saved. How can we call this in question, when we observe that in the sacrament he gives us not only one, but another token and pledge of it.

6. Some of the communicants, it may be, when taking and eating of the bread, say in their hearts, "Alas! we fear that we have no part nor lot in this Saviour; it is not for us to trust in him for salvation;" but as if compassionating their case, and willing to comfort them, he repeats the assurance of this, that he was crucified for them, and setting the cup before them, and presenting them with it, as the symbol of his blood shed for them.

7. And as to others who may say, Lord we believe, we believe that thou hast loved us, and hast given thyself for us, and we receive this bread as what thou givest us to encourage us to receive thee by faith as our Lord and Saviour, they may see reason to add, help thou our unbelief; Lord increase our faith. And what more proper to answer this end and to strengthen their hope and their trust in Christ than this, his assuring them that he hath appointed the cup to be a fresh token of his sufferings for them, and his commanding them to receive it as such.

SECTION VI.

For the remission of sins.

When our Lord gave his disciples the bread, the token of his body, he only told them, in the general, that it was given and broken for them; that is, for their benefit; but now he comes to give them the cup, the token of his blood, as he tells them that it was shed for them, so he likewise takes notice of its being shed for this end in particular, that he might procure for them the remission of sins.

2. The blessing here spoken of, the remission of sins, the fruit of Christ's shedding of his blood, or the effect of his sufferings and death, need not be taken in its most strict and proper sense, as meaning no more than the bare pardoning of a criminal, or delivering him from the

condemning sentence of the law, but rather as being the same with that "redemption which we have through the blood of Jesus, according to the riches of his grace," Eph. i. 7. or, as taking in all the blessings for which he suffered and died.

3. And yet it is not without reason that he mentions this in particular, and would fix the eyes of the communicants upon it : for he speaks of his blood, as the blood of the new covenant ; and he presents the cup to us, not only as the token of his blood, but also as the token and seal of this covenant, and nothing can do more to encourage us to receive it under this notion, than to consider that it is shed for us, for the remission of sins.

4. Sins in the general are here spoken of, and consequently all sins must be intended. Have our sins therefore been ever so many, and ever so heinous, we should not say, Alas for us ! there is no hope ! but think with ourselves that we are invited to the table of our Lord, and that as he there offers us his body, as given and broken for us, and calls us to eat bread in token of our receiving him by faith as our Lord and Saviour ; so he there assures us, that out of a regard to his blood, God is willing to make a new covenant with us ; nay, and that the wine, the representative of this blood, is given us as the seal of this covenant on the part of God ; and from this it follows, as we shall see under the next section, that our receiving of it is to be the token of our thankful acceptance of this covenant, and of our bringing ourselves under the most solemn engagements to God that we will be his servants.

5. Whereas therefore, some of the communicants may thus speak within themselves ; " But alas ! we have sinned and rebelled against the Lord, and is it for us to look for such a favour as this, the having him for our God in covenant ?" this may do some thing to give them relief and comfort, " the blood of Jesus Christ his Son was shed for the remission of sins, to wash (Rev. i. 5.) and cleanse us from all sin," 1 John i. 7. and remove that, which is the only thing that can be supposed to hinder the favour of God from flowing to us in a full stream. But this may lead me to observe,

6. This, the shedding of Christ's blood, or his suffer-

ing and dying for us, for the remission of sins, as it was the last and the most difficult part of his undertaking, so it was the crowning and completing of the whole. Agreeably we find, that when upon the cross, he was just about to expire or give up his spirit, bowing his head, he said it is finished. John xix. 30. And as in token of his full hope and confidence of acceptance with God, "He cried with a loud voice, and said, Father, into thine hands I commit my spirit," Luke xxiii. 46.; so there is abundant reason to conclude that God was well pleased fully satisfied with what our blessed Saviour had done, because he hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow," Phil. ii. 9, 10. And because he is entered into the holy place, Heaven itself, with his blood there to appear in the presence of God for us, Heb. ix. 12, 24. "and ever lives to make intercession for us," Heb. vii. 15. Let these things be considered, and it will be seen that a solid foundation is laid for our hope and trust in Christ; and that we may be fully assured, that "he is able to save to the uttermost, all them that come unto God by him," Heb. xii. 25.



SECTION VII.

And gave it unto them, saying, Drink ye all of it.

I: As that, which our Lord had before given to his disciples was no other than bread broken, so this, which he is now putting into their hands, is no other than wine poured into the cup. But that we may know what act or acts of our minds should attend the receiving of it, we are not to consider what it is in its own nature, but what it is made to signify, by virtue of his ordinance or institution.

Had this therefore been all that he had said of the cup, "This is my blood which is shed for you;" as it would only have served, like the bread, to have set Christ before us, as crucified for us; so like that, it would only have called for our faith in him, and then the giving of

the cup would have tended to no other end than the giving of the bread.

3. But we find that our Lord has also spoken of the cup as "the new covenant in his blood;" and this notion being peculiar to the cup, we may reasonably say, that this is that which we are principally to have in our eye in receiving it.

4. When therefore the cup is about to be put into our hands, it will be proper for us to consider our blessed Saviour, as the mediator of the new covenant, and as assuring us that, having shed his blood, he has done all that which was necessary to reconcile God to us, his sinful and rebellious creatures; so that now he may be just, Rom. iii. 26. and yet enter into the new covenant with us; and that all the articles of this covenant are drawn, and signed and sealed as it were in this blood, so that nothing else is wanting to complete the blessed work, but our accepting, signing, and sealing of the same; and to this he calls and invites us.

5. This is so amazing, that we may well be crying out, "But is it so in very deed?" 2 Chron. vi. 18. Is there any ground for the ravishing thought, that the great God, the Creator of heaven and earth, will make a covenant of peace and friendship with us; with us, who by our sins have brought ourselves under the curse of his righteous law? is it for condemned criminals to look for such an high privilege as this? when we consider what we are, and how ill we have carried it towards our maker, what reason have we to fear that he will deal with us as with the angels that sinned, "whom he cast down to hell, and delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment," 2 Pet. ii. 4. Well might there remain "no sacrifice for our sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries," Heb. x. 26, 27. "Well might shame and confusion for ever cover us." But now, as if it were to obviate, or silence our fears, and give us to hope for this blessedness, as our compassionate Redeemer here speaks of his blood as the foundation and seal as well as token of the new covenant, so he also tells us that it was "shed for us for the remission of sins."

6. Being filled therefore with a sense of our obligations to God for the unspeakable gift of his love, the gift of his Son : and building all our hopes on his sufferings and death, we should cheerfully and thankfully receive the cup in token of our hearty acceptance of God's offered grace, and of our solemnly engaging that we will be his, and will spend all our days in his service.

7. To this the riches of the grace of God in his kindness towards us through Jesus Christ, should in reason constrain us. And what more evident than that this is absolutely necessary to our happiness ? For a covenant being, as was observed, (Sect. iv. 2.) a mutual engagement between the parties concerned, who enter into bonds, or come under an obligation to each other, it cannot be supposed that the Lord should be a God in covenant with those who do not covenant with him. Besides, we see that the blessings of the new covenant are all along spoken of in scripture, as the portion not of those who are enemies unto God, but of such only as are his people and servants.



SECTION VIII.

This do in remembrance of me : This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

1. If this *do* meant no more than the bare eating the bread and drinking of the wine, the latter of the sentences at the head of this section, which relates to the cup, would have been a tautology, and the same as to say, "This do as oft as ye do it." But our Lord does here evidently command his disciples not only to eat bread and drink wine, but to do it in a manner agreeable to all that which he had said and done in their presence, that is, to break the bread, and to take and eat it when broken, as signifying his body given and broken for them ; and to drink of the wine in the cup, as signifying his blood, the blood of the new covenant ; and as signifying also the new covenant in his blood shed for

them, and for many, for the remission of sins ; and, after his example, to pray to God with thanksgiving, as on the solemn taking of the bread, so likewise on taking of the cup.

2. Many writers have considered these two passages as a direction to the communicants to remember Christ. But although I freely own that it is their duty to remember him, and that it is to no purpose to eat bread and drink wine at his table without a serious remembrance of him ; yet I see no reason to think that he here directs his disciples to this duty : because after all that had passed, such a direction would have been altogether needless. For persons of knowledge and understanding cannot easily hear that which is said of the bread, and of the cup, and attend to the prayers made upon this occasion, without remembering Christ.

3. But as he might very properly give orders to his disciples to observe the ordinance he had just instituted, so it was likewise very proper for him to let them know at the same time for what reason he gave them that order ; and both these things are done in the sentences we now consider. For, first, our Lord commands his disciples not only to eat bread and drink wine, but to do it as was said in a manner agreeable to his institution ; and then he acquaints them with the reason of his appointing these rites, viz. “ the keeping up the remembrance of him in the world :” A reason that obliges Christians in all ages to observe them.

4. As therefore the passover was to the children of “ Israel for a memorial of the Lord’s passing over their houses,” Exod. xii. 14, 27. “ when he smote Egypt in their first-born, and brought out his people from among them with a strong hand, and a stretched-out arm :” so the Lord’s supper is appointed to be to us a memorial of our Saviour and his suffering and dying for us on the cross, that he might deliver us from sin, from death and hell, and make us blessed for ever. It is as a pillar, or monument, which he himself hath set up in his church, and which he would have to continue therein till the time of his coming to judge the world, that his name may endure for ever, and the remembrance of him and of his love to all generations.

5. And as the very sight of a monument, if we are before acquainted with the occasion of its being erected, is sufficient to lead our thoughts to those things, the memory of which it is designed to preserve, and as it cannot well be but that we must think on them, when we read or hear that which is inscribed upon it; so the very sight of the bread and the cup at the Lord's table, if we are before acquainted with the occasion of their being set upon it, is sufficient to lead her thoughts to him; and it cannot well be, but that we must think on him, when we read or hear that which is as it were inscribed on the bread and on the cup, or written concerning them: And when these words have been just pronounced, "This bread is Christ's body, which is given and broken for you; and this cup is Christ's blood of the new covenant, and the new covenant in his blood shed for you, and for many for the remission of sins;" surely there is not the least necessity, or it must be in vain, to call on the communicants to remember him.

6. I only add here, that some think that the original words may be thus rendered, This do for my memorial; and that, as the rainbow was appointed to put God in remembrance, so the Lord's supper was instituted, and we are commanded to observe it to put Christ in remembrance*. But there is this difference in the two cases. We are told that the rainbow is to put God in remembrance of the covenant he was pleased to make with all flesh, that he would not "any more destroy the earth with a flood," Gen. ix. 16. But no intimation is given us of any thing that the sacrament is to put Christ in remembrance of. But be this as it will, the notion of this ordinance, that it is as a monument to preserve remembrance of him is no ways affected by it: for as the bow in the cloud not only serves to put God in remembrance of his covenant, but to keep up the remembrance of it among men, so whatever that be which this institution is to put Christ in remembrance of, it is not the less proper to preserve the remembrance of him, and his sufferings and dying for us.

* Holloway's commemorative sacrifice, p 15.

SECTION IX.

And they all drank of it.

1. Had our Lord said no more as to the cup, than he spake with respect to the bread, 'This do in remembrance of me; we might reasonably have understood him as commanding his disciples to drink of the cup, as well as to eat the bread, in a manner agreeable to his ordinance. But knowing that, in time to come, many of the communicants would satisfy themselves with the "bare eating and drinking in his presence," Luke xiii. 26. as a means proper to prevent this evil, which may prove of fatal consequence to such as are guilty of it; he adds, as oft as ye drink it, words that evidently teach us, as we have seen SECT. VIII. 1. that when drinking of the cup we are to have an eye to the institution, and to see that we exactly observe it; and this may lead us to conclude that we are to do the same when eating the bread.

2. And thus it is as to this, which we are now to consider, the express notice that is taken of the disciples drinking of the cup. It is not said that they did all eat of the bread, and yet we cannot but think that they did all eat of it. And we might reasonably have thought that they all drank of the cup, had this also been pass over in silence. But known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world. And things that to us are future and to come in far distant ages, are all present unto him; and as he foresaw that some would arise who would interpret the words, this do ye, when spoken with reference to the cup, as not being a command to drink of it*, and who agreeably to this would refuse giving it to the greatest part of the communicants; so as if it were to shew that all have a right to it, and to embolden them to insist on their right, one of the in-

* Hac igitur parte non continetur præceptum facien li, id est, de Calice bibendi. Egius in 1 Cor. xi. 25. De Communionem corporis et sanguinis Christi sub utraque specie nullum extat omnino præceptum. Ritus Ecclesiæ Laudunensis, p. 641.

spired writers of the institution of the Lord's supper was moved, as we see, to leave this upon record, that they all drank of it. Mark xiv. 23.

3. We may therefore oppose, not only the precept of Christ, but the example of his disciples, to the general practice of the Papists* in withholding the cup from the laity, and all others, but the priest who consecrates it. As our Lord said of the bread, take, eat, so he said of the cup, drink ye all of it; and since it is evident from the carriage of his apostles that they looked upon his precept to be as binding in one case, as it was in the other, why should not we also do the same?

4. Besides, if we consider the meaning of these rites, it will appear that the drinking of the cup is more necessary than the eating of the bread. For the cup sets Christ before us as crucified for us, as well as the bread, and like that calls for our faith in him. But it cannot be said of the bread, as it may of the cup, that it sets the new covenant also before us; and that it calls for our faith in Christ to dispose us with the greater readiness and cheerfulness of mind to accept of God's gracious offer of being our God, in covenant with us, and to constrain us to bind ourselves in a solemn covenant unto him; and to lead us to do it in such a manner as that we may be sure of finding favour in his sight.

5. Had our blessed Saviour appointed the cup with no other view then to stir us up to a repetition of that faith in him as crucified for us, which we are to exercise when taking and eating of the bread, it would have been our duty to have complied with his institution; but when he hath appointed it not only for that purpose, but also to encourage and engage us to covenant with the Lord, that he shall be our God, and we will be his people and servants, we should be so far from thinking it needless to receive the cup, that we should rather look upon the receiving it as a matter of even greater importance to us, than the eating of the bread.

* The King of France may receive the cup at his coronation, and some others have this privilege. *Ritus Ecclesie Laudunensis*, p. 641. &c.

6. I shall therefore put an end to the review of this institution, with observing, that the reasons for giving the cup to every communicant are so plain and convincing, that it is really amazing any should entertain a thought that the priest alone is to receive it. So that we may say of this notion of the papists, as is said by an ingenious author* of their absurd doctrine of transubstantiation, "that, as it is, one is almost tempted to suspect it to be the effect of arrogance, rather than error? and to consider it as a meer insolent attempt to shew the world, in the strongest instance they could invent, what monstrous things the clergy should dare to say, which the wretched laity should not dare to contradict; nay, which they should be forced to pretend they believed. In this view the thought is admirable, and worthy the most malicious wit, that ever lorded it over the heritage of God. But it may deserve some serious reflection, whether it be not an instance of infatuation, to which God has given them up, that it may be a plain mark to all, that will use common sense, of the grossest error in a church, which claims infallibility; and may not be intended by providence, as a kind of antidote against the rest of its poison."

DIRECTIONS *to the Communicants, in their* MEDI-
TATIONS *and* EJACULATIONS.

It should be our concern, to let none of that time run waste, which we spend in the house of our God, but to improve every minute of it to some good purpose. And as to the spaces, or intervals, that there may be between one ordinance and another, it will be proper to fill them up with pious thoughts and ejaculations. This may be a means to render those ordinances, that are over, the more useful to us, and to prepare us for such as we are to be found in. As soon therefore, as the rest of the public worship is ended, you may speak to yourselves in some such language as this.

* Dr Doddridge on the New Testament. vol. ii. p. 444.

“ Now the Lord furnisheth a table for us in his house,
 “ and setteth thereon the choicest dainties. There will
 “ be bread, which strengtheneth man’s heart, and wine,
 “ that maketh it glad ; bread which came down from
 “ Heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die ;
 “ wine, which whosoever drinketh, hath eternal life.

“ There the crucified Jesus, and all the blessed fruits
 “ of his sufferings and death, will be set before us. And
 “ behold ! though vile, and sinful, and utterly unworthy
 “ of such a favour, I am invited to be a guest ! The
 “ Spirit and the bride say come, and let him that heareth
 “ say come, and let him that is athirst come ; and whoso-
 “ ever will let him freely take of this spiritual provision.
 “ With what satisfaction, delight and joy ; with what
 “ admiration of the love of God in Christ ; and with
 “ what thankfulness and praise shouldst thou, O my soul,
 “ accept of the invitation !

“ Oh ! may I be aright prepared for this feast.
 “ When the king shall come in to see the guests, let me
 “ not be found without a wedding garment. Forbid it,
 “ O Lord, that I should eat and drink at thy table, in
 “ token of friendship with thee, and secretly purpose
 “ to go on in sin and rebellion against thee. Give me
 “ to be found in all the duties now incumbent on me ;
 “ and to hunger and thirst after all the good things thou
 “ hast prepared for me. And O bless me with all spi-
 “ ritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. On his
 “ grace I depend for assistance ; I trust to his merits for
 “ acceptance.”

And now being come to the table, and looking on the
 bread, and on the cup, let them lead your thoughts to
 the Lord Jesus, and fix them on him as one, who came
 from heaven that he might give his flesh, and shed his
 blood for the life of the world, and say upon it,

“ Although thou hast sinned, O my soul ! and by sin
 destroyed thyself, yet there is hope. In God is thine
 help. He has laid help on one that is mighty ; mighty
 to save. In this was manifested the love of God to-
 wards us, because he sent his only begotten Son into the
 world, that we might live through him. Behold what
 manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us !

“ He spared not the angels that sinned ; but cast them down to hell ; and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment. The Son of God did not come from heaven with a design to take hold on them, or help and save them, no, but with a view to our salvation ; and took part of our flesh and blood, that he might deliver us from all the evils, which our sins had brought upon us, and raise us up to endless bliss and glory.

“ Hofannah to the Son of David ; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hofannah in the highest. God is the Lord which hath shewed us light. Thou art my God, and I will praise thee. Thou art my God I will exalt thee. O give thanks unto the Lord ; for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever. Come, and let us offer the sacrifice of praise unto God, the fruit of our lips, and call upon his name. Let the heart of them rejoice that seek him, seek the Lord and his strength ; seek his face for evermore ; remember his marvellous works that he hath done.”

Who knows but that while engaged in such exercises as these, your hearts may grow hot within you ; while you are thus musing, the sacred fire of devotion may be kindled in your breasts. This is certainly a very proper means to prepare our minds for those public prayers and thanksgivings in which every communicant is to join ; and as when these are over, the next thing to be attended to, is the breaking of the bread ; so this rite setting Christ before us as suffering and dying for us, we may spend the time it takes up in thus speaking within ourselves.

“ Thou art now, O my soul, on fix thine eye on the blessed Jesus, the Lord of life and glory, suffering and dying for thee. This he did now more than seventeen hundred years ago, and he has instituted this rite, the breaking of this bread, to preserve the memory of it ; and it now presents it to thy thoughts. Lord help me to turn aside and see this great sight ; may I view it on all sides ; view it thoroughly, and with a becoming temper. What more amazing ! what more affecting !

“ See here a righteous and innocent person, given up

into the power of his blood-thirsty enemies, to be crucified and slain by their wicked hands, as if he had been the vilest of malefactors; nay, see here, the only begotten Son of God bruised, and put to grief by his beloved Father.

“Who can say how great his sufferings were! what an agony was he in when he prayed again and again unto God, with strong crying and tears, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt:” and when he was so depressed with sorrow and amazement; when such was the distress and anguish of his soul, that his sweat ran from him like great drops of blood!

“How shall we account for these sufferings of the Holy Jesus, the Son of God, his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased! Where were the bowels of his Father! nay, where his justice! The scripture answers, God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, Rom. v. 8. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, chap. viii. 32. And this he might do without any injustice, or want of affection to him; for Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering, and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour, Eph. v. 2.

“See then, O my soul, this love of God, this grace of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Lord, give me to know more of this grace; raise in me the highest thoughts of this love. Oh! may I feel that it constraineth me henceforth to live, not unto myself, but unto him that died for me, and rose again.”

And now the bread being broken, it is next presented to the communicants, and the words of our Lord Jesus are repeated, Take, eat, this is my body, which is given and broken for you. This may lead us to add as follows.

“What words do I hear! with what pleasure and joy should I receive them! Is not this the same as if the blessed Jesus were saying unto thee, O my soul! Let all thy fears and doubts, as to thy concern in my sufferings and death, immediately vanish; and know, assuredly, that as my body was given and broken upon the cross, so it was for thee that this was done; for thee I

suffered ; for thee I was crucified : for thy good ; for thy salvation : And I am willing, heartily willing, to be thy Saviour. “ To this end I was born, and for this cause came I into the world, and made my soul an offering for sin.” And I now give thee this bread, the symbol of my body given and broken for thee, in token of my calling on thee to look to me, with hope and joy, for all the blessed fruits of my sufferings and death : “ be not faithless, but believing.”

“ And surely it will become thee to say, in return, “ Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. Mine iniquities testify against me, and my transgressions, which “ have been multiplied. Ah, how have I despised the “ commandments of God, and done evil in his sight. It “ is of his mercies, that I am not consumed. But why “ should the sense of my sins cause my heart to despair, “ when thou, O blessed Jesus, the hope of Israel, and “ the Saviour thereof, callest to all the ends of the “ earth, to look unto thee, that they may be saved, Isa. “ xlv. 22 ; to come unto thee, that they may have rest, “ Matt. xi. 26.

“ Encouraged therefore, not only by thy word, but “ by this sensible pledge of thy favour, which thou here “ givest me, I now fly to thee as my Saviour. In thee “ alone I trust : Lord, save me, or I perish. To thee “ I now look for repentance, and the forgiveness of all “ my sins ; for a righteousness to justify me ; for thy “ Spirit to sanctify me ; for reconciliation and peace with “ God, and all the blessings thou hast purchased.

“ To thee I now solemnly and heartily devote myself. “ Lord, I am thine ; fully resolved, in an human dependence on thy grace, to spend all my days in thy service : and I now take, and eat this bread, in token of “ my acknowledging thee as my Lord, and of my trusting and hoping in thee as my Saviour.”

If there be any time between the receiving of the bread, and the other part of this ordinance, it may be employed in some such thoughts as these :

“ Thou hast now named the name of Christ, let it be “ thy care, O my soul ! to depart from all iniquity. “ Like one of his familiar friends, thou hast been “ eating of his bread, give proof of thy loving him,

“ by keeping his commandments. Be concerned to ap-
 “ prove thyself to him, as his disciple indeed, by conti-
 “ nuing in his word, living in his service. Let thy con-
 “ versation be as it becometh his gospel ; so as to adorn
 “ this doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. As
 “ thou hast received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in
 “ him, rooted, and built up in him, and stablished in
 “ the faith, abounding therein with thanksgiving. O
 “ mayest thou never forget that he is thy Lord, but dai-
 “ ly worship and serve him. Always remember that he
 “ is thy Saviour : 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.

“ O Lord ! do thou enable me to maintain a constant
 “ dependence on any grace, and grant that I may find it
 “ sufficient for me in all difficulties and trials. O thou
 “ blessed Jesus ! thou almighty Saviour ! keep that
 “ which I have committed unto thee against that day.
 “ Pray for me, that my faith may never fail ! Lord, in-
 “ crease and strengthen it ; perfect that which is lack-
 “ ing in it. Fulfil all the good pleasure of thy goodness,
 “ and the work of faith with power. May its actings
 “ be more vigorous and lively, in the remaining part of
 “ this duty, than they have been in that which is now
 “ over. Mine eyes are unto thee, O Lord, have mer-
 “ cy upon me.”

Our meditations and ejaculations, relating to the cup,
 should be suitable to the several things that our Lord
 observed, as he presented it to his disciples ; as that it is
 the symbol of his blood, which he shed for us, for
 the remission of sins ; that this blood, of which the cup
 is the appointed symbol, is the blood of the new cove-
 nant ; and that agreeably to this, the cup is also to be
 considered as the token and seal of this covenant, in Christ's
 blood, both on God's part and on ours.

The considering the cup, as representing the blood of
 Jesus shed for us, and for many, for the remission of sins ;
 “ that whosoever believeth, through him might be sav-
 ed,” may lead us to express our thoughts in such words
 as these :

“ Thou art now again, O my soul ! to view the cru-
 “ cified Jesus ; for he is again evidently set forth before

“ thine eyes, as crucified among us. Behold the price
 “ of thy redemption, the forgiveness of thy sins ; not
 “ corruptible things, as silver and gold, but the preci-
 “ ous blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and
 “ without spot. How great is that salvation, which was
 “ purchased by the Son of God at so dear a rate ! how
 “ shall I escape if I neglect it !

“ But be not cast down, O my soul ! why shouldst
 “ thou fear, and not hope in the Saviour of all men, e-
 “ ven every one who believeth, when he assureth thee,
 “ that he suffered and died for thee, and again calleth
 “ on thee to look to him for all the blessed fruits of his
 “ sufferings and death ; nay, again presenteth them un-
 “ to thee !

“ Do not forget that he who was delivered for thine
 “ offences, was raised again for thy justification ; and
 “ that, as by his blood, that blood which he shed for
 “ the remission of thy sins, he entered into the holy place,
 “ heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for
 “ thee ; so he is able to save them to the uttermost, that
 “ come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make
 “ intercession for them.”

When considering the cup, as setting before us the
 blood of the new covenant, you may proceed as fol-
 lows :

“ O may the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Fa-
 “ ther of glory, enlighten the eyes of my understanding,
 “ that I may know what is the hope of his calling ;
 “ what the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness
 “ towards me through Jesus Christ ; how very desirable
 “ that blessedness is, which is now set before me.

“ Had no more been said of the blood of Jesus, than
 “ that it was shed for the remission of sins, it might have
 “ been thought, that the being saved from wrath through
 “ him, is all I am to look for. But how shouldst thou
 “ wonder, O my soul ! at the gracious words which pro-
 “ ceeded out of his mouth ! This is my blood of the
 “ new covenant : words evidently designed to encourage
 “ thy hopes of the sum of all blessedness, the having the
 “ Lord for thy God, in covenant with thee.

“ And now thou art not merely to view, but receive
 “ Christ by faith, as having once suffered for sins, the

“ just for the unjust, that he might bring thee to God ;
 “ that God, of an enemy, might be thy friend ; that his
 “ covenant of life and peace might be with thee ; that
 “ all the exceeding great and precious promises in his
 “ word, promises of the life that now is, and of that
 “ which is to come, might be thy portion. In Christ
 “ they are yea, and in him, amen ; ratified and confirm-
 “ ed by his blood.

“ Now thou art to look up to God in the heavens, as
 “ sitting on the throne of his grace, holding out the
 “ golden sceptre, inviting thee to draw near, and in how
 “ condescending, how kind, and moving a manner ! in-
 “ cline thine ear ; come unto me ; hear, and thou shalt
 “ live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with
 “ thee, even the sure mercies of David, Isa. lv. 5.

“ Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this ! let angels, as
 “ well as saints, stand amazed at the love of God, in giv-
 “ ing his Son ; and the love of Christ, in giving himself
 “ to suffer and die that we might partake of this blessed-
 “ ness. Oh how rich is God in mercy ! How great is
 “ the love wherewith he hath loved us ! How exceed-
 “ ing abundant is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ !
 “ Shouldst thou not love him who first loved thee !

“ What is there, O my soul ! of greater importance
 “ than this, the having God’s covenant with thee. Thy
 “ life ; thy all ; thy peace and comfort, in this world,
 “ and eternal blessedness in the other depend upon it.
 “ Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help ;
 “ whose hope is in the Lord his God, who made hea-
 “ ven, earth, and sea, and all that is therein ; who keep-
 “ eth truth and shall reign for ever, even thy God, O
 “ Zion, unto all generations !”

That each of these notions, which our Lord has given
 us of his blood, may be further improved for your com-
 fort, it may be proper to add.

“ And what can do more to silence all thy fears, nay,
 “ to fill thee with all joy, and peace in believing ; and
 “ even give thee to abound in hope of this unspeakable
 “ privilege, through the power of the holy Ghost, than
 “ that, which thy blessed Saviour has observed concern-
 “ ing his blood ?

“ Thy sins, O my soul, have been many, thy guilt has
 “ been great ; but be of good comfort ; the blood of
 “ Jesus was shed for thee, for the remission of thy sins :
 “ if therefore thou confessest and forsakest them, e-
 “ ven the faithfulness, as well as mercy, of God, may
 “ encourage thy hopes of forgiveness, 1 John i. 9.
 Prov. xxvii. 13.

“ Thou hast rebelled against the most high God, the
 “ possessor and Lord of heaven and earth ; and there
 “ is nothing thou canst do to merit his favour ; but dost
 “ thou repent of thy wickedness and chuse the things
 “ that please him, it is no presumption in thee to take
 “ hold of his covenant, and look for all the blessings it
 “ speaks of ; for this blood, which was shed for the re-
 “ mission of thy sins, is also the blood of the covenant,
 “ the price of these blessings.”

The viewing the cup as the new covenant in Christ's
 blood, may lead you to speak to yourselves in some such
 manner as this.

“ And should it not remove every discouraging thought,
 “ to behold the Lord Jesus presenting thee with this cup,
 “ the symbol of his blood, and commanding thee to re-
 “ ceive it, as the new covenant in his blood. It is a
 “ sensible pledge of God's favour to thee ; the seal, as
 “ well as token of his covenant ; and designed, not meer-
 “ ly to lead thy thoughts to the gracious declarations
 “ and promises of the word ; but to excite and strength-
 “ en thy faith and thy hope in them, and to serve as a
 “ witness for God, that there shall not fail one word of
 “ all his good promises.

“ Make use then, O my soul, of that liberty that is
 “ granted thee, to enter into the holiest by the blood of
 “ Jesus ; that blood by which he himself is entered ; and
 “ go boldly, though with reverence and godly fear, to
 “ the throne of grace, that thou mayest obtain mercy,
 “ and find grace to help in time of need.

“ And now, O Lord, I draw near to thee. O may
 “ I do it with a true and upright heart ! In thy favour
 “ is life. Thy loving kindness is better than life. My
 “ flesh and my heart faileth ; and all things here will
 “ fail ; but if I have thee for my God, in covenant with
 “ me, my happiness will be secure and lasting ; for thou

“ wilt be the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. This is all my salvation, and all my desire.

“ I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity will I not hide ; to me belongeth confusion of face, because I have sinned against thee, I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies ; if thy compassions had failed, how very miserable had I now been ! who am I, O Lord God ! whence is this to me, that thou shouldst speak of making with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure ; but such are the riches of thy grace, that as in thy word thou settest this blessedness before me, so this cup is presented to me to encourage my hopes of enjoying it.

“ And now having full assurance of faith, being firmly persuaded of the efficacy of the blood of Jesus ; that blood which he shed for the remission of my sins, the blood of the new covenant, I receive, and drink of this cup as the symbol of this blood, and as the token and seal of this covenant, and this I do, for a testimony of my taking thee for my God and dedicating myself to thy service.

“ O Lord, thou art my Lord, my lot, my portion, the life of my soul ; the father of mercies ; the God of all comfort. All my springs are in thee. In thee will I put my trust. In thee will I boast all the day long. I will praise thy name for ever. In this alone will I glory, the understanding and knowing thee. Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens ; thy faithfulnes reacheth unto the clouds. Thou exercisest loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth. Thou wilt abundantly satisfy thy people ; thou wilt make them to drink of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life. In thy light shall we see light.

“ I now yield myself unto thee as thy servant ; all the powers and faculties of my soul, and all the members of my body, as instruments of righteousness unto God. I now enter into thy covenant and into thine oath, that I will be thine ; and will walk in thy ways, will live in thy service. I now solemnly engage to make thy word the rule of my life, and thy glory the end of my living.

“ O take away all iniquity, and receive me graciously : turn not away from me, but rejoice over me to do me good, and put thy fear in my heart, that I may ne

never depart from thee. Thou who art the God of peace, that hast brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make me perfect in every good work to do thy will, working in me that which is well pleasing in thy sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

These devotional exercises relating to the cup, may prepare your hearts for the praises as well as prayers which are to be offered up to God in public, after the receiving it.

I speak of praises as well as prayers, because it appears from the history of the institution of the Lord's supper, as might have been observed in the review, that Christ and his apostles sang an hymn before they left the house in which he had instituted it, Mat. xxvi. 30. Mark xiv. 26. We cannot say, whether this was the hallel of the Jews, which began at Psal. cxiii. and ended with Psal. cxviii. ; or a part of it only ; or some other hymn more suited to his new institution. But, be this as it will, as the reason of things led the Jews to sing praises to God, when they had eaten the passover, so it should much more lead Christians to do the same, on their having received the Lord's supper : for no instance of the love and grace of God is equal to that, which this ordinance sets before us.

But the laudable custom that prevails amongst us, makes it needless to insist on the proof of this point : for, as the Church of England, in her communion service, directs us to say, or sing, " Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good-will towards men ; we praise thee, we adore thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty ; so the dissenters have various collections of hymns for their use at the Lord's table. I shall transcribe a few lines from Dr. Watts, because of their suitability to that which I have observed concerning the sacramental cup.

Hope in the covenant.

HOW oft have sin and Satan strove
 To rend my soul from thee, my God !
 But everlasting is thy love,
 And Jesus seals it with his blood.

The oath and promise of the Lord
 Join to confirm the wondrous grace ;
 Eternal power performs the word,
 And fills all heaven with endless praise.

Amidst temptations sharp and long
 My soul to this dear refuge flies :
 Hope is my anchor firm and strong,
 While tempests blow and billows rise.

The gospel bears my spirits up ;
 A faithful and unchanging God
 Lays the foundation for my hope
 In oaths, and promises, and blood.

Hymns, B. I. CXXXIX.

The New Covenant sealed.

THE promise of my Father's love
 Shall stand for ever good ;
 He said, and gave his soul to death
 And seal'd the grace with blood.

To this dear cov'nant of thy word
 I set my worthless name ;
 I seal the engagement to my Lord,
 And make my humble claim.

Thy light and strength, and pard'ning grace
 And glory shall be mine ;

My life and soul, my heart and flesh,
And all my pow'rs are thine.

B. III. iv.

Here in thy courts I leave my vow,
And thy rich grace record;
Witness, ye faints, who hear me now,
If I forsake the Lord.

Psal. cxvi.

Unless John xvii. is one of Christ's Sacramental prayers, we cannot plead his example for praying after receiving of the cup. But since there is no colour of reason for thinking that this duty is then improper, or unseasonable, why should any be for breaking in upon the custom of concluding this feast with prayer, which so generally prevails*?

And now the public worship being over, all that remains is for every communicant to make the most serious reflection on what he has done, and to be found in such exercises of the heart in his retirements as are suitable to his case.

If Deists as well as Christians, they who deny, as well as they who believe the gospel of God concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, are among the communicants, they may put such questions as these to themselves.

“ Is this that I have done to be justified? have I acted honestly, and with a regard to truth? were I in Turkey, or in China, might I not join with the Mahometans, or Pagans in their superstitions, as well as join with the Christians in this, which they look upon as the most solemn institution of what they call their Religion? may not Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be justly applauded for their bravery and nobleness of their spirits in hazarding their lives rather than fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up? and may not I as justly be condemned for being governed by the basest principle in receiving the sacrament with no other view than that I may have a legal qualification for an office? Is it fit upon any consideration whatever to be found in any act of false worship, and to do honour to an impostor.

* Oratio convivium dirimit. Tertul. Apol.

“ But why should I thus speak of Jesus of Nazareth, who, if the histories of him in the New Testament be true, was a man without guile; and approved of God, as a teacher come from Him, by many miracles, and wonders and signs, which were openly done by him, and at length declared to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead ?

“ This institution, indeed, sets him before us as crucified; but is this the only notion under which I ought, in reason, to consider him? had he been a deceiver of the people, must there not have been a full end of all faith in him, and regard to him, upon his having been put to death, and in so infamous a manner? but is it not certain that Christianity very much prevailed, and that the number of his disciples mightily increased, for many years after his crucifixion? and is it not also certain that men in those times, could not reasonably hope for any worldly advantages from professing themselves Christians; so far from it, that this was the way to endanger the loss of their estates, their friends, their liberties, and even their lives? what then should lead such multitudes to this, but the full evidence they had of the truth of Christ's resurrection; and that he was indeed exalted by the right hand of God, to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins?

“ When this was the case, have I no cause to suspect that there is some passion, some prejudice or other, that has hitherto blinded my mind, and hindered the light of his gospel from shining upon me? will it not be prudent, is it not necessary, to examine my heart with all possible care, that I may discover the secret springs of my carriage?

“ Was not the author and finisher of the Christian's faith for this purpose manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil? and sin and iniquity being the devil's work, did he not come into the world to save his people from their sins, and to bless them in turning away every one of them from his iniquities? is not this, the leading us to holiness in heart and in life, the end of the doctrine he taught, and is it not proper to answer this end? should not this recommend it to us as a doctrine worthy of God, and profitable to men? and yet is not

TWENTY-FIVE

DISCOURSES

SUITABLE TO THE

LORD'S SUPPER,

Delivered just before the ADMINISTRATION of
that sacred ORDINANCE.

By the Reverend and Learned

JOHN OWEN, D. D.

Of the last Age.

HEB. XI. 4.

He being dead, yet speaketh.

Vol. 2.

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1798



TO

Mrs COOKE, of Stoke-Newington.

MADAM,

FOUR years ago the world was favoured, through your means, with a volume of Doctor Owen's sermons, which never before appeared in print; and it is at your instance that the the following sacramental discourses of that same venerable Divine are now made public. Hereby, Madam, you at once express your high value and just esteem for the memory and works of that incomparable author, with your generous concern, and prevailing desire of being serviceable to the cause of Christ, a cause much more dear to you than all the worldly possessions with which the providence of God has blessed you.

WITH the greatest sincerity it may be said, your constant affection to the habitation of God's house, your steady adherence to the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, your kind regards to the faithful ministers of the gospel, your extensive benevolence to the indigent and the distressed, your affability to all you converse with, and, in a word,

your readinefs to every good work, are fo fpread abroad, that, as the apoftle fays to the Theffalonians, there is no need to fpeak any thing.

THAT the Lord would prolong your valuable life, daily refresh your foul with the dew of his grace, and enable you, when the hour of death approaches, to rejoice in the full profpect of eternal life through our Lord Jefus Chrift, is the prayer,

MADAM,

Of your affectionate

and obedient Servant,

Took's Court,
Curfitor-ftreet,
March 4. 1760.

RICHARD WINTER.

this that which makes me unwilling to receive it, and acknowledge the divine authority of its teacher? but if this be so, does not my reason, my conscience condemn me? and must I not conclude that the God of truth does also condemn me? and that I may escape his righteous judgment ought I not immediatly to fall down on my knees, and pray, Lord pardon the sins of which I have been guilty, and give me to do thy will, that I may know of the doctrine of Jesus, whether it be of thee or whether he spake of himself?"

Let the Deists make the experiment, and I am apt to think they will find that their giving a satisfactory answer to these questions will shew that it is highly reasonable for them, to resolve either to go to the Lord's table no more, or to observe his institution for the future with other affections and to a different purpose than they have ever done it before.

And that it may be the same with another sort of communicants, those I mean who profess to believe the gospel of Christ, but do not obey it, such as call him, Lord, Lord, but know in their consciences that they do not the things that he saith; let them, as is meet, reason with themselves after some such manner as this.

"Wherein is it better with me than with a Deist? what benefit may I expect from partaking of the sacrament, which he may not look for? we are acted by the same principles and aim at the like ends in that which we have done. I may say as well as he, that it was not inclination to this duty, affection to Christ, a desire to shew respect to him, a concern for my spiritual advantage, or any thing of this nature, that carried me to the Lord's table, no; but the love of this world, and a regard to its profits, its pleasures, or its honours. Had it not been to please my friends, or to gain the reputation of a pious man, or to qualify me for such an office, or for some end like these, I had thought nothing of eating this bread and drinking this wine.

"But what hypocrisy and folly have I been guilty of! I may have imposed on my fellow communicants; but be not deceived, O my soul, God is not mocked. He who searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts, cannot but know all the

springs of my actions ; even my most secret sins are not hid from his eyes, and whatsoever I sow that shall I also reap.

“ What an evil servant have I been ! I have trodden under foot the Son of God, I have counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and done despite to the spirit of grace : and I may justly be thought worthy of the forest punishment. What a wonder of mercies is it that my Lord did not come and cut me asunder, and appoint me my portion with hypocrites, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth !

“ But hitherto, O Lord, thou hast kept silence, and waited to be gracious unto me. Should I go on to despise the riches of thy goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering, and not be led thereby to repentance, what can I think but that I shall treasure up unto myself wrath against the day of thy wrath, and revelation of thy righteous judgment, who wilt render to every man according to his deeds ?

“ Blessed be thy name that I am yet the living before thee and have some sight of the danger I am in : impress my heart with a more affecting sense of it. May my flesh tremble for fear of thee. May I be so afraid of thy judgments, as not to dare to take one step more in the way of sin.

“ But why, O Lord, should I give up all hopes of being saved when I yet hear of a Saviour ; and when his blood which cleanseth from all sin, is yet set before me : and when I yet enjoy the ministry of reconciliation by which I am assured that thou art in Christ reconciling the world unto thyself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and beseechest me to be reconciled unto thee.

“ What amazing love and grace is this ! Lord ! give me to feel that it constraineth me to throw down my arms immediately, and yield myself unto thee : and O have mercy upon me according to thy loving kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, in Christ, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquities, and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God ! and renew a right spirit within me. Let no iniquity any longer have dominion over

me; but break all the cords of my sins, wherewith I have been holden: set my soul at liberty, by the power of thy grace; make me thy servant, and help me to spend the remainder of my days in thy service."

It may be some who fear that they are among this sort of communicants may be secretly moved, while thus praying, to add with pleasure and joy.

"And now, O Lord, thou givest me my heart's desire, and hast not withholden the requests of my lips. For now I feel the holy fire kindling in my breast, and am made willing to be thine. Thou art my portion, faith my soul, therefore will I hope in thee. Thou art my rightful Sovereign, and I now submit myself unto thee. Other lords, in time past, have had dominion over me; but by the assistance of thy grace, thee only will I serve for the future. O that my heart may be right with thee, stedfast in thy covenant; and that having my fruit unto holiness, my end may be everlasting life, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord."

But this leads our thoughts to the truly pious; for it cannot justly be said of any other persons, that their hearts speak such language: and the proper workings of their minds, when retired, after they had been at the Lord's table, may be thus expressed.

"I have lifted up my hand unto the most high God, and I cannot go back. I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep his righteous commandments. I love my master, and I will not go out free. Lord to whom shall I go? Thou hast the words of eternal life; I love thy service, and am fully resolved never to leave it. It is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come.

"But knowing that I am in an evil world, in which I shall meet with many temptations to forget God, and deal falsely in his covenant, and being sensible that the flesh is weak, and ready to comply with them, I dare not trust in my own heart, nor place any confidence in my own strength; but I fly to thee, my blessed and almighty Saviour. Thou art the mediator of the new covenant, and a witness of my oath; be thou a surety for me, and help me by thy Spirit to act agreeably to all my solemn engagements. Lord, confirm me unto the end.

Perform the good work begun in my soul. Keep me by thy power through faith unto salvation.

“How great is that blessedness which has been presented to me at the Lord’s table! all the fruits of his sufferings and death, all the blessings of the new covenant. Look diligently, O my soul, lest thou fail of this grace of God. Fear lest thou shouldst so much as seem to come short of it. Seek after a bright and continued evidence of thine interest in this blessedness; that Christ is thy Saviour, and that the Lord is thy God in covenant with thee. This will be the way to have that cheerful heart which doth good like a medicine, and to be rejoicing in all thy tribulations with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

“Pursue then, O my soul, toward the mark for this prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Give all diligence to add to thy faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness, charity.

“O that these things may be in me abound, that I may be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus my calling and election being made sure, I shall go on my way rejoicing, and an entrance shall be ministered unto me abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”

T H E E N D.

P R E F A C E.

THE preceding dedication is sufficient to acquaint the public, that these sacramental discourses are the genuine productions of that great man of God, Doctor JOHN OWEN, who was for some time in the last age vice-chancellor of Oxford. They enter the world through the same channel, as his thirteen sermons on various occasions, published four years since, viz. They were at first taken in short-hand from the Doctor's mouth, and by the late Sir John Hartopp, Baronet, Mrs Cook's pious grandfather, were transcribed into long-hand.

Mr Matthew Henry has this note in his annotations on 2 Kings ii. "There are remains of great and good men, which like Elijah's mantle, ought to be gathered up, and preserved by the survivors; their sayings, their writings, their examples; that as their works follow them in the reward of them, they may stay behind in the benefit of them." Not that our faith is to stand in the wisdom of men: the bible alone is the standard of truth; and there we are bid to go by the footsteps of the flock; and to keep the paths of the righteous. There is a strange itch in the minds of men after novelties; and it is too common a case, that

they who are for striking out something new in divinity are ready to pour contempt on the valuable writings of those who are gone before them; and even the most learned, peaceable and pious men shall not escape their unrighteous censures. This is notorious in the conduct of those who embrace the new scheme.

If we inquire of the former age, we shall find there flourished in it some of the greatest and best of men, for whose printed works many acknowledge they have abundant cause to bless God to eternity. Among these the writings of Doctor Owen shine with a peculiar lustre, in the judgment of judicious Christians; and I am persuaded, they who peruse them with the spirit of love and of a sound mind will be as far from asserting, that in his manner of maintaining the doctrine of faith, his "right arm appeared to be weakened," as from saying, that his right eye was darkened, and unable to discern the object of it.

As to the following discourses, which the Doctor calls familiar exercises, they are now printed in hopes they will be made useful, through the divine blessing, to assist the meditations of Christians of all denominations in their approaches to the Lord's table, seeing they are so well adapted to answer that sacred purpose.

DISCOURSE I.

October 10. 1669.

2 COR. V. 21.

*For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin ;
that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

I SHALL not enter into the opening of this scripture, but only propose some few things, that may be a suitable subject for your present meditation.

There are three things concerning God the Father ; three things concerning the Son ; and three things concerning ourselves ; all in these words that I have mentioned, and all suitable for us to be acting faith upon.

I. I would consider, if the Lord help me, the *sovereignty* of God the Father, his *justice* and his *grace*. His sovereignty ; He made him ; God the Father made him. His justice ; He made him to be sin ; a sacrifice and an offering for sin. And his grace ; “ that we might be made the righteousness of God in Christ.”

1. The *sovereignty* of God. I could mention, that this sovereignty of God extends itself to all persons chosen, and shew for whom Christ should be made sin ; for he was not made sin for all, but for them who became the righteousness of God in him.—Also the sovereignty of God over things, dispensing with the law so far, that he suffered for sin, who knew no sin : and we, who had sinned, were let go free. The sovereignty of God in appointing the Son to this work ; he made him ; for none else could : he was the servant of the Father. So that the whole foundation of this great transaction lies in the sovereignty of God over persons and things, in reference unto Christ. Let us then remember to bow

down to the sovereignty of God in this ordinance of the Lord's supper.

2. There is the *justice* of God. He made him to be sin, imputed sin unto him, reckoned unto him all the sins of the elect, caused all our sins to meet upon him, made him a sin-offering, a sacrifice for sin, laid all the punishment of our sins upon him. To this end he sent him forth to be a propitiation for sin, to declare his righteousness. The Lord help us to remember, that his righteousness is in a special manner exalted by the death of Christ. He would not save us any other way but by making him sin.

3. There is the *grace* of God manifests itself in the aim and design of God in all this matter. What did God aim at? It was "that we might become the righteousness of God in him;" that we might be made righteous and free from sin.

II. There are three things that lie clear in these words, that we may call to remembrance, concerning the Son. There is his *innocency*, his *purity*; "he knew no sin." There is his *sufferings*; he was made "to be sin." And there is his *merit*; it was "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Here is another object for faith to meditate upon.

1. There are many things in scripture that direct us to the spotless purity, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, when we think of his sufferings. A Lamb of God without spot. He did no sin, nor had any guile in his mouth. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." Faith should call this to mind in the sufferings of Christ, that he knew no sin. That expression sets sin at the greatest distance from Jesus Christ.

2. The *sufferings* of Christ; "he was made sin;" a comprehensive word, that sets out his whole sufferings. Look, whatever the justice of God, the law of God, whatever the threatenings of God did require to be inflicted as a punishment for sin; Christ underwent it all. They are dreadful apprehensions we ourselves have, or can take in concerning the issue and effect of sin, from the wrath of God, when under convictions, and not relieved by the promises of the gospel. But we see not

the thousandth part of the evil of sin, that follows inseparably from the righteousness and holiness of God. The effects of God's justice for sin will no more enter into our hearts fully to apprehend, than the effects of his grace and glory will: yet whatever it was, Christ underwent it all.

3. Then there is the *merit* of Christ; which is another object of faith that we should call over in the celebration of this ordinance. Why was he made sin? It was, "that we might become the righteousness of God in him." It is answerable to that other expression in Gal. iii. 13, 14. He hath borne the curse, was made a curse for us. To what end? "That the blessing of faithful Abraham might come upon us;" or that we might be completely made righteous. The design of our assembling together, is to remember, how we come to be made righteous; it is, by Christ's being made sin.

III. We may see three things concerning ourselves.

1. Our own *sin* and *guilt*: he was "made sin for us." If Christ was made sin for us, then we were sinners.

2. We may remember our *deliverance*; how we were delivered from sin, and all the evils of it. It was not by a word of command, or power, or by the interposition of saints or angels, or by our own endeavours; but by the sufferings of the Son of God. And,

3. God would have us remember and call to mind the *state* whereunto we are brought, which is a state of righteousness; that we may bless him for that which in this world will issue in our righteousness, and in the world to come, eternal glory.

These things we may call over for our faith to meditate upon. Our minds are apt to be distracted; the ordinance is to fix them: and if we act faith in an especial manner in this ordinance, God will be glorified.

DISCOURSE II.

November 26. 1669.

I COR. X. 16.

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

THERE is, in the ordinance of the Lord's supper, an especial and peculiar communion with Christ in his body and blood to be obtained. One reason why we so little value the ordinance, and profit so little by it, may be because we understand so little of the nature of that special communion with Christ, which we have therein.

We have this special communion upon the account of the special object that faith is exercised upon in this ordinance, and the special acts that it puts forth in reference to that, or those objects. For the acts follow the special nature of their objects. Now,

1. The special object of faith, as acted in this ordinance, is not the object of faith, as faith; that is, the most general object of it, which is the divine veracity. "He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal, that God is true," John iii. 33. The divine veracity, or the truth of God, that is the formal object of faith, as faith; and makes our faith to be divine faith. But now this is not the special object of faith in this ordinance, but something that doth suppose that.

2. The special object of faith, as justifying, is not the special object of faith in this ordinance. The special object of faith, as justifying, is the promise, and Christ in the promise, in general as the Saviour of sinners: so when the apostle called men to repent and believe, he tells them, "The promise is to you," Acts ii. 38. And, I suppose, I need not insist upon the proof of this, that the promise, and Christ in the promise, as Saviour and Redeemer, is the object of faith, as it is justifying. But

this also is supposed in the actings of faith in this ordinance ; which is peculiar, and gives us peculiar communion with Christ. Therefore,

3. The special and peculiar object of faith, the immediate object of it, in this ordinance, in its largest extent, is,

(1.) The human nature of Christ, as the subject where-in mediation and redemption was wrought. Christ is considered to come as a sacrifice ; that is laid down as the foundation of it, Psal. xl. 6. Heb. x. 5. “ A body hast thou prepared me ;” which is synecdochically taken for the whole human nature. Faith, when it would lead itself unto the sacrifice of Christ, which is here represented, doth in an especial manner consider the human nature of Christ ; that God prepared him a body for that end. This we are to have peculiar regard unto, whenever we come to the administration or participation of this ordinance ; for that end we now celebrate it. Nay,

(2.) Faith goes further, and doth not consider merely the human nature of Christ, but considers it as distinguished into its integral parts, into body and blood ; both which have a price, value, and virtue given unto them, by their union with his human soul ; for both the body of Christ and the blood of Christ, upon which the work of our redemption is put in scripture, have their value and worth from their relation unto his soul ; as soul and body, making the human nature, had its value and worth from its relation unto the Son of God : otherwise he saith of his body, “ Handle it, it is but flesh and bones.” But where the body of Christ is mentioned, and the blood of Christ is mentioned, there is a distribution of the human nature into its integral parts, each part retaining its relation to his soul, and from thence is its value and excellency. This is the second peculiar in the object of faith in this ordinance.

(3.) There is more than this : they are not only considered as distinguished but separate also ; the blood separate from the body, the body left without the blood. This truth our apostle, in this chapter and the next, doth most signally insist upon, *viz.* the distinct parts of this ordinance, one to represent the body, and the other to re-

represent the blood ; that faith may consider them as separate.

The Papists, we know do sacrilegiously take away the cup from the people : they will give them the bread, but they will not give them the cup : and as it always falls out, that one error must be covered with another, or else it will keep no man dry under it, they have invented the doctrine of concomitance ; that there is a concomitance, that is, whole Christ is in every kind, in the bread, and in the wine ; the one doth accompany the other ; which is directly to overthrow the ordinance upon another account, as it is to represent Christ's body and blood as separated one from the other : our Lord Jesus blessed the bread and the cup, and said, " This is my body ;" which cannot be spoken distinctly, unless supposed to be separate.

Here then is a threefold limitation of the act of faith, even in this ordinance, in a peculiar manner restraining it to a special communion with God in Christ ; that it hath a special regard to the human nature of Christ ; to his human nature, as consisting of body and blood ; and as it respects them as separated body and blood.

Yea, (4.) It respects them as separate in that manner. You all along know, that I do not intend these objects of faith as the ultimate object ; for it is the person of Christ that faith rests in ; but those immediate objects that faith is exercised about, to bring it to rest in God : it is exercised about the manner of this separation ; that is, the blood of Christ comes to be distinct, by being shed ; and the body of Christ comes to be separate by being bruised and broken. All the instituted sacrifices of old did signify this, a violent separation of body and blood ; the blood was let out with the hand of violence, and so separated, and then sprinkled upon the altar, and then towards the holy place ; and then the body was burned distinct by itself : so the apostle tells us, " It is the cup which we bless, and the bread which we break ;" the cup is poured out, as well as the bread broken, to remind faith of the violent separation of the body and blood of Christ. From this last consideration of faith acting itself upon the separation of the body and blood of Christ, by way of violence, it is led to a peculiar acting of it-

self upon all the causes of it; whence it was, that this body and this blood of Christ was represented thus separate; and by inquiring into the causes of it, it finds a moving cause,—a procuring cause,—an efficient cause,—and a final cause; which it ought to exercise itself peculiarly upon always in this ordinance.

[1.] A moving cause; and that is, the eternal love of God in giving Christ in this manner, to have his body bruised, and his blood shed. The apostle, going to express the love of God towards us, tells you it was in this, that “he spared not his own Son.” Rom. viii. 32. One would have thought, that the love of God might have wrought in sending his Son into the world, but it also wrought in not sparing of him. Thus faith is called in this ordinance, to exercise itself upon that love which gives out Christ not to be spared.

[2.] It reflects upon the procuring cause; whence it is, or what it is, that hath procured it, that there should be this representation of the separated body and blood of Christ; and this is even our own sin: He was delivered for our iniquities, given for our transgressions, died to make reconciliation and atonement for our sins; they were the procuring cause of it, upon such considerations of union and covenant, which I shall not now insist upon. It leads faith, I say, upon a special respect to sin, as the procuring cause of the death of Christ. A natural conscience on the breach of the law leads the soul to the consideration of sin, as that which exposes itself alone to the wrath of God and eternal damnation: but in this ordinance we consider sin as that which exposeth Christ to death; which is a peculiar consideration of the nature of sin.

[3.] There is the efficient cause; whence it was that the body and blood of Christ was thus separated; and that is threefold, principal, instrumental, and adjuvant.

What is the principal efficient cause of the suffering of Christ? Why, the justice and righteousness of God. “God set him forth to be a propitiation, to declare his own righteousness,” Rom. iii. 25. Whence it is said, “He spared him not;” he caused all our sins to meet upon him; the chastisement of our peace was upon him.

Again, There is the instrumental cause ; and that is the law of God. Whence did that separation, which is here represented unto us, ensue and flow ? It came from the sentence of the law, whereby he was hanged upon the tree.

Moreover, the adjuvant cause, was those outward instruments, the wrath and malice of men : “ For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,” Acts iv. 27.

Faith considers the cause whence it was that Christ was thus given up, the eternal love of God ; the procuring cause was our own sins ; and if once faith doth take a view of sin, as that which hath nailed Christ to the cross, it will have a blessed effect upon the soul : and it considers the efficient cause, which is the justice and righteousness of God. The law of God was the instrument in the hand of righteousness, which was holpen on by those outward instruments who had a hand in his suffering ; but none in his sacrifice.

[4.] Faith considers in this matter the end of this separation of the body and blood of Christ, which is thus represented ; and that is ultimately and absolutely the glory of God. He set him forth for the declaration of his righteousness, Rom. iii. 25. Eph. i. 6. God aimed at the glorifying of himself. I could easily manifest unto you, how all the glorious properties of his nature are advanced, exalted, and will be so to eternity, in this suffering of Christ.—The subordinate ends are two ; I mean, the subordinate ends of this very peculiar act of this separation of the body and blood.

(1.) It was to confirm the covenant. Every covenant of old was to be ratified and confirmed by sacrifice ; and in confirming the covenant by sacrifice, they divided the sacrifice into two parts and passed between them before they were offered ; and then took it upon themselves, that they would stand to the covenant, which was so confirmed. Jesus Christ being to confirm the covenant, (Heb. ix. 16.) the body and blood of Christ, this sacrifice, was to be parted, that this covenant might be confirmed. And,

(2.) A special end of it was for the confirming and strengthening of our faith. God gives out unto us the object of our faith in parcels: we are not able to take this great mysterious fruit of God's love in gross, in the lump; and therefore he gives it out, I say in parcels. We shall have the body broken to be considered; and the blood shed is likewise to be considered. This is the peculiar communion which we have with Christ in this ordinance; because there are peculiar objects for faith to act itself upon in this ordinance above others.

The very nature of the ordinance itself gives us a peculiar communion; and there are four things that attend the nature of this ordinance that are peculiar. It is commemorative, professional, eucharistical, and federal.

1. The ordinance is commemorative: "Do this in remembrance of me." And there is no greater joy to the heart of sinners, and a man knows not how to give greater glory to God, than to call the atonement of sin into remembrance. It is observed in the offering for jealousy, Numb. v. 15. if a man was jealous, and caused an offering to be brought to God, God allowed neither oil nor frankincense; and the reason is, "Because it was to bring sin to remembrance." But how sweet is that offering that brings to our remembrance the atonement made for all our sins? That is pleasing and acceptable unto God and sweet unto the souls of sinners.

2. It has a peculiar profession attending it; saith the apostle, "Doing this, ye shew forth the Lord's death till he come:" you make a profession and manifestation of it. And, give me leave to say it, they that look towards Christ, and do not put themselves into a way of partaking of this ordinance, they refuse the principal part of that profession which God calls them unto in this world. The truth is, we have been apt to content ourselves with a profession of moral obedience; but it is a profession of Christ's institution by which alone we glorify him in this world. I will have my death shewn forth, saith Christ, and not only remembered. The use of this ordinance is to shew forth the death of Christ. As Christ requires of us to shew forth his death, so surely he hath deserved it by his death.

3. It is peculiarly eucharistical : there is a peculiar thanksgiving that ought to attend this ordinance. It is called the cup of blessing, or the cup of thanksgiving : the original word is used promiscuously for blessing and thanksgiving. It is called the cup of blessing, because of the institution, and prayer for the blessing of God upon it ; and it is called the cup of thanksgiving, because we do in a peculiar manner give thanks to God for Christ, and for his love in him.

4. It is a federal ordinance, wherein God confirms the covenant unto us, and wherein he calls us to make a recognition of the covenant unto God. The covenant is once made, but we know that we stand in need that it should be often transacted in our souls, that God should often testify his covenant unto us, and that we should often actually renew our covenant-engagements unto him. God never fails, nor breaks his promises : so that he hath no need to renew them, but testify them anew : we break and fail in ours, so that we have need actually to renew them. And that is it which we are called unto in this ordinance, which is the ordinance of the great seal of the covenant in the blood of Christ.

Upon all these accounts have we special communion with Christ in this ordinance. There is none of them but I might easily enlarge upon ; but I name these heads ; and my design is to help my own faith and your's from roving, in the administration of ordinance, or from a general acting of itself, to fix it to that which is its particular duty ; that we may find no weariness nor heaviness in the administration : here in these things is there enough to entertain us forever, and to make them new and fresh to us. But while we come with uncertain thoughts, and know not what to direct our faith to act particularly upon, we lose the benefit of the ordinance.

For the use, it is,

1. To bless God for his institution of his church, which is the seat of the administration of this ordinance, wherein we have such peculiar and intimate communion with Christ. There is not one instance of those which I have named, but, if God would help us to act faith upon Christ in a peculiar manner through it, would give new strength and life to our souls. Now in the church we have all

this treasure. We lose it, I confess, by our unbelief and dislike of it ; but it will be found to be an inestimable treasure to those that use it, and improve it in a due manner.

2. Doth God give us this favour and privilege, that we should be invited to this special communion with Christ in this ordinance ? Let us prepare our hearts for it in the authority of its institution. Let us lay our souls and consciences, in subjection to the authority of Christ, who hath commanded these things, and who did it in a signal manner the same night wherein he was betrayed. So there is a special command of Christ lies upon us ; and if we will yield obedience to any of the commands of Christ, then let us yield obedience to this. Prepare your souls for special communion with him then, by subjugating them thoroughly to the authority of Christ in this ordinance.

3. It will be good for us all to be in a gradual exercising of our faith unto these special things, wherein we have communion with Christ. You have heard sundry particulars: here is an object of your faith that is given to be represented unto you in this ordinance, that God hath prepared Christ a body, that he might be a sacrifice for you ; and that this body was afterwards distinguished into his body strictly so taken, and his blood separated from it ; and this in a design of love from God as procuring the pardon of our sins, as tending to the glory of God, and the establishing of the covenant.—Train up a young faith “ in the way it should go, and it will not depart from it when it is old. And new things will be found herein every day to strengthen your faith, and you will find much sweetness in the ordinance itself.

DISCOURSE III.

December 10.th 1669.

I COR. X. 16.

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

I HAVE been treating somewhat about the special communion which believers have with Christ in the ordinance of the Lord's supper. There remains yet something farther to be spoken unto for our direction in this great work and duty; and this is taken from the immediate ends of this ordinance. I spake, as I remember, the last day to the speciality of our communion, from the consideration of the immediate ends of the death of Christ: now I shall speak to it in reference unto the immediate ends of this ordinance; and they are two, one whereof respects our faith and our love, and the other respects our profession; which two make up the whole of what is required of us. For, as the apostle speaks, Rom. x. 10. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Both these ends, that which respects our faith and love, and that which respects our profession are mentioned by our apostle in the next chapter, ver. 24. There is mention of that end of this ordinance which respects our faith; now that is recognition. Recognition is a calling over, or a commemoration of the death of Christ; "Do this, says he, in remembrance of me." That which respects our profession, is a representation and declaration of the Lord's death, ver. 26. "When you eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye shew forth, ye declare, ye manifest the Lord's death till he come. These are the two immediate great ends of this ordinance, a recognition of the death of Christ, which respects our faith and love;

and a representation of it, which respects our profession : both are required of us.

There is that which respects our faith. The great work of faith is to make things that are absent, present to a soul, in regard to their sweetness, power and efficacy ; whence it is said to be the evidence of things not seen ; and it looks backward into the causes of things ; and it looks forward unto the effects of things ; to what hath wrought out grace, and to what grace is wrought out ; and makes them in their efficacy, comfort, and power, to meet and centre in the believing soul.

Now there are three things, in reference unto the death of Christ, that faith in this ordinance doth recognize, call over, and commemorate. The first is, the faith of Christ in and for his work. The second is, the obedience of Christ. And the third is the work itself.

1. Faith calls over the faith of Christ. Christ had a double faith in reference to his death ; one with respect unto himself, and his own interest in God ; and the other in respect to the cause whose management he had overtaken, and the success of it. He had faith for both these.

1st, The Lord Christ had faith in reference to his own person, and to his own interest in God. The apostle, declaring, Heb. ii. 14. “ that because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, Christ also did partake of the same,” that so he might die to deliver us from death, brings that text of scripture, ver. 13. in confirmation of it, which is taken out of Psal. xviii. 2. “ And again, saith he, I will put my trust in him. How doth this confirm what the apostle produces it for ? Why from hence, That in that great and difficult work that Christ did undertake, to deliver and redeem the children, he was all along carried through it by faith and trust in God. “ He trusted in God,” saith he, and that made him undertake it : and he gives a great instance of his faith when he was departing out of the world. There are three things that stick very close to a departing soul ;—the giving up of itself ;—the state wherein it shall be when it is given up ;—and the final issue of that estate. Our Lord Jesus Christ expressed his faith as to all three of them. As to his departure, Luke xxiii. 46. “ He

cried with a loud voice, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit : and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."—What was his faith as to what would become of him afterwards ? That also he expresses, Psal. xvi. 10. " For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption. My soul shall not be left under the state of the dead, whereunto it is going ; nor my body see corruption.—What was his faith as to the future issue of things ? That he expresses, ver. 11. " Thou wilt shew me the path of life ; (which is his faith for his rising again) : In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore ;" where he was to be exalted : and these words, " Father into thy hand I commend my spirit," were the first breaking forth of the faith of Christ towards a conquest. He looked through all the clouds of darkness round about him towards the rising sun ; through all storms to the harbour, when he cried those words with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And by the way it is the highest act of faith upon a stable bottom and foundation, such as will not fail, to give up a departing soul into the hands of God, which Jesus Christ here did for our example. Some die upon presumptions, some in the dark ; but faith can go no higher than, upon a sure and stable ground, to give up a departing soul into the hands of God ; and that for these reasons, to shew the faith of Christ in this matter.

(1.) Because the soul is then entering into a new state, whereof there are these two properties that will try it to the utmost ; that it is invisible, and that it is unchangeable. I say, there are two properties that make this a great act of faith.

[1.] The state is invisible. The soul is going into a condition of things that " eye hath not seen, nor ear heard ;" that nothing can take any prospect into but faith alone. However men may talk of the invisible state of things, which our souls are departing into, it is all but talk, and conjecture, besides what we have by faith. So that to give up a soul cheerfully and comfortably into that state, is a pure act of faith.

[2.] It is unchangeable. It is a state wherein there is no alteration. And though all alterations should prove

for the worfe, yet it is in the nature of man to hope good from them. But here is no more alteration left: the foul enters into an unchangeable ftate. And,

(2.) The 2d reason is, becaufe the total fum of man's life is now caft up, and he fees what it will come to. While men are trading in this world, though they meet with fome ftraits and difficulties, yet they have that going on which will bring in fomething this way, or that way. But when it comes to this, that they can go no farther, then they fee how things ftand with a departing foul; the whole fum is caft up, there is no more venture to be made, no more advantage to be gained, he muft ftand as he is. And when a man takes a view of what he is to come to, he needs faith to obtain a comfortable paffage out of it. And,

(3.) Even death itfelf brings a terror with it, that nothing can conquer but faith; I mean, conquer duly. He is not crowned that doth not overcome by faith. It is only to be done through the death of Chrift. "He delivered them that by reafon of death were in bondage all their days." There is no deliverance that is true and real, from a bondage frame of fpirit to death, but by faith in Chrift.

I touch on this by the way, to manifelt the glorious fuccefs the faith of Chrift had, who in his dying moment, cried out, "Father, into thy hands I commend my fpirit;" and this is that we are to call over in the remembrance of his death. It is a very great argument the apoftle ufes to confirm our faith, when fpeaking of the patriarchs of old; he fays, "All thefe died in faith." But that *all* is nothing to this argument, that Jefus Chrift, our head and representative, who went before us, he died in faith. And this is the principal inlet into life, immortality, and glory, the confideration of the death of Chrift, dying in that faith, that he gave up his foul into the hands of God, and was perfuaded God "would not leave his foul in hell, nor fuffer his holy One to fee corruption; but that he would fhew him the path of life, and bring him to his right hand, where there are pleafures for evermore."

2dly, Chrift had a faith for the caufe wherein he was engaged. He was engaged in a glorious caufe, a great

undertaking, to deliver the elect of God from death, hell, Satan, and sin; to answer the law, to undergo the curse, and to bring his many children unto glory. And dreadful oppositions lay against him in this undertaking. See what faith he had for his cause, Jf. 1. 7, 8, 9. "The Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God will help me, who is he that shall condemn me? Who is my adversary?" or, as in the Hebrew, "Who is the master of my cause?" I have a cause to plead; who is the master of it? I am engaged in a great cause, saith he, and I am greatly opposed; they seek to make me ashamed, to confound me, to condemn me: but here is faith for his cause; "The Lord God will justify me," saith he. It was with Christ as it would have been with us under the covenant of works; man ought to have believed he should be justified of God, though not by Jesus Christ; so here he had faith that he should be justified. God will justify me; I shall not be condemned in this cause that I have undertaken.

It is matter of great comfort and support to consider, that when the Lord Jesus Christ had in his eye all the sins of all the elect upon the one hand, and the whole curse of the law and the wrath of God on the other, yet he cried, "I shall not be confounded, I shall go through it, I shall see an end of this business, and make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness; and God will justify me in it." We are in an especial manner to call to remembrance the faith that Christ had for his cause, and we ought to have the same faith for it now, for this great conquest of overcoming the devil, sin, death, hell, and the saving of our souls: he hath given us an example for it.

There is one objection lies against all this, and that is this: But did not Christ despond in his great agony in the garden, when he cried three times, "Father, if it be possible lett his cup pass from me?" and in that dreadful outcry on the cross, which he took from the xxxii. psalm, a prophecy of him, "My God, my God, why hast thou

forfaken me?" Doth not Chrift feem to repent here, and to defpond?

I answer, In this difficult inquiry two things are to be flated; 1. In reference to his perfon, that it was impoffible Chrift fhould have the indiffolubility of his perfonal union utterly hid from him. He knew the union of his human nature unto the Son of God could not be utterly diffolved, that could not be utterly hid from him; fo that there could not be defpair properly fo called in Chrift. And, 2. This is certain alio, that the contract he had with the Father, and the promifes he had given him of being fucceffful, could never utterly be hid from him. So that his faith, either as to his perfon or caufe, could not poffibly be utterly ruined. But there was a fevere and terrible conflict in the human nature, arifing from thefe four things.

(1.) From the view which he was exalted to take of the nature of the curfe that was then upon him. For the curfe was upon him, Gal. iii. 13. "He was made a curfe for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Give me leave to fay, Jefus Chrift faw more into the nature of the curfe of God for fin, than all the damned in hell are able to fee; which caufed a dreadful conflict in his human foul upon that profpect.

(2.) It arofe from hence, that the comforting influences of the union with the divine nature were reftained. Jefus Chrift was in himfelf, "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." But yet all the while there were the influences of light and glory from the divine nature to the human by virtue of their union; and now they are reftained, and inftead of that, was horrible darknefs, and trembling, and the curfe, and fin, and Satan, round about him; all prefenting themfelves unto him; which gave occafion to that part of his prayer, Pfal. xxii. 20, 21. "Deliver my foul from the fword; my darling from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth," &c. There was the fword in the curfe of the law, and the dog and the lion, or Satan, as it were, gaping upon him, as if ready to devour him; for it was the hour and power of darknefs, dread and terror: befides there were cruel men, which he compares to the bulls of Bafhan, which rent him. This caufed that terrible conflict.

(3.) It was from the penal desertion of God. That he was under a penal desertion from God, is plain; "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And when I say so, I know little of what I say, I mean, what it is to be under such penal desertion. For the great punishment of hell, is an everlasting penal desertion from God.

(4.) It was from the unspeakable extremity of the things that he suffered. Not merely as to the things themselves which outwardly fell upon his body; but as unto that sword of God, which was awakened against him, and which had pierced him to the very soul. The advantage which he had in his sufferings by his divine union, was that which supported and bore him up under that weight, which would have sunk any mere creature to nothing. His heart was enlarged to receive in those pains, that dread and terror, that otherwise he could not have received: and notwithstanding all this, as I shewed before, Christ kept up his faith in reference to his person, and kept up his faith in reference to his cause; and a great example he hath given unto us, that though the dog and the lion should encompass us, though we should have desertion from God, and pressures more than nature is able to bear, yet here is a way of keeping up faith, trust, and confidence through all, and not to let go our hold of God.

Now this is the first thing we are to call over in remembrance of Christ, in reference to his death; that faith he had, both for his person and his cause, in his death. For if you remember any of the martyrs that died, you will stick upon these two things, more than upon the flames that consumed them; they expressed great faith of their interest in Christ, and in reference to the cause they died for. They are things you will remember. And this you are to remember of him, who was the head of martyrs, our Lord Jesus Christ's faith.

2. We are to call over his obedience in his death. The apostle doth propose it unto us; Phil. ii. 5, 6, 7, 8. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient

unto death, even the death of the cross." We are to call over the mind of Christ in suffering. And the following things the scripture doth peculiarly direct us to consider in the obedience of Christ unto death: the principle of it, which was love,—readiness to and for it,—submission under it,—his patience during it. They are things the scripture minds us concerning the obedience of Christ in his death.

1. Consider his love, which is one of the principal things to be regarded in this obedience of Christ. The love wherewith it was principled: Gal. ii. 20. "He loved me, (saith the apostle,) and gave himself for me. 1 John iii. 16. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." It was his love did it; Rev. i. 5. Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. This gives life to the whole sufferings of Christ, and to our faith too. It was an high act of obedience to God, that he laid down his life; but that obedience was principled with love to us.

And now, I pray God, to enable me to consider this with my own soul, what that love would stick at, that did not stick at this kind of death we have been speaking of. If Jesus Christ had reserved the greatest thing he was to do for us unto the last, we had not known but his love might have stuck when it came to that; I mean, when it came to the curse of the law, though he had done other things. But having done this, he that would not withdraw nor take off from that, because he loved us, what will he stick at for the future? Our hearts are apt to be full of unkind and unthankful thoughts towards him, as though upon every dark and black temptation and trial he would desert us, whose love was such, as he would not do it when himself was to be deserted and made a curse. Call over then the love of Christ in this obedience. Yes; but love prevails sometimes, you will say, with many, to do some things, that they have no great mind to: we come very difficultly to do some things, when yet out of love we will not deny them. But it was not so with Christ; his love was such, that he had,

(2.) An eternal readiness unto his work. There are two texts of scripture informs us of it; Prov. viii. 30. where the Holy Ghost describes the prospect that the wisdom of God, that is, the Son of God, took of the world, and the children of men, in reference to the time he was to come among them; I was, saith he, daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men. He considered what work he had to do for the sons of men, and delighted in it. The 40th psalm expounds this, ver. 6, 7, 8. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, &c. Sacrifice and burnt-offering will not take away sin, saith he; Then, Lo, I come. But doth he come willingly? Yes, I delight, (saith he), to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart. What part of the will of God was it? the apostle tells you, Heb. x. 10. "Offering the body of Jesus Christ once for all; by which will we are sanctified. He came not only willingly, but with delight. The baptism he was to be baptised with, he was straitened till it was accomplished. The love he had unto the souls of men, that great design and project he had for the glory of God, gave him delight in his undertaking, notwithstanding all the difficulties he was to meet with.

(3.) We are to remember his submission to the great work he was called unto. This he expresses, Is. l. 5. 6. "The Lord God," saith he, "hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting." The Lord God called him to it, and he was not rebellious, but submitted unto it.

There is one objection arises against this submission, and that is the prayer of Christ in the garden, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

I answer, That was an expression of the horror which was upon the human nature, which we mentioned before. But there were two things that Christ immediately closed upon, which gave evidence to this submission; that he did not draw back, nor rebel, nor hide himself, nor turn

away his face from shame and spitting. One was this, "Father, thy will be done," saith he; and the other was this, that he refused that aid to deliver him which he might have had: "Know ye not that I could pray the Father, and he would give me more than twelve legions of angels?" He then suffered under the Roman power, and their power was reduced to twelve legions. Saith he, I could have more than these; which argues his full submission unto the will of God.

(4.) We are to call over his patience under his sufferings, in his obedience, II. liii. 7. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth: The highest expressions of an absolute, complete, and perfect patience. Though he was afflicted, and though he had all manner of provocations, "though he was reviled, he reviled not again." The apostle tells us, Heb. xii. 2. "he endured the cross." (that is he patiently endured it, as the word signifies), "and despised the shame, that he might sit down at the right hand of God."

You see then the end of this ordinance of the Lord's supper, is to stir us up to call over the obedience of Christ, both as to his love in it, as to his readiness for it, submission to the will of God in it, and patience under it.

3. Faith is to call over the work itself, and that was the death of Christ. I shall not now be able to manifest under what consideration in this ordinance faith calls over the death of Christ; but these are the heads I shall speak unto. It calls it over as a sacrifice, in that it was bloody;—it calls it over as shameful, in that it was under the curse;—it calls it over as bitter and dreadful, in that it was penal. It was a bloody, shameful, and penal death; as bloody, a sacrifice; as cursed, shameful; and as it was penal, it was bitter. In the work of faith's calling over these things, there is a peculiar work of love also. Saith our Saviour, "Do this in remembrance of me." These are the words we would use unto a friend, when we give him a token or pledge, "Remember me." What is the meaning of it? Remember my love to you; my kindness for you, remember my person. There is a remembrance of love towards Christ

to be acted in this ordinance, as well as a remembrance of faith ; and as the next object of faith is, the benefits of Christ, and thereby to his person ; so the next object of love, is the person of Christ, and thereby to his benefits ; I mean as represented in this ordinance. Remember me, saith he, that is, with an heart full of love towards me. And there are three things wherein this remembrance of Christ by love, in the celebration of this ordinance, both consist : delight in him,—thankfulness unto him,—and the keeping of his word. He that remembers Christ with love, hath these three affections in his heart.

(1.) He delights in him. Thoughts of Christ are sweet unto him, as of an absent friend : but only in spiritual things we have this great advantage, we can make an absent Christ present to us. This we cannot in natural things. We can converse with friends only by imagination ; but by faith we can make Christ present with us, and delight in him.

(2.) There is thanksgiving towards him. That love which is fixed upon the person of Christ will break forth in great thankfulness, which is one peculiar act of this ordinance. The cup which we bless, or give thanks for.

(3.) It will greatly incline the heart to keep his word. If ye are my disciples, “ If ye love me, keep my commandments.” Every act of love fixed upon the person of Christ, gives a new spring of obedience to all the ordinances of Christ : and the truth is, there is no keeping up our hearts unto obedience to ordinances, but by renewed acts of obedience upon the person of Christ. This will make the soul cry, When shall I be in an actual observation of Christ’s ordinance, who hath thus loved me and washed me with his own blood, that hath done such great things for me ?

This is the end of the death of Christ, which concerns our faith and love ; the end of commemoration, or calling to remembrance.

There is an end of profession also ; which is to shew forth the Lord’s death till he come. But this must be spoken to at some other time. If we come to the practice of these things, we shall find them great things to call over : *viz.* the whole frame of the heart of Christ

in his death, and his death itself, and our own concern therein, and the great example he hath set unto us. Some of them I hope may abide upon our hearts and spirits for use.

DISCOURSE IV.

December 24. 1669.

I COR. xi. 26.

As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death until he come.

ONE end, you see, of this great ordinance, is to shew the Lord's death, to declare it, to represent it, to shew it forth, hold it forth; the word is thus variously rendered. And in the especial ends of this ordinance it is, that we have special communion with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now there are two ways whereby we shew forth the Lord's death; the one is, the way of representation to ourselves; and the other is, a way of profession unto others.

I. The way of *representation* to ourselves. The work of representing Christ aright to the soul, is a great work. God and men are agreed in it; and therefore God, when he represents Christ, his design is to represent him to the faith of men. Men that have not faith have a great desire to have Christ represented to their fancy and imagination; and therefore when the way of representing Christ to the faith of men was lost among them, the greatest part of their religion was taken up in representing Christ to their fancy. They would make pictures and images of his cross, resurrection, ascension, and every thing he did.

There are three ways whereby God represents Christ to the faith of believers; the one is, by the word of the gospel itself, as *written*; the second is, by the *ministry* of the gospel, and *preaching* of the word; and

the third in particular is, by *this sacrament*, wherein we represent the Lord's death to the faith of our own souls.

1. God doth it by the *word* itself. Hence are those descriptions that are given of Christ in Scripture, to represent him desirable to the souls of men. The great design of the book of Canticles, consists for the most part in this, in a mystical, allegorical description of the graces and excellencies of the person of Christ, to render him desirable to the souls of believers; as in the fifth chapter, from the ninth verse to the end, there is nothing but that one subject. And it was a great promise made to them of old, Isa. xxxiii. 17. *Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty.* The promises of the Old Testament are much spent in representing the person of Christ beautiful, desirous, and lovely to the faith of believers. And you will see in 2 Cor. iii. 18. what is the end of the gospel: *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.* The gospel is the glass here intended; and looking into the glass, there is an image appears in it, not our own, but the representation the gospel makes of Jesus Christ, is the image that appears in the glass. The work and design of the gospel, is to make a representation of Christ unto us. As Christ makes a representation of the Father, and therefore he is called *his image, the image of the invisible God*: why so? because all the glorious properties of the invisible God are represented to us in Christ, and we looking upon the image of Christ in this glass, that is the representation made of him in the gospel; it is the effectual means whereby the Spirit of God transforms us into his image.

This is the first way whereby God doth this great work of representing Christ unto the faith of men, which men having lost, have made it their whole religion to represent Christ unto their fancy.

2. The second way is, by the *ministry* of the word. The great work of the ministry of the word, is to represent Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul tells us, Gal. iii. 1. *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that*

you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? He is *depictus crucifixus*, crucified before their eyes. How was this? not before their bodily eyes; but the apostle had in his preaching made such a lively representation unto their faith of the death of Christ, that he was as one painted before them. One said well on this text, "Of old the apostles did not preach Christ by painting, but they painted him by preaching;" they did in so lively a manner represent him.

Abraham's servant, in the 24th chapter of Genesis, that was sent to take a wife for his son Isaac, is by all granted to be, if not a type, yet a resemblance of the ministers of the gospel, that go forth to prepare a bride for Christ: and what does he do? truly he is a great example; when he came to the opportunity, though he had many things to divert him, yet he would not be diverted. There was set meat before him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat till I have told my errand." Nothing should divert the ministers of the gospel, no not their necessary meat, when they have an opportunity of dealing with souls on behalf of Christ. What course does Abraham's servant take? He saith, "I am Abraham's servant; and the Lord hath blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and men-servants, and maid servants, and camels, and asses." What is all this to Isaac? he was to take a wife for Isaac, not for Abraham. He goes on; "And Sarah, my master's wife, bare a son to my master when she was old; and unto him hath he given all that he hath." The way to procure this wife for Isaac, was to let them know, that this great man, had given all that he had to Isaac. And it is the work of ministers of the gospel, to let the people know, that God the Father hath given all things into the hands of his Son; they are to represent Christ, as Abraham's servant does here his master Isaac, as one who inherited all the goods of Abraham; so Christ is the appointed heir of all things, of the kingdom of heaven, the whole household of God. They are to represent him thus to the souls of men, to make him desirable to them. This is a great work of ministers who

are ambassadors of God ; they are sent from God to take a wife for Christ ; or to make ready a bride for him from among the children of men.

3. The special way whereby we represent Christ unto our souls through faith, is in the *administration* of this ordinance, which I will speak to upon the great end of shewing forth the death of the Lord.

Now the former representations were general, this is particular ; and I cannot at this time go over particulars. I bless the Lord my soul hath many times admired the wisdom and goodness of God in the institution of this one ordinance, that he took bread and wine for that end and purpose, merely arbitrary, of his own choice, and might have taken any thing else, what he had pleased ; that he should fix on the cream of the creation, which is an endless store-house, if pursued, of representing the mysteries of Christ. When the folly of men goes about to invent ceremonies that they would have significant ; when they have found them out, they cannot well tell what they signify. But though I do acknowledge, that all the significancy of this ordinance depends upon the institution, yet there is great wisdom in the fitting of it ; the thing was fitted and suited to be made use of to that end and purpose.

One end of the ordinance itself is to represent the death of Christ unto us ; and it represents Christ with reference to these five things.

1. It represents him with reference to God's *setting him forth*. 2. In reference to his own *passion*. 3. In reference to his *exhibition in the promise*. 4. To our *participation* of him by believing. And, 5. To his *incorporation* with us in union.

1. The great end of God in reference to Christ as to his death, was, his *setting of him forth*. Rom. iii. 25. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation." And in the very setting forth of the elements in this ordinance, there is a representation of God's setting forth his Son, of giving him out for this work, of giving him up unto it to be a propitiation.

2. There is a plain representation of his *passion*, of his suffering and death, and the manner of it. This, with all the concerns of it, I treated of the last Lord's day,

under the head of recognition, or calling over the death of Christ, "Do this in remembrance of me;" and so I shall not again insist upon it.

3. There is a representation of Christ in it, as to the *exhibition* and tender of him in the promise. Many promises are expressed in invitations, "Ho! every one that thirsts, come," take eat: there is a promise in it. And in the tender that is made even of the sacramental elements, there is the exhibition of Christ in the promise represented to the soul. I told you before God hath carefully provided to represent Christ unto our faith, and not to our fancy; and therefore there is no outward similitude and figure. We can say concerning this ordinance with all its representations, as God said concerning his appearing to Moses upon mount Horeb, "Thou sawest no similitude." God hath taken care there shall be no natural figure, that all representations made may stand upon institution. Now there is this tender with an invitation. The very elements of the ordinance are a great representation of the proposal of Christ to a believing soul. God holds out Christ as willing to be received, with an invitation. So we shew forth the Lord's death.

4. There is in this ordinance a representation of Christ as to our reception of him; for hereon depends the whole of the matter. God might make a feast of fat things, and propose it to men; but if they do not come to eat, they will not be nourished by it. If you make a tender of payment to a man, if he doth not receive it, the thing remains at a distance as before. Christ being tendered to a soul, if that soul doth not receive him, he hath no benefit by it.—All these steps you may go. There may be God's exhibition of Christ, and setting of him forth; there may be his own oblation and suffering, laying the foundation of all that is to come; there may be an exhibition of him in the promise, tender and invitation, and yet, if not received, we have no profit by all these things. What a great representation of this receiving is there in the administration of this ordinance, when every one takes the representation of it to himself, or doth receive it!

5. *Lastly*, It gives us a representation of our incorporation in Christ; the allusion whereof from the nature of the elements incorporation with us, and being the strength of our lives, might easily be pursued.—This is the first way of shewing forth the Lord's death.

II. I shall now speak a few words to the profession of it among ourselves, and to others.

Let me take one or two observations to make way for it.

1. That visible profession is a matter of more importance than most men make of it. As the apostle saith, Rom. x. 10. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Look how indispensibly necessary believing is unto righteousness, to justification; no less indispensibly necessary is confession or profession unto salvation. There is no man that doth believe with his heart unto righteousness, but he will with his mouth (which is there taken by a synecdoche for the whole of our profession) make confession unto salvation. This is that which brings glory to God. The apostle tells us, 2 Cor. ix. 13. that men "by the experiment of this ministration, glorify God for your professed subjection to the gospel of Christ." Glory doth not arise out of obedience, so much as by your profession of it; by the giving them experiment, both of your faith and the reality of it, and that by this fruit of your profession.

Now profession consists in these two things; (1.) In an abstinence from all things with reference to God and his worship, which Christ has not appointed. (2.) In the observation and performance of all things that Christ has appointed.

Men are apt to think, that abstinence from the pollutions that are in the world through lust, the keeping themselves from the sins and defilements of the world, and inclining to that party that is not of the world, is profession. These things are good: but our profession consists in the observation of Christ's commands, what he requires of us. "Go teach them" What to do! "Whatsoever I have commanded them; and lo, I am with you always to the end of the world." There is

an expression, John xiv. 24. wherein our Saviour puts a trial of our love to him upon the keeping of his sayings. "He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings." To keep the sayings of Christ is to observe the commands of Christ, which is the perfect trial of our love to him.

2. There is in this ordinance a special profession of Christ. There is a profession of him against the shame of the world; a profession of him against the curse of the law; and a profession of him against the power of the devil. All our profession doth much centre, or is mightily acted in this ordinance.

(1.) The death of our Lord Jesus Christ was in the world a shameful death, and that with which Christians were constantly reproached, and which hardly went down with the world. It is a known story, that when the Jesuits preached the gospel, as they call it, in China, they never let them know of the death of Christ, till the congregation *de propaganda fide* commanded it; for the world is mightily scandalized at the shameful death of the cross.

Now in this ordinance we profess the death of Christ wherein he was crucified, as a malefactor, against all the contempt of the world. It was a great part of the confession of the Christians of old, and there is something in it still: here we come solemnly before God, and all the world, and profess that we expect all our life and salvation from the death of this crucified Saviour.

(2.) In our profession we shew forth the death of the Lord, in the celebration of this ordinance, in opposition to the curse of the law: that whereas the curse of the law doth lay claim to us because we are sinners, here we profess that God hath transferred the curse of the law to another who underwent it. So they did with the sacrifices of old, when they had confessed all the sins and iniquities of the people over the head of the goat, then they sent him away into destruction. So it is in this ordinance: here we confess all our sins and iniquities over the head of this great sacrifice, and profess to the law and all its accusations, that there our sins are charged. "Who shall lay any thing to our charge? and who shall condemn? It is Christ that died. We confront the claim

of the law, shake off its authority as to its curse, and profess to it that its charge is satisfied.

(3.) We make a profession against the power of Satan. For the great trial of the power and interest of the devil in, unto, and over the souls of men, was in the cross of Jesus Christ. He put his kingdom to a trial, staked his all upon it, mustered up all the strength he had got, all the aids that the guilt of sin and the rage of the world could furnish him with. Now, saith Christ, is your hour and power of darkness. He comes to try what he can do: and what was the issue of the death of Christ? Why, saith the apostle, he spoiled principalities and powers, and triumphed over them in his cross. So that, in our celebration of the death of Christ, we do profess against Satan, that his power is broken, that he is conquered, tied to the chariot wheels of Christ, who has disarmed him.

This is the profession we make when we shew forth the Lord's death, against the shame of the world, against the curse of the law, and the power of hell.—This is the second general end of this ordinance, and another means it is whereby we have especial communion with Christ in it; which was the thing I aimed at from the words I had chosen. And now I have gone through all I intend upon this subject.

A word or two of use, and I have done.

1. It is a very great honour and privilege to be called of God unto this great work of shewing forth the death of Christ. I think it is as great and glorious a work as any of the children of men can be engaged in, in this world. I have shewed you formerly, how all the acts of the glorious properties of God's nature centre themselves in this infinite, wise, holy product of them, the death of Christ: and that God should call us to represent and shew forth this death. The Lord forgive us, where we have not longed to perform this work as we ought; for we have suffered carnal fears and affections, and any thing else, to keep us off from employing ourselves in this great and glorious work. The grace and mercy of God in this matter is ever to be acknowledged, in that he has called us to this great and glorious work.

2. Then surely it is our duty to *answer the mind of God* in this work ; and not to attend to it in a cold, careless, and transient manner. But methinks we might rejoice in our hearts when we have thoughts of it, and say within ourselves, *Come we will go and shew forth the Lord's death.* The world, the law, and Satan, are conquered by it : blessed be God that has given us an opportunity to profess this. O that our hearts may long after the season for it, and say, When shall the time come ?

3. We may do well to remember what was spoken before concerning the great duty of representing God to our souls, that we may know how to *attend* to it. I would speak unto the meanest of the flock, to guide our hearts and thoughts, which are too ready to wander, and are so unprofitable for want of spiritual fixation. We would fain trust to our *affections* rather than to our *faith*, and would rather have them moved, than faith graciously to act itself. And when we fail therein, we are apt to think we fail in our end of the ordinance, because our affections were not moved. Set faith genuinely at work, and we have the *end* of the ordinance. Let it represent Christ to our souls, as exhibited of God and given out unto us, as suffering, as tendered to us, and as received and incorporated with us.



DISCOURSE V.

January 7. 1672.

1 COR. xi. 23.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

I HAVE been treating of that special *communion* which believers have with Christ in the administration of the ordinance of the supper of the Lord ; and thought I should have treated no more of that subject ; having gone through all the particulars of it, which were

practical, such as might be reduced to present practice. But I remember I said nothing concerning *preparation* for it, which yet is a needful duty : and therefore I shall a little speak to that also ; not what may *doctrinally* be delivered upon it, but those things, or some of them at least, in which every soul will find a *practical concern*, that intends to be a partaker of that ordinance to benefit and advantage : and I have taken these words of the apostle for my ground-work, *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

There were many disorders fallen in this church at Corinth ; and that various ways, in schisms and divisions, in neglect of discipline, in false opinions, and particularly in a great abuse of the administration of this great ordinance of the supper of the Lord. And though I do not, I dare not, I ought not to bless God for their sin ; yet I bless God for his providence. Had it not been for their disorders, we had all of us been in much darkness as to all church-way. The correction of their disorders contains the principal rule for church-communion, and the administration of this sacrament, that we have in the whole scripture ; which might have been hid from us, but that God suffered them to fall into them on purpose, that through their fall in them and by them, he might instruct his church in all ages to the end of the world.

The apostle is here rectifying abuses about the administration of the Lord's supper, which were many ; and he applies particular directions to all their particular miscarriages, not now to be insisted on ; and he gathers up all directions into this one general rule that I have read, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat, &c.* Now this self-examination extends itself unto the whole due preparation of the souls of men for the actual participation of this ordinance. And I shall endeavour, by plain instances out of the scripture, (which is my way in these familiar exercises), to manifest that there is a preparation necessary for the celebration, or observance of all solemn ordinances.—And I shall shew you what that preparation is, and wherein it doth consist.—And then I shall deduce from thence, what is that particular preparation which is incumbent upon us, in reference

unto this special ordinance, that is superadded unto the general preparation that is required unto all ordinances.

First, I shall manifest, that there is a preparation necessary for the celebration of solemn worship. We have an early instance of it in Gen. xxxv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. In the first verse, "God said unto Jacob, Arise go up to Bethel, and make there an altar unto God." It was a solemn ordinance Jacob was called unto, to build an altar unto God, and to offer sacrifice. What course did he take? you may see, ver. 2, 3. "And Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments; and let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God." I will not engage, saith he, in this great duty without a preparation for it; and, saith he, the preparation shall be suitable. Peculiar, special preparation (to observe that by the way) for any ordinance, consists in the removal of that from us which stands in peculiar opposition to that ordinance, whatever it be. I am to build an altar unto God; put away the strange gods; and accordingly he did so.

When God came to treat with the people in that great ordinance of giving the law, which was the foundation of all following ordinances, Exod. xix. 10. "The Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against the third day; for the third day the Lord will come down upon mount Sinai." I will not insist on these typical preparations, but only say, it sufficiently proves the general thesis, that there ought to be such a preparation for any meeting with God in any of his ordinances. Saith he, "Sanctify yourselves, &c. and on the third day I will come." God is a great God with whom we have to do. It is not good to have carnal boldness in our accesses and approaches to him; and therefore he teaches us, that there is a preparation due. And what weight God lays upon this, you may see, 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19, 20. A multitude of people came to the sacrifice of the passover; but, saith he, they had not cleansed themselves, there was not due preparation; but "Hezekiah prayed for

them saying, The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary. And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people." Perhaps the people might have thought it enough, that they had their personal qualification, that they were believers, that they had prepared their hearts to seek the Lord God of their fathers; a thing most persons trust unto in this matter. No, saith the king, in praying for them; they did prepare their hearts for the Lord God of their fathers, but they were not prepared according to the preparation of the sanctuary. There is an instituted preparation, as well as a personal disposition, which if not observed, God will smite them. God had smote the people; given them some token of his displeasure: they come with great willingness and desire to be partakers of this holy ordinance; yet because they were not prepared according to the purification of the sanctuary, God smites them.

It was an ordinance of God that Paul had to perform, and we would have thought it a thing that he might easily have done, without any great fore-thought, but it had that weight upon his spirit, (Rom. xv. 30. 31.) that with all earnestness he begs the prayers of others that he might be carried through the performance of it; "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that my service which I have for Jerusalem, may be accepted of the saints." He had a service to do at Jerusalem. He was gathering the contributions of the saints, (an ordinance of God), to carry it up to the poor at Jerusalem; and it was upon his heart, that his service might find acceptance with them; therefore he begs with all his soul, "I beseech you brethren," &c. So great weight did he lay upon the performance of an ordinance, that one would think might be easily passed over, without any great regard.

The caution we have, Eccl. v: 1. is to the same purpose: Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil. I

I shall not stand upon the particular exposition of any of these expressions, but it is a plain caution of diligent consideration of ourselves in all things we have to do in the house of God. A bold venturing upon an ordinance is but the sacrifice of fools: keep thy foot, look to thy affections; be more ready to hear, saith he; that is, to attend unto the command, what God requires from thee, and the way and manner of it, than merely to run upon a sacrifice, or the performance of the duty itself.

I will name one place more: Psal. xxvi. 6. "I will wash my hands in innocency; so will I compass thine altar, O Lord."

I have a little confirmed this general proposition, that all take for granted; and I fear we content ourselves, for the most part, with the state and condition of those mentioned, who prepared their hearts to meet the Lord God of their fathers, not considering how they may be prepared according to the preparation of the sanctuary. You will ask, what is that preparation?

This question brings me to the

Second general head I propounded to speak unto. I answer, that the general preparation that respects all ordinances, hath reference unto God, to ourselves, to the ordinance itself.

1. It hath respect unto God. This is the first thing to be considered; for this he lays down as the great law of all his ordinances. "I will be sanctified in them that draw nigh unto me," Lev. x. 3. God is, in the first place, to be considered in all our drawings nigh unto him; as that is the general name of all ordinances, a drawing nigh, an access unto God. "I will be sanctified," &c. Now God is to be considered three ways, that he may be sanctified in any ordinance; as the author, as the object, as the end of it. I shall speak only to those things that lie practically before us, and are indispensably required of us in waiting upon God, in any and every ordinance.

(1.) Our preparation in reference unto God, consists in due consideration of God as the author of any ordinance wherein we draw nigh unto him. For this is the foundation of all ordinances; Rom. xiv. 11. "As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and e-

very tongue shall confess to me. A practical sense of the authority of God in every ordinance, is that which is required in the very first place for our preparation. I know full well, how that the mind of man is to be influenced by general convictions and particular customs. Particular usages built upon general convictions, carry most people through their duties : but that is no preparation of heart. There is to be an immediate sense of the authority and command of God.

(2.) We are to consider God in Christ, as the immediate object of that worship which in every ordinance we do perform. You will ask, what special apprehensions concerning God are particularly necessary to this duty of preparation for communion with God in an ordinance ? I answer, Two are particularly necessary, that should be practically upon our thoughts in every ordinance, the presence of God, and the holiness of God. As God is the object of our worship, these two properties of God are principally to be considered in all our preparations.

(1.) The presence of God. When Elijah (1 Kings xviii. 27). derided the worshippers of Baal, the chief part of his derision was, he is on a journey ; you have a God that is absent, saith Elijah : and the end of all idolatry in the world, is to feign the presence of an absent deity. All images and idols are set up for no other end, but to feign the presence of what really is absent. Our God is present and in all his ordinances. I beg of God, I may have a double sense of his presence, (1.) A special sense of his omnipresence. God requires, that we should put in all ordinances a specialty of faith upon his general attributes. Gen. xviii 16 Jacob when God appeared unto him, though but in a dream, awaked out of sleep, and said, " Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." I would say so concerning every ordinance whereunto I go ; the Lord is in that place. I speak now only concerning his real presence : for if idolaters adorn all their places of worship with pictures, images, and idols, that they might feign the presence of a God ; I ought to act faith particularly upon the real presence of the immense and omnipresent God. He bids us consider it in the business of his worship ; Jer.

xxiii. 23. "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off?" Consider my glorious presence is every where. As we ought always, wherever we are, and whatever we do, to carry a sense with us of the presence of God, to say, God is here, that we may not be surprized in our journies, or in any thing that may befall us, suppose a broken leg or a broken arm; then we may say, God is in this place, and I knew it not: so particularly where we have to do in his ordinances, let there be an antecedent remembrance that God is in that place.

2.) We are to remember the gracious presence of God. There was a twofold presence of God of old, the one temporary, by an extraordinary appearance; the other standing, by a continued institution. Wherever God made an extraordinary appearance, there he required of his people to look upon him to have a special presence. It was but temporary, when God appeared to Moses in the bush: "Draw not nigh, saith God, put off the shoes from off thy feet; for the ground whereon thou standest is holy; because of God's special appearance." But the next day, as far as I know, sheep fed upon that holy ground. It was no longer holy than God's appearance made it so. So he said to Joshua, when he was by Jericho, "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy," Josh. v. 15. It was a temporary appearance of God; there was his special presence. It was so on the institution of the tabernacle and temple; God instituted them, and gave his special presence to them by virtue of his institution. Our Saviour tells us, all this is departed under the gospel. John iv. 21. "You shall no longer worship God, saith he, neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem; but he that worshippeth God, must worship him in spirit and in truth.—Is there no special presence of God remains then? yea, there is a special presence of God in all his ordinances and institutions. "Wherever I record my name, (as the name of God is upon all his institutions), there will I come unto you, and I will bless you, saith God," Exod. xx. 24. Let us exercise our thoughts then to this special promised presence of God in every ordinance and institution. it belongs greatly to

our due preparation for an ordinance. It was no hard thing for them, you may think, of old, where God had put his presence in a place, to go thither, and expect the presence of God; things that are absent are hard, things that are present are not so. But it is no harder matter for us to go and expect God's presence in his instituted ordinances now, than for them to go to the temple; considering God, as the object of our worship, is no less present with us.

(2.) The second property, which is principally to be considered in God, in his ordinances, as he is the object of them, is his holiness. This is the general rule that God gives in all ordinances: "Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." And Joshua, chap. xxiv. 19. tells the people what they were principally to consider in serving the Lord. "We will serve the Lord, say the people: saith Joshua, You cannot serve him, for the Lord is an holy God;" intimating, that they were to have due apprehensions of his holiness; and without it there is no approaching unto him in his service. The apostle gives a great and plain rule to this purpose, Heb. xii. 29. "Let us have grace, saith he, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear." What doth he propose now as the principal reason why he requires this preparation? For, saith he, our God is a consuming fire. What property of God is expressed by this word *consuming fire*? It is the holiness of God, the purity of God's nature, that can bear no corrupt nor defiled thing. It is set forth by that metaphorical expression, a consuming fire. As fire is the most pure and unmixed element, and so powerful of itself as that it will consume and destroy every thing that is not perfectly of its own nature; so is God, saith he, a consuming fire; and in all your serving of him, and approaches unto him, labour to obtain a frame of spirit that becomes them who have to do with that God who is so pure and holy.

I do but chuse out these things, which in the way of ordinances, I would say, are, I may say, desire, should be most upon my heart and spirit: I might easily enlarge it to other considerations. But let these two considerations dwell upon our minds, as our preparation for

our access unto God ; thoughts of his glorious and gracious presence, and of his holiness, Psal. xciii 5. " Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever." That is the second thing with respect to God, as the object of all the ordinances of our worship.

(3.) Our preparation respects God as he is the end of ordinances ; and that to these three purposes, if I could insist upon them. He is the end of them, as we aim in them to give glory unto him : he is the end of them, as we aim in them to be accepted with him : he is the end of them, as we aim in them to be blessed by him. These are three things that are our end in all ordinances that we celebrate.

(1.) The first is, the general end of all that we do in this world ; we are to do all to the glory of God : it is the immediate end of all our worship. " If I am a Father, saith he, where is my honour ? where is my glory ?" Mal. i. 6. Do you come to worship me ? you are to give me honour as to a Father, glory as to a Master, as to a Lord. We come to own him as our Father, acknowledge our dependence upon him as a Father, our submission to him as our Lord and Master, and thus give glory to him. He hath never taken one step to the preparing his heart according to the preparation of the sanctuary, in the celebration of ordinances, who hath not designed in them to give glory unto God.

(2.) Another end is, to be accepted with him ; according to that great promise, which you have, Ezekiel xlvi. 27. " You shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar ; and I will accept you, saith the Lord God." It is a promise of gospel-times ; for it is in the description of the new, glorious temple. We come to God to have our persons and offerings accepted by Jesus Christ. And,

(3.) To be blessed according to his promise. That God will bless us out of Zion. What the particular blessings are we look for in particular ordinances, in due time, God assisting, I shall acquaint you with, when we come to the special and particular preparation for that ordinance we aim at. But this is necessary to all, and so to that.

2. This preparation respects ourselves. There are

three things which I desire my heart may be prepared by in reference to the ordinances of God.

(1.) The first is indispensably necessary, laid down in that great rule, Psal. lxxvi. 18. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me;" that I bring a heart to ordinances without regard to any particular iniquity. We have the dreadful instance of Judas, who came to that great ordinance of the passover with regard to iniquity in his heart, which particular iniquity was covetousness, and went away with the devil in his whole mind and soul.

Ezek. xiv. 4. is another place to this purpose: "Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him that cometh, according to the multitude of his idols." There is no more effectual course in the world to make poor souls incorrigible, than to come to ordinances, and be able to digest under them a regard to iniquity in our hearts. If we have idols, God will answer us according to our idols. What is the answering of men according to their idols? Why plainly, it is this, allotting them peace while they have their idols; you shall have peace with regard to iniquity; you come for peace, take peace; which is the saddest condition any soul can be left under: you shall have peace and your idols together. Whenever we prepare ourselves, if this part of our preparation be wanting, if we do not all of us cast out the idols of our hearts, and cease regarding of iniquity, all is lost.

(2.) The second head of preparation on our own part, is self-abasement, out of a deep sense of the infinite distance that is between God and us, whom we go to meet. I have taken upon myself to speak to the great Possessor of heaven and earth, who am but dust and ashes. Nothing brings God and man so near together, as a due sense of our infinite distance: Is. lvii. 15. "Thus saith the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.

(3.) A heart filled with love to ordinances is a great preparation for an ordinance. How doth David in the eighty-fourth psalm, pant and long, and breathe after the ordinances of God! To love prayer, to love the word, is a great preparation for both. To love the presence of Christ in the supper, is a great preparation for it. To keep an habitual frame of love in the heart for ordinances.

I would not load your memories with particulars. I mention plain practical things unto those, for whose spiritual welfare I am more particularly concerned; that we may retain them for our use, and know them for ourselves; and they are such as I know more or less (though perhaps not so distinctly) all our hearts work after, and in these things our souls do live.

3. Our preparation in reference unto any ordinance itself; which consists in two things.

(1.) A satisfactory persuasion of the institution of the ordinance itself; that it is that which God hath appointed. If God should meet us, and say, "Who hath required these things at your hands?" and Christ should come and say, "Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be plucked up; or, In vain do you worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men:" How would such words fill the hearts of poor creatures with confusion, if engaged in such ways that God hath not required? We must be careful then, that for the substance of the duty, it be appointed by God.

(2.) That it be performed in a due manner. One failure herein what a disturbance did it bring upon poor David? It is observed by many, that search the whole course of David's life, that what he was most eminent in, which God did so bless him for, and own him in, was his love to the ordinances of God. And I cannot but think with what a full heart David went to bring home the ark; with what longings after God; with what rejoicings in him; with what promises to himself, what glorious things here would be, after he had the ark of God to be with him; and yet, when he went to do this, you know what a breach God made upon him, dashed all his hopes and all the good fruit in him. God made a breach upon Uzzah; and it is said, the thing God did displeased

David, it quite unframed him, and threw a damp on his joy and delight for the present. But he afterwards gathers it up, 1 Chron. xv. 12, 13. "He spake to the Levites, Sanctify yourselves both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel, unto the place that I have prepared for it. For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order." We sought him, saith he, but not after the due order. And what that due order was he shews in the next verses, where he declares that the Levites carried the ark upon their own shoulders, with the staves thereon, as Moies commanded, according to the word of the Lord; whereas before they carried it in a cart, which was not for that service. It is a great thing to have the administration of an ordinance in the due order. God lays great weight upon it, and we ought to take care that the order be observed.

This is what we have to offer to you concerning the two general propositions, That there is a preparation required of us for the observance of all solemn ordinances; and, That this preparation consists in a due regard to God, to ourselves, and to the ordinance, whatever it be. To God as the author, as the object, and as the end of ordinances; to ourselves, to remove that which would hinder, not to regard iniquity, to be self-abased in our hearts with respect to the infinite distance that there is between God and us, and with a love unto ordinances; with respect unto the ordinance itself, that it be of God's appointment for the matter and manner. These things may help us to a due consideration, whether we have failed in any of them or not.

I have mentioned nothing but what is plain and evident from the scripture, and what is practicable; nothing but what is really required of us; such things as we ought not to esteem a burden, but an advantage; and whereinssoever we have been wanting, we should do well to labour to have our hearts affected with it for it hath been one cause why so many of us have laboured in the fire under ordinances, and have had no profit nor benefit by them. As I said before, conviction is the foundation, custom is the building of moit in their observation

of ordinances. Some grow weary of them; some wear them on their necks as a burden; some seek relief from them, and do not find it; and is it any wonder if this great duty be wanting? having neither considered God, nor ourselves, in what we go about! and above all things take heed of that deceit I mentioned, which is certainly very apt to impose itself upon us, That where there is a disposition in the person there needs no preparation for the duty. There was a preparation in those whom God broke out upon, because they were not prepared according to the preparation of the sanctuary; that is, in that way and manner of preparation; they had not gone through those cleanings which were instituted under the law.

DISCOURSE VI.

January 21. 1678.

1 COR. XI. 28.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

I HAVE been treating in fundry of these familiar exercises about communion with Jesus Christ in that great ordinance of the Lord's supper, intending principally, if not solely, the instruction of those who have, it may be, been least exercised in such duties. I have spoke something of preparation for it, and on the last opportunity of this kind I did insist upon these two things, That there is a preparation required unto the due observance of every solemn ordinance; and I did manifest, what in general was required to that preparation. I have nothing to do at present, but to consider the application of those general rules to the special ordinance of the supper of the Lord. For the special preparation for an ordinance consists in the special respect which we have to that ordinance in our general preparation; and I shall speak to it plainly, so as that the weakest, who are concerned may see their interest in it, and have some guidance to their practice.

And there are two things which may be considered

to this purpose, The *time* wherein this duty is to be performed ; and, The *duty* of preparation itself.

First, The *time* of the performance of the duty ; for that indeed regards as well what hath been said concerning preparation in general, as what shall now be farther added concerning preparation in particular, with respect to this ordinance.

Time hath double respect unto the worship of God, as a part of it ; so it is when it is separated by the appointment of God himself ; and, as a necessary adjunct of those actions whereby the worship of God is performed ; for there is nothing can be done, but it must be done in time, the inseparable adjunct of all actions.

And therefore having proved that a preparation is necessary, I shall prove that there is a time necessary ; for there can be no duty performed, but it must be performed, as I said, in some time.

For the right stating of that therefore I shall give you these rules.

1. That there is a time *antecedent* to the celebration of this ordinance to be set apart for preparation unto it. The very nature of the duty, which we call *preparation*, doth inevitably include this, that the time for it must be antecedent to the great duty of observing the ordinance itself. So Mat. xxvii. 62. the evening before the passover is called the preparation of the passover, time set apart for the preparation of it.

2. The second rule is this, That there is no *particular* set time neither as to the day, or season of the day, as to the beginning or ending of it, that is determined for this duty in the scripture ; but the duty itself being commanded, the time is left to our own prudence, to be regulated according to what duty doth require ; so that you are not to expect that I should precisely determine this or that time, this or that day, this or that hour, so long or so short ; for God hath left these things to our liberty, to be regulated by our own duty and necessity.

3. There are three things that will greatly guide a man in the determination of the time, which is thus left unto his own judgment according to the apprehension of his duty.

(1.) That he chuse a time wherein the preparation of it may probably influence his mind and spirit in and unto the ordinance itself. Persons may chuse a time for preparation, when there may be such an interposition of worldly thoughts and business, between the preparation and the ordinance, that their minds may be no way influenced by it in the performance and observation of the duty. The time ought to be so fixed, that the duty may leave a favour upon the soul unto the time of the celebration of the ordinance itself, whether it be the preceding day, or whether it be the same day. The work is lost unless a man endeavours to keep up a sense of those impressions which he received in that work.

(2.) Providential occurrences and intimations are great rules for the chusing of time and season for duties. Paul comes to Athens, Acts xvii. and, in all probability, he intended not to preach immediately upon his journey. He intended to take some time for his refreshment. But observing the wickedness of the place, ver. 16. "that they were wholly given to idolatry," and observing an altar to the unknown God, ver. 22. he laid hold of that hint of providence, that intimation given him by God's providence from these things, and immediately fell upon his work; which God blessed with great success. There be a thousand ways, if I may so say, wherein an observing Christian may find God hinting and intimating duties unto him. The sins of other men, their graces, mercies, dangers, may be all unto us intimations of a season for duty. Were none of us ever sent to God by the outrageous wickedness of others? by the very observation of it? And it is a sign of a good spirit to turn providential intimations into duties. The Psalmist speaks to that purpose, Psal. xxxii. 8, 9. "I will guide thee by mine eye," saith he. The next words are, "Be not as the horse, or as the mule which hath no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle." God loves a pliable spirit, that upon every look of his eye will be guided to a duty. But those who are like horses and mules, that must be held with a strong rein, that will not be turned, till God puts great strength to it, are possessed with such a frame of spirit which God approves not. You are left at liberty to chuse a time, but observe

any intimation of providence that may direct to that time.

(3.) Be sure to improve surprisals with gracious dispositions, I mean in the approach of solemn ordinances. Sometimes the soul is surpris'd with a gracious disposition, as in Canticles vi. 12. "Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib." I knew it not, saith the church, I was not aware of it, but I found my soul in a special willing manner drawn forth to communion with Christ. Is God pleas'd at any time to give us such gracious surprisals, with an holy disposition to be dealing with him, it will be the best season; let it not be omitted.

These things will a little direct us in the determination of the time for preparation, which is left unto our own liberty.

4. Take care that the time designed and allotted, does neither too much intrench upon the occasions of the outward man, nor upon the weakness of the inward man. If it doth they will be too hard for us. I confess in this general observation which professors are fallen into, and that custom which is in the observation of duties, there is little need to give this rule. But we are not to accommodate our rule unto our corruptions, but unto our duties; and so there is a double rule in scripture that fortifies this rule; the one is that great rule of our Saviour, "That God will have mercy, and not sacrifice." Where these duties of observing sacrifices do sensibly intrench upon duties of mercy, God doth not require it; which hath a great regard even unto our outward occasions. And the other rule is this, "That bodily exercise profits little." When we assign so long a time as wearies out our spirits, and observe the time, because of the time, it is bodily exercise; when the vigour of our spirits is gone, which is a sacrifice God delights not in. As Jacob told Esau, if the cattle were driven beyond their pace they would die; so we find by experience, that though with strong resolutions we may engage unto duties in such a manner as may intrench upon these outward occasions, or those weaknesses, they will return, and be too hard for us, and instead of getting ground, they will drive us off ours; so that there is prudence to be required therein.

5. Let not the time allotted be so short, as to be unmeet for the going through with the duty effectually. Men may be ready to turn their private prayers into a few ejaculations, and going in or out of a room may serve them for preparation for the most solemn ordinance. This hath lost us the power, the glory, and the beauty of our profession. Never was profession held up to more glory and beauty, than when persons were most exact in their preparation for the duties of their profession; nothing will serve their turn, but their souls having real and suitable converse with God, as unto the duty that lies before them.

6. The time of preparation is to be exercised and made more solemn upon extraordinary occasions. The intervention of extraordinary occasions must add a solemnity to the time of preparation, if we intend to walk with God in a due manner. These extraordinary occasions may be referred to three heads, particular sins, particular mercies, particular duties.

(1.) Is there an interveniency upon the conscience of any special sin; that either the soul hath been really overtaken with, or that God is pleased to set home afresh upon the spirit, there is then an addition to be made unto the time of our preparation, to bring things to that issue between God and our souls, that we may attend upon the ordinance, to hearken what God the Lord will now speak, and then he will speak peace. This is the first principal extraordinary interveniency, that must make an addition to the time of preparation for this ordinance.

(2.) The interveniencies of mercies. The ordinance hath the nature of a thank-offering, and is the great medium, or means, of our returning praise unto God, that we can make use of in this world. And then are we truly thankful for a temporal mercy, when it engages our hearts to thank God for Christ, by whom all mercies are blessed to us. Hath God cast in any special mercy? add unto the special preparation, that the heart may be fit to bless God for him, who is' the fountain and cause of all mercies.

(3.) Special duties require the like. For it being the solemn time of our renewing covenant with God, we stand in need of a renewal of strength from God, if we

intend to perform special duties; and in our renewing covenant with God, we receive that special strength for these special duties.

These rules I have offered you concerning the time of this great duty of preparation, which I am speaking unto; and I shall add one more, without which you will easily grant that all the rest will fall to the ground, and with which God will teach you all the rest; and that is, *Be sure you set apart some time.* I am greatly afraid of customariness in this matter. Persons complain, that in waiting upon God in that ordinance, they do not receive that entertainment at the hand of God, that refreshment which they looked for. They have more reason to wonder, that they were not cast out, as those who came without a wedding garment. That is not only required of us, that we come with our wedding garment, which every believer hath, but that we come decked with this garment. A man may have a garment that may fit very ill, very unhand somely, about him. The bride *decks* herself with her garments for the bridegroom. We are to do so for the meeting with Christ in this ordinance, to stir up all the graces God hath bestowed upon us, that we may be decked for Christ. There lies the unprofitableness under that ordinance, that though God has given us the wedding-garment that we are not cast out, yet we take not care to *deck* ourselves, that God and Christ may give us refreshing entertainment when we come into his presence. Our failing herein evidently and apparently witnesses to the faces of most professors, that this is the ground of their unprofitableness under that ordinance. So much for the time.

Secondly, I shall now speak a little to the duty itself of preparation for that ordinance; remembering what I spake before of preparation in general, unto all solemn ordinances, which must still be supposed.

Now the duty may be reduced to these four heads, meditation, examination, supplication, expectation. And if I mistake not, they are all given us in one verse; and though not directly applied to this ordinance, yet to this among other ways of our intimate communion with Christ: Zech. xii. 10. "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the

Spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born." There is (1.) Meditation: *they shall look upon him*; this is no otherwise to be performed but by the meditation of faith. Our looking upon Christ is by believing meditation. Looking argues the fixing of the sight; and meditation is the fixing of faith in its actings. Looking is a fixing of the eye; faith is the eye of the soul; and to look is to fix faith in meditation. And there is (2.) Examination, which produceth the mourning here mentioned. For though it is said, *They shall mourn for him*; it was not to mourn for his sufferings; for so he said, "Weep not for me;" but to mourn upon the account of those things wherein they were concerned in his sufferings. It brings to repentance; which is the principal design of this examination. (3.) There is Supplication; for there shall be poured out a spirit of grace and supplication. And (4.) there is Expectation; which is included also in that of looking unto Christ.

1. The first part of this duty of preparation consists in *meditation*: and meditation is a duty, that by reason of the vanity of our own minds, and the variety of objects which they are apt to fix upon, even believers themselves do find as great a difficulty therein as any.

I shall only mention those special objects which our thoughts are to be fixed upon in this preparatory duty; and you may reduce them to the following heads.

(1.) The principal object of meditation in our preparation for this ordinance, is the horrible guilt and provocation that is in sin. There is a representation of the guilt of sin made in the cross of Christ. There was a great representation of it in the punishment of angels; a great representation of it is made in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; and both these are proposed unto us in a special manner, (2 Pet. ii. 4, 5, 6.) to set forth the heinous nature of the guilt of sin; but they come very short, nay, give me leave to say, that hell itself comes short of representing the guilt of sin, in comparison of the cross of Christ. And the Holy Ghost would have us mind it, where he saith, "He was made sin for

us," 2 Cor. v. 21. See what comes of sin, saith he, what demerit, what provocation there is in it ; to see the Son of God praying, crying, trembling, bleeding, dying, God hiding his face from him ; the earth trembling under him ; darkness round about him ; how can the soul but cry out, O Lord is this the effect of sin ! is all this in sin ! Here then take a view of sin. Others look on it in its pleasures and the advantages of it ; and cry, Is it not a little one ? as Lot of Zoar. But look on it in the Cross of Christ, and there it appears in another hue. All this is from my sin, saith the contrite soul.

(2.) The *purity*, the *holiness*, and the *severity* of God, that would not pass by sin, when it was charged upon his Son. "He set him forth (Rom. iii. 25.) to declare his righteousness." As there was a representation of the guilt of sin, so there was an everlasting representation of the holiness and righteousness of God in the cross of Jesus Christ. He spared him not. And may the soul say, Is God thus holy in his nature, thus severe in the execution of his wrath, so to punish, and so to revenge sin, when his Son undertook to answer for it ? How dreadful is this God ! how glorious ! what a consuming fire ! It is that which will make sinners in Zion cry, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire ? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings ?" Isa. xxxiii. 14. Consider the holiness and the severity of God in the cross of Christ, and it will make the soul look about him, how to appear in the presence of that God.

(3.) Would you have another object of your meditation in this matter ; let it be the infinite wisdom and the infinite love of God that found out this way of glorifying his holiness and justice, and dealing with sin according to its demerit. "God so loved the world, (John iii. 16.) as to send his only begotten Son. And herein is love, love indeed ! (1 John iv. 10.), that God sent his Son to die for us." And the apostle, Eph. iii. 10. lays it upon the manifold wisdom of God. Bring forth your faith ; be your faith never so weak, never so little a reality, do but realize it, and do not let common thoughts and notions take up and possess your spirits : here is a glorious object for it to work upon, to consider the infinite wisdom and love that found out this way. It was cut

of love unsearchable. And now what may not my poor sinful soul expect from this love? what difficulties can I be entangled in, but this wisdom can disentangle me? and what distempers can I be under, but this love may heal and recover? There is hope then, faith the soul, in preparation for these things.

(4.) Let the infinite love of Jesus Christ himself be also at such a season had in remembrance. Gal. iii. 10. "Who loved me and gave himself for me." Rev. i. 5. "Who loved us, and washed us in his own blood." Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8. "Who, when he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." 2 Cor. viii. 9. "This was the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." The all-conquering and all endearing love of Christ, is a blessed preparative meditation for this great ordinance.

(5.) There is the *end*, what all this came to; this guilt of sin, this holiness of God, this wisdom of grace, this love of Christ; what did all this come to? Why the apostle tells us, Col. i. 20. "He hath made peace through the blood of his cross." The end of it all was to make peace between God and us; and this undertaking issued in his blood, that was able to do it, and nothing else; yea, that hath done it. It is a very hard thing for a soul to believe, that there is peace made with God for him, and for his sin; but really trace it through these steps, and it will give a great deal of strength to faith. Derive it from the lowest, the deepest pit of the guilt of sin; carry it into the presence of the severity of God, and so bring it to the love of Christ, and the issue which the scriptures testify of all these things was, to make peace and reconciliation.

Some may say, that they would willingly meditate upon these things, but they cannot remember them, they cannot retain them, and it would be long work to go through and think of them all; and such as they have not strength and season for.

I answer [1.] My intention is not to burden your memory, or your practice, but to help your faith. I do

not prescribe these things as all of them necessary to be gone through in every duty of preparation ; but you all know, they are such as may be used, every one of them singly in the duty ; though they that would go through them all again and again, would be no losers by it, but will find something that will be food and refreshment for their souls. But,

[2.] Let your peculiar meditation be regulated by your peculiar present condition. Suppose for instance, the soul is pressed with a sense of the guilt of any sin, or of many sins ; let the preparative meditation be fixed upon the grace of God, and upon the love of Jesus Christ, that are suited to give relief unto the soul in such a condition.—Is the soul burdened with senselessness of sin ? doth it not find itself so sensible of sin as it would be ; but rather that it can entertain slight thoughts of sin ? let meditation be principally directed unto the great guilt of sin as represented in the death and cross of Christ, and to the severity of God as there represented. Other things may lay hold on our carnal affections ; but if this lay not hold upon faith, nothing will.

I have one rule more in these meditations ; Doth any thing fall in that doth peculiarly affect your spirits, as to that regard which you have to God ? Set it down. Most Christians are poor in experience ; they have no stock ; they have not laid up any thing for a dear year or a hard time : though they may have had many tokens for good, yet they have forgot them. When your hearts are raised by intercourse between God and yourselves in the performance of this duty, be at pains to let them down for your own use ; if any thing do immediately affect your spirits you will be no loser by it ; it is as easy a way to grow rich in spiritual experiences as any I know.—This is the part of this duty of preparation, which, with the rules given, may be constantly so observed, as to be no way burdensome nor wearisome to you ; but very much to your advantage. The other duties I shall but name, and so have done.

2. There is examination. Examination is the word in my text, and that duty which most have commonly spoke unto, that have treated any thing about prepara-

tion for this ordinance. It respects principally two things, *viz.* Repentance and faith.

(1.) Our examination as to repentance, as far as it concerns preparation unto this duty, may be referred to three heads.

[1.] To call ourselves to account, whether indeed we have habitually that mourning frame of spirit upon us, which is required in them who converse with God in the cross of Jesus Christ. "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn." There is an habitual mourning frame of spirit required in us; and we may do well to search ourselves about it, whether it is maintained, and kept up, or no? whether worldly security and carnal joys do not devour it? For spiritual joys will not do it. Spiritual joys will take off nothing from spiritual mourning; but worldly security, and carnal joy and pleasures will devour that frame of spirit.

[2.] Our examination as to repentance respects actual sins, especially as for those who have the privilege and advantage of frequent and ordinary participation of this ordinance. It respects the surprisals that have befallen us, (as there is no man that doth good and sinneth not), since we received the last pledge of the love of God in the administration of that ordinance. Friends, let us not be afraid of calling ourselves to a strict account. We have to do with him that is greater than we, and knoweth all things. Let us not be afraid to look into the book of conscience and conversation, to look over our surprisals, our neglects, our sinful failings and miscarriages. These things belong to this preparation, to look over them, and mourn over them also. I would not be thought to myself or you to prescribe an hard burden in this duty of preparation. It is nothing but what God expects from us, and what we must do if we intend any communion with him in this ordinance. I may add,

[3.] Whether we have kept alive our last received pledges of the love of God? It may be at an ordinance we have received some special intimations of the good will of God. It is our duty to keep them alive in our spirits; and let us never be afraid we shall have no room for more. The keeping of them makes way for what far-

ther is to come. Have we lost such sensible impressions? there is then matter for repentance and humiliation.

(2.) Examination also concerns faith; and that in general and in particular. In general: Is not my heart hypocritical? or do I really do what in this ordinance I profess? which is placing all my faith and hope in Jesus Christ for life, mercy, salvation, and for peace with God. And in particular, Do I stir up and act faith to meet Christ in this ordinance? I shall not enlarge upon these things that are commonly spoken unto.

3. The third part of our preparation, is *supplication*: that is adding prayer to this meditation and examination. Add prayer, which may inlay and digest all the rest in the soul. Pray over what we have thought on, what we have conceived, what we have apprehended, what we desire, and what we fear: gather all up into supplications to God.

4. There belongs unto this duty, *expectation* also; that is, to expect that God will answer his promise, and meet us according to the desire of our hearts. We should look to meet God, because he hath promised to meet us there; and we go upon his promise of grace, expecting he will answer his word and meet us. Not going at all adventures, as not knowing whether we shall find him or not; God may indeed then surprize us, as he did Jacob when he appeared unto him, and made him say, "God is in this place, and I knew it not. But we go where we know God is. He hath placed his name upon his ordinances, and there he is; go to them with expectation, and rise from the rest of the duties with this expectation.

This is the substance of what might be of use to some in reference unto this duty of preparation for this great and solemn ordinance, which God hath graciously given unto any of you the privilege to be made partakers of.

Have we failed in these things, or in things of a like nature? Let us admire the infinite patience of God, that hath borne with us all this while, that he hath not cast us out of his house, that he hath not deprived us of these enjoyments, which he might justly have done, when we have so undervalued them, as far as lay

in us, and despised them; when we have had so little care to make entertainment for the receiving of the great God and our Lord Jesus Christ, who comes to visit us in this ordinance. We may be ready to complain of what outward concerns, in and about the worship of God some have been deprived of. We have infinite more reason to admire, that there is any thing left unto us, any name, any place, any nail, any remembrance in the house of God; considering the regardlessness which hath been upon our spirits in our communion with him. "Go away, and sin no more, lest a worse thing befall us." If there be in any, that have not risen up in a due manner in this duty, any conviction of the necessity and usefulness of it, God forbid we should be found sinning against this conviction.



DISCOURSE VII.

July 7. 1673.

I SHALL shew briefly what it is to obtain a sacramental part of Jesus Christ in this ordinance of the Lord's supper.

It is a great mystery, and great wisdom and exercise of faith lie in it, how to obtain a participation of Christ. When the world had lost an understanding of this mystery, for want of spiritual sight, they contrived a means to make it up, that should be easy on the part of them that did partake, and very prodigious on the part of them that administered. The priest, with a few words, turned the bread into the body of Christ; and the people have no more to do but to put it into their mouths, and so Christ is partaken of. It was the loss of the mystery of faith in the real participation of Christ, that put them on that invention.

Neither is there in this ordinance, a naked figure, a naked representation; there is something in the figure, something in the representation, but there is not all in it. When the bread is broken, it is a figure, a representation that the body of Christ was broken for us; and

the pouring out of the wine is, a figure and representation of the pouring of the blood of Christ, or the pouring forth of his soul unto death. And there are useful meditations that may arise from thence. But in this ordinance there is a real exhibition of Christ, unto every believing soul.

I shall a little enquire into it, to lead your faith into a due exercise in it, under the administration of this ordinance.

First, The exhibition and tender of Christ in this ordinance, is distinct from the tender of Christ in the promise of the gospel; as in many other things, so it is in this: In the promise of the gospel, the person of the Father is principally looked upon, as proposing and tendering Christ unto us: in this ordinance, Christ tenders himself. "This is my body," saith he, "do this in remembrance of me." He makes an immediate tender of himself unto a believing soul; and calls our faith unto a respect to his grace, to his love, to his readiness to unite, and spiritually to incorporate with us. Again,

Secondly, It is a tender of Christ, and an exhibition of Christ under an especial consideration; not in general, but under this consideration, as he is, as it were, newly (so the word is) sacrificed; as he is a new and fresh sacrifice in the great work of reconciling, making peace with God, making an end of sin, doing all that was to be done between God and sinners, that they might be at peace.

Christ makes a double representation of himself, as the great Mediator upon his death, and the oblation and sacrifice which he accomplished thereby.

He represents himself unto God in heaven, there to do whatever remains to be done with God on our behalf, by his intercession. The intercession of Christ is nothing but the presentation of himself unto God, upon his oblation and sacrifice.

He presents himself unto God, to do with him what remains to be done on our part, to procure mercy and grace for us.

He presents himself unto us, in this ordinance, to do with us what remains to be done on the part of God; and this answers to his intercession above, which is the counterpart of his present mediation, to do with us what

remains on the part of God, to give out peace and mercy in the seal of the covenant unto our souls.

There is this special exhibition of Jesus Christ, and it is given directly for this special exercise of faith, that we may know how to receive him in this ordinance.

1. We receive him as one that hath actually accomplished the great work (so he tenders himself) of making peace with God for us; for the blotting out of sins, and for the bringing in everlasting righteousness. He doth not tender himself only as one that can do these things. It is a relief when we have an apprehension that Christ can do all this for us. Nor doth he tender himself as one that will do these things upon any such or such conditions, as shall be prescribed unto us. But he tenders himself unto our faith, as one that hath done these things; and as such are we to receive him, if we intend to glorify him in this ordinance; as one that hath actually done this, actually made peace for us, actually blotted out our sins, and purchased eternal redemption for us.

Brethren, can we receive Christ thus? are we willing to receive him thus? If so, we may go away and be no more sorrowful. If we come short herein, we come short of that faith, which is required of us in this ordinance. Pray let us endeavour to consider how Jesus Christ doth hereby make a tender of himself unto us, as one that hath actually taken away all our sins, and all our iniquities, that none of them shall ever be laid unto our charge: and to receive him as such, is to give glory unto him.

2. He tenders himself as one that hath done this work by his death; for it is the remembrance of his death in a peculiar manner that we celebrate. What there is of love, what there is of efficacy, of power and comfort in that, what there is of security, I may have occasion another time to speak unto you. — At present this is all I would offer; that for the doing of these great things, for the doing the greatest, the hardest things that our faith is exercised about, which are the pardon of our sins, and the acceptance of our persons with God, for the accomplishment hereof, he died an accursed death; and that death had no power over him, but the bands of it were loosed; he rose from under it and was acquitted.

Let us act faith on Jesus Christ, as one that brings with him mercy and pardon, as that which was procured by his death, against which lies no exception. I could shew you that nothing was too hard for it, that nothing was left to be done by it, which we are to receive.

3. To be made partakers of him in this sacramental tender, by submitting unto his authority in his institutions, by assenting unto the truth of his word in the promise, that he will be present with us, and give himself unto us, and by approving of that glorious way of making peace for us, which he hath troden and gone in, in his sufferings, and in our stead. To get a view of Christ, as tendering himself unto every one of our souls in this ordinance of his own institution, as he who hath perfectly made an end of all differences between God and us, and who brings along with him all the mercy and grace that is in the heart of God, and in his covenant: to have such a view of him, and so to receive him by faith, that it shall be life unto our souls, is the way to give glory unto God, and to have peace and rest in our own bosoms.

4. and *lastly*. In one word, faith is so to receive him, as to enable us to sit down at God's table, as those that are God's friends; as those that are invited to feast upon the sacrifice. The sacrifice is offered. Christ is the sacrifice, the Lord's passover; God makes a feast upon it, and invites his friends to sit down at his table, there being now no difference between him and us. Let us pray that he would help us to exercise faith to this purpose.

DISCOURSE VIII.

November 2. 1673.

YOU know I usually speak a few words to prepare us for this ordinance: you know it is an ordinance of calling to remembrance, "Do this in remembrance of me." There was under the Old Testament but one sacrifice to call any thing to remembrance; and God

God puts a mark upon that sacrifice, as that which was not, as it were, well pleasing unto him, but only what necessity did require. and that was the sacrifice of jealousy, Numb. v. 15. Saith God, "There shall be no oil in it, (a token of peace); there shall be no frankincense, (that should yield a sweet favour), for it is a sacrifice to bring iniquity to remembrance. This great ordinance of the Lord's supper, is not to call iniquity to remembrance but it is to call to remembrance the putting an end to iniquity; God will make an end of sin; and this ordinance is our solemn remembrance of it.

Now there are fundry things that we are to call to remembrance. I have done my endeavour to help you to call the love of Christ to remembrance. The Lord, I trust, hath guided my thoughts now to direct you to call the sufferings of Christ unto remembrance. I know it may be a suitable meditation to take up your minds and mine, in and under this ordinance. It is our duty in this holy ordinance solemnly to call to remembrance the sufferings of Christ.

It is said of the preaching of the gospel, that "Jesus Christ is therein evidently crucified before our eyes," Gal. iii. And if Christ be evidently crucified before our eyes in the preaching of the gospel, Christ is much more evidently crucified before our eyes in the administration of this ordinance, which is instituted for that very end. And certainly, when Christ is crucified before our eyes, we ought deeply to consider his sufferings. It would be a great sign of an hard and senseless heart in us, if we were not willing in some measure to consider his sufferings upon such an occasion. We are, therefore, solemnly to remember them.

Well, shall I a little mind myself and you, how we may, and how we ought to call to remembrance the sufferings of Christ?

Let us remember that we ourselves were obnoxious unto these sufferings. The curse lay doubly upon us. The original curse (in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die) lay upon us all. The consequent curse, "Curfed is every that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them;" that also lay upon us all. We were under both, the original and the consequent curse. We know what is in the curse

even all the anger and wrath that a displeased holy God can and will inflict upon sinful creatures to all eternity. In this state and condition then, all lay upon us, and all must lie upon us; unless we come to have an interest in the sufferings of Christ, there is no relief for us. I will not insist upon calling to your mind, that heaven and earth, and all God's creation combining together, could not have procured relief for one of our souls. Christ, the Son of God, offered himself, and said, Lo, I come. Indeed it was a good saying of David, it was nobly said, when he saw the angel of the Lord destroying the people with a pestilence, "Lord, (saith he), it is I, and my father's house that have sinned; but as for these sheep, (these poor people) what have they done?" It was otherwise with Christ; he came in the place of sinners, and said, "Let not these poor sheep die." If God would by faith give your souls and mine a view of the voluntary substitution of Jesus Christ in his person in our room and on our behalf, it would comfort and refresh us. When the curse of God was ready to break forth upon us, God accepted of this tender, of this offer of Christ: "Lo I come to do thy will," to be a sacrifice. And what did he do? Why, saith he, this God did; then if he will come, if he will do it, let him plainly know how the case stands; the curse is upon them, wrath is upon them, punishment must be undergone; my holiness, faithfulness, righteousness, and truth, are all engaged. Yet, saith Christ, "Lo, I come." Well what doth God do? He tells you, *isa. liii* 6. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath caused all our iniquities to meet upon him." God so far relaxed his own law that the sentence shall not fall upon their persons, but upon their Substitute, one that hath put himself in their place and stead. Be it so; all their iniquities be upon thee; all the iniquities of this congregation, saith God, be upon my son Jesus Christ.

Well, what then did he suffer? He suffered that which answered the justice of God. He suffered that which answered the law of God. He suffered that which fully rewarded the glory of God. Brethren, let us encourage ourselves in the Lord. If there be any demands to be made of you or me, it must be upon the ac-

count of the righteousness and justice of God; or upon the account of the law of God; or upon the account of the loss that God suffered in his glory by us. If the Lord Jesus hath come in, and answered all these, we have a good plea to make in the presence of the holy God.

1. He suffered all that the justice of God did require. Hence it is said, that "God set him forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the forgiveness of sins, Rom. iii. 25. And you may observe, that the apostle uses the very same words in respect of Christ's sufferings, that he uses in respect of the sufferings of the damned angels. Rom. viii. 32. "God spared them not." And when he would speak of the righteousness of God in inflicting punishment upon the sinning angels he doth it by that very word, "God spared them not." So that whatever the righteousness of God did require against sinners, Christ therein was not spared at all. What God required against your sins and mine, and all his elect, God spared him in nothing, but he paid the utmost farthing.

2. The sufferings of Christ did answer the law of God. That makes the next demand of us. The law is that which requires our poor guilty souls to punishment in the name of the justice of God. Why, saith the apostle, "He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us," Gal. iii. 13.; by undergoing and suffering the curse of the law, he redeemed us from it.

3. He suffered every thing that was required to repair and make up the glory of God. Better you and I and all the world should perish than God should be endangered in his glory. It is a truth, and I hope God will bring all our hearts to say, Christ, hath suffered to make up that. The obedience that was in the sufferings of Christ, brought more glory unto God than the disobedience of Adam, who was the original of the apostacy of the whole creation from God, brought dishonour unto him. That which seemed to reflect great dishonour upon God was, that all his creatures should as one man fall off by apostacy from him. God will have his honour repaired, and it is done by the obedience of Christ much

more. There cometh, I say, more glory to God by the obedience of Christ and his sufferings, than there did dishonour by the disobedience of Adam; and so there comes more glory by Christ's sufferings and obedience upon the cross, than by the sufferings of the damned for ever. God loses no glory by setting believers free from suffering, because of the sufferings of the Son of God. This was a fruit of eternal wisdom.

Now having thus touched a little upon the sufferings of Christ, what shall we do in a way of duty?

(1.) Let us by faith consider truly and really this great substitution of Jesus Christ; "the just suffering for the unjust;" in our stead, in our room, undergoing what we should have undergone. The Lord help us to admire the infinite holiness, righteousness, and truth that is in it. We are not able to comprehend these things in it; but if God enables us to exercise faith upon it, we shall admire it. Whence is it that the Son of God should be substituted in our place? Pray remember, that we are now representing this infinite effect of divine wisdom in substituting Jesus Christ in our room, to undergo the wrath and curse of God for us.

(2.) Let us learn from the cross of Christ, what indeed is in our sins; that when Christ, the Son of God, in whom he was always well pleased, that he did the whole will of God, was in his bosom from all eternity, came and substituted himself in our room, God spared him not. Let not any sinner under heaven that is estranged from Christ, ever think to be spared. If God would have spared any, he would have spared his only Son. But if he will be a Mediator of the covenant, God will not spare him, though his own Son. We may acquaint you hereafter, what it cost Christ to stand in the room of sinners. The Lord from thence give our hearts some sense of that great provocation that is in sin, that we may mourn before him, when we look on him whom our sins have pierced.

(3.) Will God help us to take a view of the issue of all this, of the substitution of Jesus Christ, placing him in our stead, putting his soul in the place of our souls: his person in the place of our persons; of the commutation of punishment, in which the righteousness, holiness,

and wisdom of God laid that on him which was due unto us. What is the issue of all this? It is to bring us unto God; to peace with God, and acquitment from all our sins; and to make us acceptable with the righteous, holy, and faithful God; to give us boldness before him: this is the issue. Let us consider this issue of the sufferings of Christ, and be thankful.



DISCOURSE IX.

February 22. 167 $\frac{3}{4}$.

IT is the table of the Lord that we are invited to draw nigh unto. Our Lord hath a large heart and bountiful hand; hath made plentiful provision for our souls at this table; and he saith unto us by his Spirit in his word, "Eat, O my friends, yea drink abundantly." It is that feast that God hath provided for sinners. And there are three sorts of sinners that I would speak a word unto to stir them up unto a due exercise of faith in this ordinance, according as their condition doth require. There are such as are not sensible of their sins, so as they ought to be; they know they are not; they are not able to get their hearts affected with their sins, as they desire. There are some that are so burdened, and overpressed with the sense of their sins, that they are scarce able to hold up under the weight of them; under the doubts and fears wherewith they are distressed. And there are sinners, who are in enjoyment of a sense of the pardon of sin; and do desire to have hearts to improve it in thankfulness and fruitfulness.

Something of these several frames may be in us all; yet it may be, one is predominant, one is chief; one in one, another in another; and therefore I will speak a few words distinctly to them all.

1. There are sinners, who are believers, who cannot get their hearts and spirits affected with sin so as they ought and so as they desire. There is not a sadder complaint of the church, as I know in the whole book of God, than that **II. lxiii. 17.** "Why hast thou hardened our

hearts from thy fear?" Poor creatures may come unto that perplexity through an apprehension of the want of a due sense of the guilt of sin, as to be ready thus to cry out, Why is it thus with me? Why am I so senseless under the guilt of all the sins that I have contracted? I have a word of direction unto such persons. Are there such among us? It is a direction unto faith to be acting in this ordinance. It is that which we have, Zech. xii. 10. "They shall look unto him whom they have pierced and mourn." Why, brethren, Christ is represented unto us in this ordinance, as he was pierced, as his precious blood was poured out for us. Let us act faith, if God help us, in two things.

(1.) Upon the dolorous sufferings of Christ which are represented here unto us. Let us take a view of the Son of God under the curse of God.

(2.) Remember that all these sufferings were for us; "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and then mourn." The acting of faith upon the sufferings of Christ, as one that suffered for us, is the great means in this ordinance to bring our hearts to mourn for sin indeed. Therefore pray, let us beg of God, whoever of us are in any measure under this frame, that our insensibleness of the guilt and burden of sin may be our great burden. Let us try the power of faith in this ordinance, by getting our hearts affected with the sufferings of Christ in our behalf. Let us bind it to our hearts and consciences; and may the Lord give a blessing.

2. There are others who, it may be, are pressed under the weight of their sins; walk mournfully, walk disconsolately. I know there are some so, in the condition expressed by the Psalmist, Psal. xl. 12. "Innumerable evils have compassed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me." Some may be in that condition, that their hearts are ready to fail them, through the multitude of their iniquities taking hold upon them. What would you direct such unto in this ordinance? Truly, that which is given John iii. 14. 15. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him, should not

perish, but have eternal life." The Lord Jesus Christ is lifted up, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, and here he is lifted up, as bearing all our sins on his own body upon the tree. Here is a representation made unto poor sinners, whose hearts are most burdened; here is Jesus Christ lifted up with all our sins upon the tree. Let such a soul labour to have a view of Christ as bearing all our iniquities, that believing on him we should not perish, but have life everlasting. God hath appointed him to be crucified evidently before our eyes, that every poor soul that is hung with sin, ready to die by sin, should look up unto him, and be healed; and virtue will go forth, if we look upon him, for "by his stripes we are healed."

3. There may be some that live in full satisfaction of the pardon of their sins, and are solicitous how their hearts may be drawn forth unto thankfulness and fruitfulness. Remember that place, Rev. i. 5. 6. "To him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." Remember this, that whatever your state and condition be, you have here a proper object for faith to exercise it self upon; only be not wanting unto your own comfort and advantage.

DISCOURSE X.

May 17. 1674.

MATT. xxviii. 20.

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

BY the end of the world, we are to understand the consummation of all things; when all church-work is done, and all church-duties are over; when the time comes that we shall pray no more, hear no more, no more administer ordinances; but till then, saith Christ, take this for your life and for your comfort, Do what I com-

mand you, and you shall have my presence with you.

There are three things whereby Christ makes good this promise, and is with his church to the end of the world.

First, By his Spirit. “Where-ever, (saith he), two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” (Mat. xviii. 20.) by his quickening, guiding, directing Spirit, as a Spirit of grace and supplication, as a Spirit of light and holiness, and as a Spirit of comfort.

Secondly, Christ is present with us by his word. Saith the apostle, Col. iii. 16. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” or plentifully. And how then? Then, saith he, Eph. iii. 17. “Christ dwelleth in us by faith.” The word dwelleth in us plentifully, if mixed with faith; and Christ dwelleth in us; he is present with us by his word.

Thirdly, Christ is present with us in an especial manner in this ordinance. One of the greatest engines that ever the devil made use of to overthrow the faith of the church, was by forging such a presence of Christ as is not truly in this ordinance, to drive us off from looking after that presence which is true. I look upon it as one of the greatest engines that ever hell set on work. It is not a corporal presence; there are innumerable arguments against that; every thing that is in sense, reason, and the faith of a man, overthrows that corporal presence. But I will remind you of one or two texts wherewith it is inconsistent. The first is that in John xvi. 7. “Nevertheless, (saith our Saviour), it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.” The corporal presence of Christ, and the evangelical presence of the Holy Ghost, as the Comforter, in the New Testament, are inconsistent. I must “go away, or the comforter will not come.” But he so went away as to his presence, as to come again with his bodily presence, as often as the priests call. No, saith Peter, Acts iii. 21. “The heavens must receive him; (for how long)? till the time of restitution of all things.” I go away as to my bodily presence, or the Comforter will not come; and when he is gone away, the heavens must receive him until the time of the restitution of all

things. We must not therefore look after such a presence.

I will give you a word or two, what is the presence of Christ with us in this ordinance; what is our duty; and how we may meet with Christ when he is thus present with us; which is the work I have in hand. Christ is present in this ordinance in an especial manner three ways, by representation, by exhibition, by oblation, or sealing.

1. He is present here by representation. So in a low, shadowy way God was present in the tabernacle, in the temple, in the ark, and mercy-seat; they had a representation of his glory. But Christ here hath given us a more eminent and clear representation of himself. I will name but two things.

1. A representation of himself, as he is the food of our souls.

2. A representation of himself, as he suffered for our sins.

These are two great ways whereby Christ is represented as the food of our souls, in the matter of the ordinance; and Christ as suffering for our sins is represented in the manner of the ordinance; both by his own appointment. The apostle saith, Gal. iii. 1. "Jesus Christ was evidently crucified before their eyes." Evidently crucified, doth not intend particularly this ordinance, but the preaching of the gospel, which gave a delineation, a picture and image of the crucifixion of Christ unto the faith of believers. But of all things that belong unto the gospel, he is most evidently crucified before our eyes in this ordinance; and it is agreed on all hands that Christ is represented unto the soul in this ordinance. How shall we do this? shall we do it by crucifixes, pictures and images? No; they are all cursed of that God who said, "Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image." But that way by which God himself, and Christ himself hath appointed to represent these things unto us, that he blesses, and makes effectual. This way, as I have often shewed, is the way that was chosen by the wisdom and goodness of Jesus Christ; the name of God is upon it; it is blessed unto us, and will be effectual, if we are not wanting to ourselves.

II. Christ is present with us, by way of exhibition ; that is, he doth really tender and exhibit himself unto the souls of believers in this ordinance, which the world hath lost, and knows not what to make of it. They exhibit that which they do not contain. This bread doth not contain the body of Christ, or the flesh of Christ ; the cup doth not contain the blood of Christ ; but they exhibit them ; both do as really exhibit them to believers, as they partake of the outward signs. Certainly we believe that our Lord Jesus Christ doth not invite us unto this table for the bread that perishes, for outward food ; it is to feed our souls. What do we think then ? doth he invite us unto an empty, painted feast ? do we deal so with our friends ? Here is something really exhibited by Jesus Christ unto us, to receive, besides the outward pledges of bread and wine. We must not think the Lord Jesus Christ deludes our souls with empty shews and appearances. That which is exhibited is himself, it is his flesh as meet indeed, and his blood as drink indeed ; it is himself as broken and crucified, that he exhibits unto us. And it is the fault and sin of every one of us, if we do not receive him this day, when an exhibition and tender is made unto us, as here, by way of food. To what end do we receive it ? Truly we receive it for these two ends, for incorporation, for nourishment.

1. We receive our food, that it may incorporate and turn into blood and spirits, that it may become one with us ; and when we have so done,

2. Our end and design is, that we may be nourished, nature strengthened, comforted, and supported, and we enabled for the duties of life.

Christ doth exhibit himself unto our souls, if we are not wanting unto ourselves, for these two things, incorporation and nourishment ; to be received into union, and to give strength unto our souls.

III. Christ is present in this ordinance by way of ob- signation : he comes here to seal the covenant ; and therefore the cup is called, “ the new testament in the blood of Christ.” How in the blood of Christ ? It is the new covenant that was sealed, ratified, confirmed, and made so stable, as you have heard, by the blood of

Jesus Christ. For, from the foundation of the world, no covenant was ever intended to be established, but it was confirmed by blood; and this covenant is confirmed by the blood of Christ; and he comes and seals the covenant with his own blood in the administration of this ordinance.

Well, if Jesus Christ be thus present by way of representation, exhibition, and oblation, what is required of us that we may meet him, and be present with him? For it is not our mere coming hither that is a meeting with Christ; it is a work of faith: and there are three acts of faith whereby we may be present with Christ, who is thus present with us.

1. The first is by recognition, answering his representation. As Christ in this ordinance doth represent his death unto us, so we are to remember it, and call it over. Pray consider how things were done formerly in reference unto it. The paschal lamb was an ordinance for remembrance; "it is a night to be had in remembrance;" and this they should do for a remembrance: and it was to be eaten with bitter herbs: there was once a year a feast wherein all the sins, iniquities, and transgressions of the children of Israel were called to remembrance: and it was to be done by greatly afflicting of their souls. If we intend to call to remembrance the death of Christ, we may do well to do it with some bitter herbs; there should be some remembrance of sin with it, some brokenness of heart for sin, with respect to him who was pierced and broken for us. Our work is to call over and shew forth the death of Christ. Pray, brethren, let us a little consider, whether our hearts be suitably affected with respect to our sins which were upon Jesus Christ when he died for us, or no; lest we draw nigh unto him with the outward bodily presence, when our hearts are far from him.

2. If Christ be present with us by way of exhibition, we ought to be present by way of admission. It will not advantage you or me, that Christ tenders himself unto us, unless we receive him. This is the great work; herein lies the main work upon all the members of the church. When we are to dispense the word, the first work lies upon the ministers; and when the work is suf-

ficiently discharged, they will be a good favour unto God in them that believe, and in them that perish: but in this ordinance, the main work lies upon yourselves. If in the name of Christ we make a tender of him unto you, and he be not actually received, there is but half the work done; so that you are in a peculiar manner to stir up yourselves, as having a more special interest in this duty, than in other duty of the church whatsoever; and you may take a better measure of yourselves by your acting in this duty, than of us by our acting in the ministry. Let Christ be received into your hearts by faith and love, upon this particular tender that he assuredly makes in this ordinance of himself unto you; for, as I said, he hath not invited you unto an empty painted feast or table.

3. Know what you come to meet him for, which is, to seal the covenant, solemnly to take upon yourselves again the performance of your part of the covenant. I hope I speak in a deep sense of the thing itself, and that which I have much thought of. This is that which ruins the world, the hearing that God hath made a covenant of grace and mercy; it is preached to them, and declared unto them, and they think to be saved by this covenant, though they themselves do not perform what the covenant requires on their part. What great and glorious words do we speak in the covenant, that God gives himself over unto us to be our God! Brethren, there is our giving ourselves unto God (to answer this) universally and absolutely. If we give ourselves unto the world, and to our lusts, and to self, we are not to expect any benefit by God's covenant of grace. If it be not made up by our sealing of the covenant of grace, or by an universal resignation of ourselves in all that we are and do unto him, we do not meet Jesus Christ; we disappoint him when he comes to seal the covenant. Where is this people, saith Christ, that would enter into covenant with me? Let it be in our hearts to see him seal the covenant of grace as represented in this ordinance; and to take upon ourselves the performance of what is required of us, by an universal giving up ourselves unto God.

DISCOURSE XI.

August 9. 1674.

I SHALL now produce some few places of Scripture, one especially, that may administer occasion unto you for the exercise of faith, the great duty required of us at this time. You may do well to think of these words of the prophet concerning Jesus Christ, concerning his sufferings and death, which we are here gathered together in his name to remember. They are,

ISA. liii. 11.

He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.

There are two things that the Holy Ghost minds us of in these words.

1 That Jesus Christ was in a great travail of soul to bring forth the redemption and salvation of the church.

2. He minds us that Jesus Christ was satisfied, and much rejoiced in the consideration, the effects and fruits of the travail of his soul.

I shall speak a word to both, and a word to show you how both these things are called over in this ordinance, both the travail of the soul of Christ, and his satisfaction in the fruit of that travail.

First, Christ was in a great travail of soul to bring forth the redemption and salvation of the church. It was a great work that Christ had to do. It is usually said, we are not saved as the world was made, by a word; but there was travail in it; it is the word whereby the bringing forth of children into the world is expressed; the travail of a woman. And there are three things in that travail; an agony of mind; outcrying for help; and sense of pain. All these things were

in the travail of the soul of Christ. I will name the Scriptures, to call them to your remembrance.

1. He was in an agony, Luke xxii. 44. An agony is an inexpressible conflict of mind about things dreadful and terrible. So it was with Christ. No heart can conceive, much less can tongue express, the conflict that was in the soul of Jesus Christ, with the wrath of God, the curse of the law, the pains of hell and death, that stood before him in this work of our redemption. There was an agony.

2. There was an outcrying for help, Heb. v. 7. "Who in the days of his flesh offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him." Such is the outcry of a person in travail, crying out unto them that are able to save them. So it was with Jesus Christ when he was in the travail of his soul about our salvation. He made these strong cries unto God, to him that was able to save him.

3. There was pain in it, which is the last thing in travail; so that he complained that "the pains of hell had taken hold upon him." Whatever pain there was in the curse of the law, in the wrath of God; whatever the justice of God did ever design to inflict upon sinners, was then upon the soul of Jesus Christ; so that he was in travail. This is the first thing I would mind you of; that, in the bringing forth the work of our redemption and salvation, the Lord Jesus was in travail.

Secondly, It was a satisfaction, a rejoicing unto the Lord Jesus Christ, to consider the fruits and effects of this travail of his soul, which God had promised he should see. He was satisfied in the prospect he had of the fruit of the travail of his soul. So the apostle tells us, Heb. xii. 2. "that, for the joy that was set before him," which was the joy of bringing us unto God, of being the Captain of salvation unto them that should obey him, "he endured the cross, and despised the shame;" he went through all with a prospect he had of the fruit of his travail; there would joy come out of it; the joy that was set before him; as he speaks, Psal. xvi. 6. "God presents unto him what he shall have by this travail, what he shall get by it; saith he, "The

lines are fallen unto me in a pleasant place, yea I have a goodly heritage." It is the satisfaction that Jesus Christ (who is there spoken of only in that psalm) takes in the fruit of the travail of his soul; he is contented with it. He doth not do as Hiram, who when Solomon gave him the twenty cities in the land of Galilee, calls them "Cabul, they were dirty, and they displeased him," 1 Kings ix. 11. &c. No: but "the lines are fallen unto me in a pleasant place;" he rejoiced in his travail. It is expressed, in my apprehension, to the height, in Jer. xxxi. 25. 26. "I have fatiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul." What follows? 'Upon this I awaked, and beheld; and my sleep was sweet unto me.' They are the words of Jesus Christ; and he speaks concerning his death, wherein he was as asleep in the grave. Now consider what was the effect and fruit of it? It was sweet unto Jesus Christ after all the travail of his soul, that he had "fatiated the weary soul, and replenished every sorrowful soul."

In one word, both these things, the travail of the soul of Christ, and the satisfaction he took in the fruit of his travail, are represented unto us in this ordinance.

There is the travail of the soul of Christ to us in the manner of the participation of this ordinance, in the breaking of the bread, and in the pouring out of the wine, representing unto us the breaking of the body of Christ, the shedding of his blood and the separation of the one from the other, which was the cause of his death. Now, though these were outward things in Christ, (because the travail of his soul cannot be represented by any outward things, wherein the great work of our redemption lay), we are in this ordinance to be led through these outward things to the travail of the soul of Christ: we are not to rest in the mere outward act or acts of the breaking of the body of Christ, and pouring out of his blood, the separation of the one from the other, and of his death thereby, but through all them we are to enquire, what is under them? There was Christ's making his soul an offering for sin; there was Christ's being made a curse under them, Christ's travail of soul in an agony to bring forth the redemption and salvation of the church.

Brethren, let us be able, by faith, not only to look through these outward signs to that which makes the representation itself unto us, the body and blood of Christ; but even with them and through them in the travail of the soul of Christ, the work that he was doing between God and himself for the redemption of the church.

And here is also a representation made unto us of that satisfaction the soul of Christ received in the fruit of his travail having appointed it in a particular manner to be done in remembrance of him. No man will appoint a remembrance of that which he doth not delight in. When Job had no more delight in his life, he desired that the time of his birth might never be remembered. When God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, whereby he exalted his glory, he appointed a passover, and said, "It was a day greatly to be remembered;" because the people had a great deliverance, and God received great glory and great satisfaction, therefore it was greatly to be remembered. We are to celebrate this ordinance in remembrance of Christ, and therefore, there is a representation of that satisfaction which Jesus Christ did receive in the travail of his soul, so that he never repented him of one groan, of one sigh, of one tear, of one prayer, of one wrestling with the wrath of God. It is matter of rejoicing, and to be remembered; and do you rejoice in the remembrance of it?

Again, It is apparent from hence, because this ordinance is in an especial manner an ordinance of thanksgiving; the bread that is blessed, or which we give thanks for; the cup which is blessed: Christ gave thanks. Now, if hereby we give thanks, it is to call to remembrance, not merely the travail of Christ's soul, but the success of that travail; hereby all differences were made up between God and us; hereby grace and glory were purchased for us, and he became the Captain of salvation unto us.

To shut up all, here is by Christ's institution, bread and wine provided for us; but it is bread broken, and wine poured out. There are two things in it, there is the weak part that is Christ's, there is the nourishing part that is given unto us. The Lord Christ hath chosen by this ordinance to represent himself by these things that

are the staff of our lives; they comprise the whole nourishment and sustenance of our bodies. He hath so chosen to represent them by breaking and pouring out, that shall signify his sufferings; here are both, as the bread is broken, and as the wine is poured out, there is the representation of the travail of the soul of Christ to us: as bread is received, and the cup, which is the means of the nourishment of man's life, here is the fruit of Christ's death exhibited unto us, and his sufferings. The Lord help us to look into the satisfaction that Christ received from this, that we may be partakers of the one and the other.

DISCOURSE XII.

February 21. 167 $\frac{4}{5}$.

WE are met here to remember, to celebrate and set forth the death of Christ, to profess and plead our interest therein. And there are two things that we should principally consider in reference to ourselves, and our duty, and the death of Christ. The first is, the benefits of it, and our participation of them; and the second is our conformity unto it: both are mentioned together by the apostle in

PHIL. iii. 10.

That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.

I shall speak a word or two (upon this occasion of remembering the death of Christ) unto the latter clause, of our being made conformable unto his death, wherein a very great part of our due preparation unto this ordinance doth consist; and for the furtherance whereof we do in an especial manner wait upon God in this part of his worship. Therefore I shall in a few words, mind you

wherein we ought to be conformable unto the death of Christ, and how we are advantaged therein by this ordinance.

We are to be conformable unto the death of Christ, in the internal, moral cause of it, and in the external means of it.

The cause of the death of Christ, was sin. The means of the death of Christ, was suffering. Our being conformable unto the death of Christ, must respect sin and suffering.

The procuring cause of the death of Christ was sin. He died for sin; he died for our sin; our iniquities were upon him, and were the cause of all the punishment that befel him.

Wherein can we be conformable unto the death of Christ with respect unto sin? We cannot die for sin. Our hope and faith is, in and through him, that we shall never die for sin. No mortal man can be made like unto Christ in suffering for sin. Those that undergo what he underwent, because they were unlike him, must go to hell, and be made more unlike him, to eternity. Therefore the apostle tells us, that our conformity unto the death of Christ with respect unto sin lies in this, that as he died for sin, so we should die unto sin; and that sin which he died for, should die in us. He tells us so, Rom. vi. 5. "We are planted together in the likeness of his death;" we are made conformable unto the death of Christ, planted into him, so as to have a likeness to him in his death. Wherein? "Knowing that our old man is crucified with him," saith he, ver. 6. It is the crucifixion of the old man, the crucifying of the body of sin, the mortifying of sin, that makes us conformable unto the death of Christ as to the internal moral cause of it, that procures it. So another apostle tells us, 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2. "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." Here is our conformity to Christ as he suffered in the flesh, that we should no longer live to our lusts, nor unto the will of man, but unto the will of God. And, brethren,

let me tell you, he who approacheth unto this remembrance of the death of Christ, that hath not laboured, that doth not labour for conformity to his death in the universal mortification of all sin, runs a hazard to his soul, and puts an affront upon Jesus Christ. O let none of us come in a way of thankfulness to remember the death of Jesus Christ, and bring along with us the murderer whereby he was slain. To harbour with us, and bring along with us to the death of Christ, unmortified lusts and corruptions, such as we do not continually and sincerely endeavour to kill and mortify, is to come and upbraid Christ with his murderer, instead of obtaining any spiritual advantage; what can such poor souls expect?

To be conformable unto the death of Christ as to the outward means, is to be conformable unto him in suffering. We here remember Christ's sufferings. And I am persuaded, and hope I have considered it, that he who is unready to be conformable unto Christ in suffering, was never upright and sincere in endeavouring to be conformable unto Christ in the killing of sin; for we are called as much to the one as to the other. Christ hath suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should also suffer when we are called thereunto. And our unwillingness to suffer like unto Christ, arises from some unmortified corruptions in our hearts, which we have not endeavoured to subdue, that we may be like unto Christ in the mortification and death of sin.

There are four things required that we may be conformable unto the death of Christ in suffering; for we may suffer, and yet not be like unto Christ in it nor by it.

1. The first is, that we suffer for Christ. 1 Pet. iv. 15, 16. "Let none suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, &c. But if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed." To suffer as a Christian, is to suffer for Christ; for the name of Christ; for the truths of Christ; for the ways of Christ; for the worship of Christ.

2. It is required that we suffer in the strength of Christ; that we do not suffer in the strength of our own will, our own reason, our own resolutions; but that we suffer,

I say, in the strength of Christ. When we suffer aright, "it is given unto us in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but to suffer for him." As all other graces are to be derived from Christ, as our head and root, stock and foundation; so in particular that grace which enables us to suffer for Christ, must be from him. And we do well to consider whether it be so or no; for if it be not, all our sufferings are lost, and not acceptable to him. It is a sacrifice without salt, yea without an heart, that will not be accepted.

3. It is required, that we suffer in imitation of Christ, as making him our example. We are not to take up the cross, but with design to follow Christ. Take up the cross, is but half the command: "Take up the cross, and follow me," is the whole command; and we are to suffer willingly and cheerfully, or we are the most unlike Jesus Christ in our sufferings of any persons in the world. Christ was willing and cheerful, "Lo. I come to do thy will: I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?" saith he. And,

4. We are to suffer to the glory of Christ. These are things wherein we ought to endeavour conformity to the death of Christ, that we now remember. I pray, let none of us trust to the outward ordinance, the performance of the outward duty. If these things be not in us, we do not remember the Lord's death in a right manner.

How may we obtain strength and ability from this ordinance, to be made conformable to his death, that we may not come and remember the death of Christ, and go away and be more unlike him than formerly?

There is power to this end communicated to us doctrinally, morally, and spiritually.

There is no such sermon to teach mortification of sin, as the commemoration of the death of Christ. It is the greatest outward instruction unto this duty that God hath left unto his church; and I am persuaded which he doth most bless to them who are sincere. Do we see Christ eminently crucified before our eyes; his body broken, his blood shed for us; and is it not of powerful instruction to us, to go on to mortify sin? He that

hath not learned this, never learned any thing aright from this ordinance, nor did he ever receive any benefit from it. There is a constraining power in this instruction to put us upon the mortification of sin; God grant we may see the fruit of it. It hath a teaching efficacy; it teaches, as it is peculiarly blessed of God to this end and purpose. And I hope many a soul can say, that they have received that encouragement, and that strength by it, as that they have been enabled to more steadiness and constancy in fighting against sin, and have received more success afterwards.

There is a moral way whereby it communicates strength to us; because it is our duty now to engage ourselves unto this very work, meeting at the death of Christ, it is our duty to engage ourselves unto God, and that gives strength. And I would beg of you all, brethren, that no one of us would pass through or go over this ordinance, this representation of the death of Christ, without a fresh obligation to God to abide more constant and vigorous in the mortification of sin; we all need it.

And lastly, A spiritual beholding of Christ by faith, is the means to change us into the image and likeness of Christ. Beholding the death of Christ by faith as represented to us in this ordinance, is the means to change us into his image and likeness, and make us conformable unto his death, in the death of sin in us.

(1.) Take this instruction from the ordinance, as you believe in Christ, as you love him, as you desire to remember him, sin ought to be mortified, that we may be conformed unto him in his death.

(2.) That we do every one of us bring our souls under an engagement so to do, which is required of us in the very nature of the duty.

(3.) That we labour by faith so to behold a dying Christ, that strength may thence issue forth for the death of sin in our souls.

DISCOURSE XIII.

April 18. 1675.

I HAVE generally on this occasion fixed on something particular that may draw forth and guide present meditation; but I shall at present enter on what may be farther carried on, and speak a little to you about the nature and use of the ordinance itself, in which, it may be, some of us (for there are of all degrees and sizes of knowledge in the church) may not be so well instructed. God has taught us, that the using of an ordinance will not be of advantage to us, unless we understand the institution, and the nature and the ends of it: It was so under the Old Testament, when their worship was more carnal, yet God would have them to know the nature and the reason of that great ordinance of the passover, as you may see in Exod. xii. 24,—27. “And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee, and to thy sons for ever. And it shall come to pass when ye be come to the land, which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean you by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s passover,” &c. Carry along with you the institution; it is the ordinance of God, you shall keep this service; then you must have the meaning of it, which is this, it is the Lord’s passover; and the occasion of the institution was this, the Lord passed over our houses when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered us out of Egypt. There is a great mystery in that word, it is the sacrifice of the Lord’s passover: their deliverance was by the blood of a sacrifice; it was a sacrifice which made them look to the great sacrifice, Christ our passover, who was sacrificed for us. And there is a mystical instruction, it is the Lord’s passover, says he; it is a pledge and sign of the Lord’s passing over and sparing the Israelites, for it was

not itself the Lord's passover. Christ says, "this is my body," that is, a pledge and token of it. Under the Old Testament God would not have his people to observe this great service and ordinance, but they should know the reason of it, and the end and rise of it, that it might be a service of faith.

All these things are clearly comprised, in reference unto this ordinance of the Lord's supper, in those words of the apostle,

I COR. XI. 23, 24, 25, 26.

For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

You have both the institution and the nature, the use and ends of this ordinance in these words; and I shall speak so briefly to them, and under such short heads, as those who are young and less experienced may do well to retain.

First, There is the institution of it; I received it, said he, from the Lord; and he received it on this account, that the Lord appointed it; and if you would come in faith unto this ordinance, you are to consider two things in this institution.

1. The authority of Christ. It was the Lord: the Lord, the Head and King of the church; our Lord, our Lawgiver, our Ruler, he has appointed this service; and if you would have your performance of it an act of obedience, acceptable to God, you must get your conscience influenced with the authority of Christ, that we can give this reason in the presence of God, why we

come together to perform this service, it is because Jesus Christ our Lord has appointed it ; he hath required it of us : and what is done in obedience to his command, that is a part of our reasonable service, and therein we are accepted with God.

2. In the institution of it there is also his love, which is manifested in the time of its appointment, the Lord Jesus, “ in that same night in which he was betrayed.” One would think, that our Lord Jesus Christ, who knew all the troubles, the distresses, the anguish, the sufferings, the derelictions of God, which were coming upon him, and into which he was just now entering, would have had something else to think of besides this provision for his church. But his heart was filled with love to his people ; and that love which carried him to all that darkness and difficulty that he was to go through, that love at the same time did move him to institute this ordinance for the benefit and advantage of his church. And this I shall only say, that that heart which is made spiritually sensible of the love of Jesus Christ in the institution of this ordinance, and in what this ordinance doth represent, is truly prepared for communion with Christ in this ordinance. O let us all labour for this in particular, if possible, that, through the power of the Spirit of God, we may have some impressions of the love of Christ on our hearts ! Brethren, if we have not brought it with us, if we do not yet find it in us, I pray let us be careful to endeavour, that we do not go away without it. Thus you have what is to be observed in the institution itself, the authority and the love of Christ.

Secondly, I shall speak to the use and ends of this ordinance, and they are three, 1. Recognition ; 2. Exhibition ; and 3. Profession.

1. Recognition, that is, the solemn calling over, and remembrance of what is intended in this ordinance.

There is an habitual remembrance of Christ, what all believers ought continually to carry about them : and here lies the difference between those that are spiritual, and those that are carnal ; they all agree that Christians ought to have a continual remembrance of Christ ; but what way shall we obtain it ? Why, set up images and

pictures of him in every corner of the house and chapel, that is to bring Christ to remembrance; that way carnal men take for this purpose. But the way believers have to bring Christ to remembrance, is by the Spirit of Christ working through the word. We have no images of Christ but the word; and the Spirit represents Christ to us thereby, wherein he is evidently crucified before our eyes. But this recognition I speak of, is a solemn remembrance in the way of an ordinance, wherein unto the internal actings of our minds, there is added the external representation of the signs that God has appointed, "Do this in remembrance of me." It is twice mentioned in ver. 24, 25.

Concerning this remembrance, we may consider two things. (1.) What is the object of this remembrance, or recognition; and, (2.) What is the act of it. What we are to remember, and what is that act of remembrance that is acceptable to God in this ordinance.

(1.) What is the object of this remembrance? The object of this remembrance principally is Christ: but it is not Christ absolutely considered; it is Christ in those circumstances wherein he then was: "Do it in remembrance of me," saith he, as I am sent of God, designed to be a sacrifice for the sins of the elect, and as I am now going to die for that end and purpose; to do it so in remembrance of me. Wherefore, there are these four things that we are to remember of Christ, as proposed in those circumstances wherein he will be remembered. And I will be careful not to mention any thing but what the meanest of us may bring into present exercise at the ordinance.

[1.] Remember the grace and love of God, even the Father, in sending Christ, in setting him forth and proposing him to us. This is every where mentioned in Scripture. We are minded of this in Scripture, whenever we are called to thoughts of the death of Christ, John iii. 16. "God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son." Rom. iii. 25. "God set him forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood." Rom. v. 8. "God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Remember, I pray you, the unspeakable grace and love of God in

sending, giving, and setting forth Jesus Christ to be the propitiation.

Now, how does this ordinance guide us in calling this love and grace of God to remembrance? Why in this? in that it is in the way of a furnished table provided for us. So God has expressed his love in this matter, Isa. xxv. 6. "In this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." The preparation of the table here is to mind us to call to remembrance the love and grace of God, in sending and exhibiting his Son Jesus Christ to be a ransom and propitiation for us. That is the first thing:

[2.] Remember in particular, the love of Jesus Christ, as God-man, in giving himself for us. This love is frequently proposed to us with what he did for us; and it is represented peculiarly in this ordinance: "Who loved me, and gave himself for me," says the apostle. Faith will never be able to live upon the last expression, "Gave himself for me," unless it can rise up to the first, "Who loved me." Rev. i. 5, 6. "Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," &c.

I think we are all satisfied in this, that, in calling Christ to remembrance, we should in an especial manner call the love of Christ to remembrance. And that soul in whom God shall work a sense of the love of Christ in any measure, (for it is past comprehension, and our minds and souls are apt to lose themselves in it, when we attempt to fix our thoughts upon it), that he who is God-man should do this for us, it is too great for any thing but faith, which can rest in that which it can no way comprehend, if it go to try the depth, and breadth, and length of it, to fathom its dimensions, and consider it with reason; for it is past all understanding; but faith can rest in what it cannot comprehend. So should we remember the love of Christ, of him who is God-man, who gave himself for us, and will be remembered in this ordinance.

[3.] We shall not manage our spirits aright as to this first part of the duty, the end of the ordinance in recog-

ation, unless we call over and remember what was the ground upon which the profit and benefit of the sufferings of Christ doth redound to us.

Let us remember, that this is no other but that eternal covenant and compact that was between the Father and the Son, that Christ should undertake for sinners, and that what he did in that undertaking should be done on their behalf, should be reckoned to them, and accounted as theirs. So our Saviour speaks, Psal. xl. 6, 7. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me," &c.

Christ does that in our behalf, which sacrifice and burnt-offerings could not perform. We have this covenant declared at large, Isa. liii. 10, 11. "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed," &c. Pray, brethren, be wise and understanding in this matter, and not children in calling over and remembering Christ in this ordinance. Remember the counsel of peace that was between them both, when it was agreed on the part of Christ, to undertake and answer for what we had done; and upon the part of God the Father, that, upon his so doing, righteousness, life, and salvation should be given to sinners.

[4.] Remember the sufferings of Christ. This is a main thing. Now, the sufferings of Christ may be considered three ways. 1.) The sufferings in his soul. 2.) The sufferings in his body. 3.) The sufferings of his person, in the dissolution of his human nature, soul and body. by death itself.

1.) Remember the sufferings in his soul: and they were of two sorts, (1. Privative; his sufferings in the desertion and dereliction of God his Father; and, (2. Positive; in the emission of the sense of God's wrath, and the curse of the law upon his soul.

(1. The head of Christ's sufferings was in the divine desertion, whence he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It is certain, Christ was forsaken of God; he had not else so complained; forsaken of God in his soul; how? the divine nature in

the second person did not forsake the human; nor did the divine nature in the third person forsake the human, as to the whole work of sanctification and holiness, but kept alive in Christ all grace whatsoever, all grace in that fulness whereof he had ever been partaker. But the desertion was as to all influence of comfort, and all evidence of love from God the Father, who is the fountain of love and comfort administered by the Holy Ghost. Hence some of our divines have not spared to say, that Christ did despair in that great cry, "My God, my God," &c. Now despair signifies two things; a total want of the evidence of faith, as to acceptance with God; and, a resolution in the soul to seek no farther after it, and not to wait for it from that fountain. In the first way Christ did despair; that is, penal only; in the latter, he did not, that is sinful also. There was a total interception of all evidence of love from God, but not a ceasing in him to wait upon God for the manifestation of that love in his appointed time. Remember Christ was thus forsaken, that his people might never be forsaken.

(2. There were sufferings positive in his soul, when he was made sin and a curse for us, and had a sense of the wrath and anger of God on his soul. This brought those expressions concerning him, and from him; "He began to be sore amazed, and said, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death. He was in an agony." I desire no more for my soul everlastingly to confute that blasphemy, That Christ died only as a martyr to confirm the truth he had preached, but the consideration of this one thing. For courage, resolution, and cheerfulness are the principal virtues and graces in him who dies only as a martyr; but for him who had the weight of the wrath of God, and the curse of the law upon his soul, it became him to be "in an agony, to sweat great drops of blood," to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" which had he been called to for nothing else but barely to confirm the truth he had preached, he would have done without much trouble or shaking of mind.

I shall not now speak of the sufferings in his body, which I am afraid we do not consider enough. Some poor souls are apt to consider nothing but the sufferings

of his body, and some do not enough consider them. We may call this over some other time, as also the sufferings of his person in the dissolution of his human nature, by a separation of the soul from the body, which was also comprized in the curse.

“Do this in remembrance of me.” What are we to remember? These are things of no great research; they are not hard and difficult, but such as we all may come up to the practice of in the administration of this very ordinance. Remember the unspeakable grace and love of God in setting forth Christ to be a propitiation. Remember the love of Christ who gave himself for us, notwithstanding he knew all that would befall him on our account: remember the compact and agreement between the Father and the Son, that what was due to us he should undergo, and the benefit of what he did should redound to us: remember the greatness of the work he undertook for these ends; in the sufferings of his whole person, when he would redeem his church with his own blood.

(2.) One word for the act of remembrance, and I have done. How shall we remember? Remembrance in itself is a solemn calling over of what is true and past; and there are two things required in our remembrance; the first is, faith; and the second is thankfulness.

(1.) *Faith*; so to call it over as to believe it. But who does not believe it? Why, truly, brethren, many believe the story of it, or the fact, who do not believe it to that advantage for themselves, as they ought to do. In a word, we are so to believe it, as to put our trust for life and salvation in those things that we call to remembrance. Trust and confidence belong to the essence of saving faith. So remember these things as to place your trust in them. Shall I gather up your workings of faith into one expression? the apostle calls it, Rom. v. 11. “the receiving the atonement.” If God help us afresh to receive the atonement at this time, we have discharged our duty in this ordinance; for here is the atonement, proposed from the love of God and the love of Christ, by virtue of the compact between the Father and the Son, through the sufferings and sacrifice of Christ in his whole person, soul and body. Here is an atonement with God

propofed unto us ; the working of our faith is to receive it, or to believe it fo as to approve of it as an excellent way, full of wifdom, goodnefs, holinefs ; to embrace it and truft in it.

(2.) Remember that among the offerings of old, which were appointed to fhadow out the death of Chrift, there was a thank-offering, for there was a burning of the fat upon the altar of thank-offering. to fignify there was thankfulnefs to God always as part of the remembrance of the facrifice that Chrift made for us. Receive the atonement, and be thankful.

The Lord lead us into the practice of thefe things.

DISCOURSE XIV.

THE laft time I fpake to you on this occafion, I told you that the grace of God, and our duty in this ordinance, might be drawn under the three heads of recognition, or calling over, of exhibition, and of profeflion. The firft of thefe I then fpake unto, and fhewed you what we are to recognize or call over therein.

The fecond thing is, exhibition and reception; exhibition on the part of Chrift, reception on our part, wherein the effence of this ordinance doth confift. I fhall briefly explain it to you, rather now to ftir up faith unto exercife, than to inftuct in the doctrine. And that we may exercife our faith aright, we may confider,

I. Who it is that makes an exhibition, that offers, propofes, and gives fomething to us at this time in this ordinance.

II. What it is that is exhibited, propofed, and communicated in this ordinance. And,

III. How or in what manner we receive it.

I. Who is it that makes this exhibition? It is Chrift himfelf. When Chrift was given for us, God the Father gave him, and fet him forth to be a propitiation; but in this exhibition it is Chrift himfelf, I fay, that is the immediate exhibiter. The tender that is made of, whatever it be, it is made by Chrift. And, as our faith ftands in need of directions and boundaries to be given to it in this holy duty, it will direct our faith to confider Jefus

Christ present among us by his Spirit, and by his word, making this tender, or this exhibition unto us. It is Christ that does it, which calls out our faith unto an immediate exercise on his person.

II. What is it Christ does exhibit and propose to us? 1. Not empty and outward signs. God never instituted such things in his church. From the foundation of the world, he never designed to feed his people with such outward symbols. Those under the Old Testament were not empty, though they had not a fulness, like those under the New; they had not a fulness, because they had respect to what was yet to come, and could not be filled with that light, that grace, that evidence of the things themselves, as the present signs are, which are accomplished. Christ doth not give us empty signs.

Nor, 2. does Christ give us his flesh and blood, taken in a carnal sense. If men would believe him, he has told us a long time ago, when that doubt arose upon that declaration of his eating his flesh and drinking his blood, John vi. 52. (though he did not then speak of the sacrament, but of that which was the essence and life of it), "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" He told us, that eating his flesh profited nothing in that way they thought of eating it; for they apprehended, as the Papists do now, that they were to eat flesh, body, bones and all. Why, says he, "the flesh profits nothing; it is the Spirit that quickens;" that power that is to be communicated to you is by the Spirit. So that Christ does not give us his flesh and blood in a carnal manner, as the men, at Capernaum thought and others look for. This would not feed our souls.

But then what is it that Christ does exhibit, that we may exercise our faith upon? I say, it is himself as immediately discharging his great office of a Priest, being sacrificed for us. It is himself as accompanied with all the benefits of that great part of his mediation in dying for us. May the Lord stir up our hearts to believe, that the tender Christ makes unto us is originally and principally of himself, because all the benefits of his mediation arise from that fountain and spring, when God purchased the church with his own blood. A way this is which the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the wisdom of God, has found out and appointed to make a special ten-

der of his person to our souls, to be received by us. And he tenders himself in the discharge of his mediation, in the most amiable and most glorious representation of himself to the soul of a sinner. Christ is glorious in himself, in all his offices, and in all the representations that are made of him in the scripture unto our faith; but Christ is most amiable, most beautiful, most glorious to the soul of a believing sinner, when he is represented as dying, making atonement for sin, making peace for sinners, as bearing our iniquities, satisfying the wrath of God, and curse of the law, to draw out our hearts unto faith and love. Christ in this ordinance makes such a representation of himself as bleeding for us, making atonement for our sins, and sealing the everlasting covenant: and he proposes himself unto us with all the benefits of his death, of that redemption he wrought out for us, peace with God, making an end of sin, bringing in everlasting righteousness, and the like. I intend only to remind you of these things, for we are at a loss sometimes as to the exercise of faith in and under this duty.

III. There remains to be considered, reception; for unless it be received, there is nothing done to any saving purpose. Notwithstanding all this tender that is made, the issue of all the benefit and consolation lies upon receiving.

There are two ways whereby we do receive Christ.

1. We receive him sacramentally, by obedience in church-order. And, 2. We receive him spiritually, and really by faith or believing in him.

1. We receive him sacramentally. This consists in the due and orderly performance of what he has appointed in his word for this end and purpose, that therein and thereby he may exhibit himself to our souls. It doth not consist (as some have thought) in partaking of the elements; that is but one part of it, and but one small part. Our sacramental reception consists in the due observation of the whole order of the institution according to the mind of Christ.

2. Spiritually, we receive him by faith: and if we could rightly understand that special act of faith which we are to exercise in the reception of Christ; when he does thus exhibit himself to us, then should we glori-

ty God, then should we bring in advantage to our own souls.

I have but a word to say, and that is this, It is that acting of faith which is now required of us, which draws nearest unto spiritual, sensible experience. Faith has many degrees and many acts, some at a kind of distance from the object, in mere reliance and recumbency; and many other acts of faith make very near approaches to the object, and rise up to sensible experience. It should be (if God would help us) such an act of faith as rises up nearest to a sensible experience. It is that which the Holy Ghost would teach us by this ordinance, when we receive it by eating and drinking, which are things of sense; and things of sense are chosen to express faith wrought up to an experience. And they who had some apprehension hereof, that it must be a peculiar acting of faith and rising up to a spiritual experience, but finding nothing of the light and power of it in their own souls, gave birth to transubstantiation, that they might do that with their mouths and teeth, which they could not do with their souls.

Faith should rise up to an experience in two things, (1.) In representation. (2.) In incorporation.

(1.) The thing we are to aim at, to be carried unto by faith in this ordinance, is, that there may be a near and evident representation of Christ in his tender unto our souls; faith being satisfied in it; faith being in this matter the evidence of things not seen, making it exist in the soul, making Christ more present to the soul than he would be to our bodily eyes, if he was among us; more assuredly so. Faith should rise up to evidence in that near and close representation it makes of Christ in this exhibition of himself.

And, (2.) Faith is to answer the end of eating and drinking, which is incorporation. We are so to receive Christ, as to receive him into a spiritual incorporation, that the flesh and blood of Christ, as communicated in this ordinance through faith, may be turned and changed in our hearts into spiritual vital principles, and unto growth and satisfaction. These are the three things we receive by nourishment, and wherein incorporation does consist; there is an increase and quickening of vital

principles, there is growth, and there is satisfaction in receiving suitable food and nourishment. Faith, I say, should rise up to these three things in its acts. I mention these things to direct the actings of our faith in this holy administration.

DISCOURSE XV.

September 5. 1675.

I SHALL offer a few words to direct you in the present exercise of faith in this ordinance. I design no more but to give occasion to that particular exercise of faith which is now required of us, whereby we may sanctify the name of God in a due manner, give glory to him by believing, and receive establishment unto our own souls: and I would do it by minding you of that word of our Lord Jesus Christ in

JOHN xii. 32.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

WHAT he means by "his lifting up," the evangelist expounds in the next words, which are these, "This he spake, signifying what death he should die." So that the lifting up of Christ on the cross, is that which he lays as the foundation of his drawing sinners unto him. No sinner will come near to Christ, unless he be drawn; and to be drawn, is to be made willing to come unto him, and to follow him in chains of love. Christ draws none to him, whether they will or no; but he casts on their minds, hearts and wills, the cords of his grace and love, working in them powerfully, working on them kindly, to cause them to chuse him, to come to him and to follow him "Draw me, we will run after thee." The great principle and fountain from whence the drawing efficacy and power of grace doth proceed, is from

the lifting up of Christ. Drawing grace is manifested in, and drawing love proceeds from, the sufferings of Jesus Christ on the cross.

But that which I would just mind you of at present, is this, that the look of faith unto Christ as lifted up, is the only means of bringing our souls near to him. Our faith is often expressed by "looking unto Christ," Isa. xlv. 22. "Look unto me, (says he), and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." The conclusion is, that those who so look unto him, shall be justified and saved, Isa. lxxv. 1. "Behold me, behold me." And it is the great promise of the efficacy of the Spirit poured out upon us, that we "shall look unto him whom we have pierced," Zech. x. 12. God calls us to look off from all other things, look off from the law, look off from self, look off from sin, look only unto Christ. Is Christ said to be lifted up in his death? and to die that manner of death wherein he was lifted up on the cross? so it was expressed in the type; the brazen serpent was lifted up on a pole, that those who were smote with the fiery serpents might look to it. If the soul can but turn an eye of faith unto Jesus Christ as thus lifted up, it will receive healing; though the sight of one be not so clear as the sight of another. All had not a like sharpness of sight that looked to the brazen serpent; nor have all the like vigour of faith to look to Christ; but one sincere look to Christ is pleasing to him, so as he says, Cant. iv. 9. "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse, thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes." A soul sensible of guilt and sin, that casts but one look of faith to Christ as lifted up, it even raises the heart of Christ himself, and such a soul shall not go away unrefreshed, unrelieved.

Now, brethren, the end of this ordinance is to lift up Christ in representation: as he was lifted up really on the cross, and as in the whole preaching of the gospel, Christ is evidently crucified before our eyes, so more especially in the administration of this ordinance. Do we see then wherein the special acting of faith in this ordinance does consist? God forbid we should neglect the stirring up our hearts unto the particular acting of faith in Jesus Christ, who herein is lifted up before us. That

which we are to endeavour in this ordinance, is, to get a view by faith, faith working by thoughts, by meditation, acting by love; a view of Christ as lifted up, that is, as bearing our iniquities in his own body on the tree. What did Christ do on the tree? what was he lifted up for, if it was not to bear our sins? Out of his love and zeal to the glory of God, and out of compassion to the souls of men, Christ bore the guilt and punishment of sin, and made expiation for it. O that God in this ordinance would give our souls a view of him! I shall give it to myself, and to you in charge at this time: If we have a view of Christ by faith as lifted up, our hearts will be drawn nearer to him. If we find not our hearts in any manner drawn nearer to him, it is much to be feared we have not had a view of him as bearing our iniquities. Take, therefore, his one remembrance, as to the acting of faith in the administration of this ordinance, labour to have it fixed upon Christ as bearing sin, making atonement for it, with his heart full of love to accomplish a cause in righteousness and truth.



DISCOURSE XVI.

October 31. 1675.

TO what our minds, and lead us to a particular exercise of faith and love in this duty, I shall add a few words from that Scripture which I have already spoken something to, upon this occasion, *viz.*

JOHN xii. 32.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

THIS lifting up, as I said before, was the lifting up of Christ on the cross, when, as the apostle Peter tells us, "he bore," or as the word is, "he carried up our sins

in his own body on the tree." Christ died for three ends, 1. To answer an institution. 2. To fulfil a type. And, 3. To be a moral representation of the work of God in his death.

1. It was to answer the institution, that "he who was hanged on a tree was accursed of God," Deut. xxi. 23. There were many other ways appointed of God to put malefactors to death among the Jews; some were stoned, in some cases they were burned with fire; but it is only by God appointed, that "he that was hanged on a tree was accursed of God:" and Christ died that death, to shew, that it was he who underwent the curse of God, as the apostle shews, Gal. iii. 13. "He was made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

2. Christ died that death to fulfil a type. For it was a bloody and most painful death, yet it was a death wherein a bone of him was not broken, typified of him in the paschal lamb, of which not a bone was to be broken. Christ was lifted up on the cross to fulfil that type, that though his death was bitter, lingering, painful, shameful, yet not a bone was broke; that every one might have an whole Christ, an entire Saviour, notwithstanding all his suffering and rending on our behalf.

3. He was so lifted up, that it might be a moral representation unto all, to answer that other type also of the serpent lifted up in the wilderness; so that he was the person that might say, "Behold me, behold me." He was lifted up between heaven and earth, that all creatures might see God had set him forth to be a propitiation.

"And I, when I am lifted up;" what will he then do? when I have answered the curse, when I have fulfilled the types, when I have complied with the will of God in being a propitiation, "I will draw all men to me." It is placed upon Christ's "lifting up;" now that is actually past; nor was it done merely while Christ was hanging on the cross. There are two ways whereby there is a representation made of Christ being lifted up, to draw men unto him.

1. By the preaching of the word. So the apostle tells us, Gal. iii. 1. that "Jesus Christ was evidently

crucified before their eyes." The great end of preaching the word, is to represent evidently Christ crucified; it is to lift up Christ that he may draw sinners unto him. And, 2. It is represented in this ordinance of the Lord's supper, wherein we shew forth his death. Christ is peculiarly and eminently lifted up in this ordinance, because it is a peculiar and eminent representation of his death.

Now there are two ways of Christ's drawing persons to himself.

1. His way of drawing sinners to him, by faith and repentance.

2. His way of drawing believers to him, as to actual communion with him.

Christ draws sinners to him by faith and repentance, as he is lifted up in the preaching of the word; and he draws believers to him as unto actual communion, as by the word, so in an especial manner by this ordinance. I shall only speak a word on the latter, how Christ is lifted up in this ordinance that represents his death unto us, or, how he draws us unto actual communion with him.

(1.) He does it by his love. The principal thing that is always to be considered in the lifting up of Christ is, his love. "Who loved me, (says the apostle), and gave himself for me:" and, "Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." I could shew you, that love is attractive, that it is encouraging and constraining. I will only leave this with you, whatever apprehensions God in this ordinance shall give you of the love of Christ, you have therein an experience of Christ's drawing you, as he is lifted up, unto actual communion with him. It is of great concernment to you. Christ is never so lovely unto the soul of a sinner, as when he is considered as lifted up, that is, as undergoing the curse of God, that a blessing might come upon us. O that he who has loved us, and because he has loved us, would draw us with the cords of his loving-kindness, as God says he does, Jer. xxxi. 3. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

(2.) The sufferings of Christ in soul and body are attractive of, and do draw the souls of believers to him. "They shall look on me whom they have pierced, and mourn." It is a look to Christ as pierced for sin under his sufferings, that is attractive to the souls of believers in this ordinance, because these sufferings were for us. Call to mind, brethren, some of these texts of Scripture; see what God will give you out of them. "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He was made a curse for us; and, he bore our sins in his own body on the tree; and died, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God." If Jesus Christ be pleased to let in a sense of his sufferings for us by these Scriptures upon our souls, then we have another experience of his drawing us, as he is lifted up.

(3.) Christ draws us as he is lifted up, by the effects of it. What was he lifted up for? It was to make peace with God through his blood. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself;" When? When "he made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." It is the sacrifice of atonement; it is the sacrifice wherewith the covenant between God and us was sealed. This is one notion of the supper of our Lord. Covenants were confirmed with sacrifice. Isaac made a covenant with Abimelech, and confirmed it with sacrifice: So it was Jacob and Laban: and in both places, when they had confirmed the covenant with a sacrifice, they had a feast upon the sacrifice. Christ by his sacrifice has ratified the covenant between God and us, and invites us in this ordinance to a participation of it. He draws us by it to faith in him, as he has made an atonement by his sacrifice.

These are some of the ways whereby Christ draws the souls of believers unto communion with him in this ordinance, that represents him as lifted up, by expressing his love, by representing his sufferings, and tendering the sealing of the covenant as confirmed with a sacrifice, inviting us to feed on the remainder of the sacrifice that is left to us for the nourishment of our souls. O that he would cast some of these cords of love upon our souls! for if he should be lifted up, and we should not

come, if we should find no cords of love cast upon us to draw us unto actual communion, we should have no advantage by this ordinance.

How shall we come in actual communion unto Christ in this ordinance upon his drawing? What is required of us? Why, [1.] We are to come by faith to "receive the atonement," Rom. v. 11. We come to a due communion with Christ in this ordinance, if we come to receive the atonement made by his death, as full of divine wisdom, grace and love, and as the truth and faithfulness of God is confirmed in it, to receive and lay hold on this atonement, that we may have peace with God, Isa. xxvii. 5. "Let him take hold of my strength, and he shall be at peace with me." Brethren, here is the arm of God, Christ the power of God, Christ lifted up: We ourselves have sinned and provoked God; what shall we do? shall we set briars and thorns in battle-array against God? No, says he, I will pass through and devour such persons: what then? "Let him take hold of my strength, of my arm, and be at peace." God speaks this to every soul of us in this lifting up of Christ. Now receive the atonement as full of infinite wisdom, holiness and truth.

[2.] Faith comes and brings the soul to Christ as he is thus lifted up, but it is always accompanied with love, whereby the soul adheres to Christ when it is come.

Doth faith bring us to Christ on his drawing, to receive the atonement? set love at work to cleave unto him, to take him into our hearts and souls, and to abide with him.

[3.] It is to come with mourning and godly sorrow, because of our own sins. "Look unto him whom we have pierced, and mourn." These things are very consistent. Do not think we speak things at random: they are consistent in experience, that we should receive Christ as making an atonement, and have peace with God in the pardon of our sins, and nevertheless to mourn for our own iniquities. The Lord give experience of them in your hearts.

Let us now pray that some of these cords wherewith he draws the souls of believers, may be on our souls in this ordinance.

DISCOURSE XVII.

WHEN we have opportunity of speaking to you on these occasions, it is for the direction of the exercise of your faith in this ordinance in a due manner. Here is a representation of the death of Christ; and there is in the word a representation of that which we should principally consider, and act faith with respect unto in the representation that is made in this ordinance, and that is of a blessed change and commutation that is made between Christ and believers, in the imputation of their sins unto him, and in the imputation of his righteousness unto them: and the principal part of the life and exercise of faith, consists in a due consideration and improvement thereof. God taught this to the church of the Old Testament, in the type of the offering of the scape-goat.

LEV. XVI. 21.

And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, &c.

AARON WAS not only to confess all the sins and iniquities of the people over the head of the goat, but he was to put all their sins upon him. Here is a double act, the confession of sin, which is, as it were, the gathering of all their sins together; and the putting of them on the goat, to give a lively representation of it unto faith. So God did instruct Aaron to the putting of the guilt of our iniquities typically upon the sacrifice, really upon Jesus Christ.

He doth not say, he shall bear the punishment, but he shall take the sin itself, that is, as to the guilt of it, and carry it quite away: and therefore in the sacrifice ap-

pointed in Deut. xvi. for expiation of an uncertain murder, when a man was killed, and none knew who killed him, so none was liable to punishment, but there was guilt upon the land; then the elders of the city that was nearest the place where the murder was committed, to take away the guilt, were to cut off the neck of an heifer by God's appointment, and that took away the guilt. Thus did God instruct the church under the Old Testament in this great sovereign act of his wisdom and righteousness, in transferring the guilt of sin from the church unto Christ. Therefore the prophet says, Isa. liii. 5. 6. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." What then? "By his stripes we are healed." The stripes were all due to us; but they were due to us for our iniquities and for no other cause. Now our iniquities being transferred to Christ, all the stripes came to be his, and the healing came to be ours. To the same purpose the apostle says, "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." As we are made the righteousness of God in him, so he is made sin for us. We are made the righteousness of God in him, by the imputation of his righteousness unto us; for our apostle is to be believed, that righteousness is by imputation; God imputes righteousness, says he. We have no righteousness before God but by imputation; and when we are made righteous, the righteousness of God, which God ordains, approves and accepts, it is the righteousness of Christ imputed to us. And how is he made sin for us? because our sin is imputed to him. Some will say, he was made sin for us, that is, a sacrifice for sin; be it so; but nothing could be made an expiatory sacrifice, but it had first the sin imputed to it. Aaron shall put his hands on the goat, confessing all their sins over his head; be their sins on the head of the goat, or the expiatory sacrifice was nothing.

The same exchange you have again in Gal. iii. 13, 14. "He was made a curse for us." The curse was due to us, and this Christ was made for us: and to confirm our faith, God did institute a visible pledge long beforehand, to let us know he was made a curse for us; he had made it a sign of the curse for one to be hanged on a tree, as it is written, "Curfed is every one that hangeth on a tree." What then comes to us? Why, the blessing of

faithful Abraham. What is that ? “ Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” Justification and acceptance with God is the blessing of faithful Abraham. Here is the great exchange represented to us in the Scripture in these things, that all our sins are transferred upon Christ by imputation, and the righteousness of Christ transferred to us by imputation. Both these are acts of God, and not our acts. It is God who imputes our sin to Christ ; He hath made him to be sin for us ; and it is God who imputes the righteousness of Christ to us ; it is God that justifies : he who made Christ to be sin, he also makes us to be righteousness. These acts of God we ought to go over within our minds by faith, which is that I now call you to.

The way to apply the benefits and advantage of this great commutation to our souls, is in our minds by faith to seal to these acts of God. Christ in the gospel, and especially in this ordinance, “ is evidently crucified before our eyes,” Gal. iii. 1. “ God hath set him forth to be a propitiation :” so he is declared in this ordinance, and Christ at the same time calls us to him, “ Come unto me : Look unto me all the ends of the earth. Come with your burdens ; come you that are heavy laden with the guilt of sin. What God has done in a way of righteous imputation, that we are to do in this ordinance in a way of believing. We are, by the divine help, to lay our sins by faith on Jesus Christ, by closing with that act of God which is represented to us in the word, that God has imputed all our sins to Jesus Christ. Let you and I, and all of us, say *Amen* by faith, So be it, O Lord. Let the guilt of all our sins be on the head of Jesus Christ ; and therein admire the goodness, the grace, the love, the holiness, the infinite wisdom of God in this matter. If we were able to say *Amen* to this great truth, we should have the comfort of it in our own souls, to acquiesce in it, to find power and reality in it.

Then the other act of God is the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to us. It is not enough to us, that our sins are all carried away into a land not inhabited : we stand in need of a righteousness whereby we may be accepted before God. He makes us to be the righteousness of God ; we do not make ourselves so,

but are made so by imputation of the righteousness of Christ.

Our second act of faith that God may stir us up unto in this ordinance, is to receive the atonement. So the apostle expresses it. Rom. v. 11. We receive together with it all the fruits of the atonement.

Now if the Lord will be pleased to stir up our hearts from under their deadness, to gather them in from their wanderings, to make us sensible of our concern, to give us the acting of faith in this matter, that truly and really the holy God has laid all our iniquities upon Christ, and tenders to us life, righteousness, justification, and mercy, by him, we shall then have the fruit of this administration.

DISCOURSE XVIII.

April 16. 1676.

I SHALL offer a few words with a view to prepare our minds to the exercise of faith and communion with God in this ordinance: and because we ought to be in the highest exercise of faith in this ordinance, I shall take occasion from those words, which express as high an acting of faith, I think, as any in the scripture. I mean those words of the apostle, in

GAL. ii. 20.

I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

OUR inquiry now is, How we may act faith? It acts two ways.

1. By way of *adherence*, cleaving to, trusting and acquiescing in God in Christ, as declaring his love, grace, and good will in his promises. This is the faith where-

by we live, whereby we are justified ; the faith without which this ordinance will not profit, but disadvantage us ; for without this faith we cannot discern the Lord's body, we cannot discern him as crucified for us : this is that we are in an especial manner to examine ourselves about, in reference to a participation of this ordinance, for self-examination is a gospel institution proper for this ordinance. And this is the faith whereby we are in Christ, without which a participation of the outward signs and pledges of Christ will not avail us. So then with faith thus acting we are to be qualified and prepared unto a participation of this ordinance.

2. Another way by which faith ought to act in this ordinance, is that of special application. Who loved me, and gave himself for me ; this is faith acting by particular application. I hope the Lord has given us that faith whereby we may be prepared for this ordinance : and now I am to enquire and direct you a little in that faith which you may act in this ordinance ; I say, it is this faith of special application to our own souls, that God now requires we should act ; and I prove it thus, it is because in this ordinance there is a proposition, tender, and communication of Christ to every one in particular. In the promise of the gospel, Christ is proposed indefinitely to all that believe ; and so the faith I mentioned before, of acquiescence in him, answers what is required of us by virtue of the promise in the gospel : but in this ordinance, by God's institution, Christ is tendered and given to me and to thee, to every one in particular ; for it is by his institution that the elements in this ordinance are distributed to every particular person, to shew, that there is a tender and communication of Christ to particular persons. Now, such a particular communication is to be received by this particular faith, the faith of application, to receive him to our own souls.

And then, moreover, one great end of the ordinance is manifestly, that it requires the acting of faith in a particular way of application to every one of us ; it is for a farther incorporation of Christ in our souls ; it is for receiving Christ as nourishment, as the bread that came down from heaven, as giving his body and blood for spiritual food. Now every one knows, that whatever feasts be prepared in the world, unless every one in particular

takes his own portion, and eats and digests it, it will not turn to nourishment unto him. This particular act of application answers that eating, drinking, and digesting, which the nature of the ordinances docs require. So, brethren, this is that I aim at, that it is our duty in this ordinance to act a particular faith as to the application of Christ and all his benefits, each one to his own soul.

You will say then, what is the special object of this special faith? Truly that which the apostle tells us here. It is special love, in the first place; and it is the special design of the death of Christ, in the next place. "Who loved me and gave himself for me." The object you ought to fix upon in the exercise of this faith of application to your own souls, is the special love of Christ; that Christ had a special love, not only to the church in general; but the truth is, Christ had a special love for me in particular. It will be a very hard thing for you or me to rise up to an act of faith, that Christ hath a love for us in particular, unless they can answer this question, Why should Christ love you or me in particular? What answer can I give hereto, when I know he does not love all the world? I can give but this answer to it, Even because he would. I know nothing in me, or in any of you, that can deserve his love. Was there ever such a thing heard of, that Christ should have a particular love for such as we are? Would ever any person go and fix his love on a creature who was all over leprous? Is this the manner of man? Truly Christ would never have fixed his love upon any of our poor, defiled, leprous souls, but upon this one consideration, "I know I can cleanse them, and I will." He loved us.

But what will he do with such deformed, polluted creatures as we are? Why, "He loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might wash and purify it; and present it to him a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." Though we are altogether deformed and defiled, though no example, no instance can be given in things below, or among the creatures, of any fixing love on such as we are; yet Christ has done it out of sovereign grace, with this resolution, that he would cleanse us with his own blood, to make us fit for himself.

O that God would help you and me to some firm

unflinaken acts of faith, that Jesus Christ did out of sovereign grace love us in particular, and that in pursuit of this love he has washed us in his blood, to make us lovely and meet for himself! This is love to be adored and celebrated in time and to eternity.

This special love of Christ is not only to be considered by us in this special acting of faith, as free and undeserved, but it is to be considered as invincible, that would break through all oppositions, or whatever stood in the way, that nothing should hinder or turn him aside in his design of doing good to our souls. It is a glorious pitch that the spouse rises to in Cant. viii. 7. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned;" speaking of her own love to Christ; nothing could quench, nothing could drown it, nothing could make a purchase of it from her, but her love was invincible and would carry her through all difficulties. O how much more was the love of Christ! for our love, being once fixed on Christ, meets with no difficulties of that nature, that the love of Christ met withal when it was fixed on us. What did the love of Christ meet with when it was fixed on us? that we must take along with us, *viz.* the "curse of the law" was the first thing that presented itself to him: "The soul that sinneth shall die. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." That he was to "make his soul an offering for sin," was presented to him. We are to look on this love of Christ as sovereign and free, and with a design of making our souls lovely; so invincible also, that it broke up the eternal obstacles, that nothing could stand before it, until it had accomplished his whole work and design: "Who loved me, and gave himself for me."

I speak on this manner, and of these things, to encourage and direct the weakest and most unskillful in the mysteries of the gospel, to instruct them in the exercise of faith in this ordinance; and therefore, I say, that as this special faith (which I proved to you to be our duty in this ordinance), is to respect the love of Christ, so it is to respect more especially the peculiar acting of the

love of Christ, whereby he "gave himself for us." Gave himself! how is that? Truly thus, brethren; the Lord help me to believe it, that I stood before the judgment seat of God, charged with my original apostacy from him, and with all the sins of my life multiplied above the hairs of my head, and being ready to perish, to have the sentence pronounced against me; then Christ came and stood in my place, putting the sinner aside, and undertaking to answer this matter; "Let the poor sinner stand aside a while; come enter into rest, abide here in the cleft of the rock; I will undertake thy cause, and plead it out at God's judgment-seat." In this undertaking, God "spared him not:" as if God should say, If you will stand in the place of the sinner, and undertake his cause, then it must go with you as with him; I will not spare. "Lo, I come, (says Christ, notwithstanding this), to do thy will, O God:" whatever thou dost require to make good this cause I have espoused, lo, I come to do it.

So Christ loved me, and gave himself for me. Everlasting rest and peace will dwell upon our souls, if the Lord will be pleased to help us to exercise faith on Christ's love in this ordinance, wherein all these things are represented to us.

DISCOURSE XIX.

June 11. 1676.

GAL. ii. 20.

I am crucified with Christ: Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

THE apostle in this place is expressing the vigour, and indeed the triumph of the life of faith, "Ne-

vertheless I live." To shew the excellency of that life, says he, "Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," &c. That which I would to our purpose observe from these words is this, That the exercise of faith on the death of Christ ("who loved me, and gave himself for me,") is the very life of faith. This is what we are now called to, to the exercise of faith on the death of Christ; and I cannot more recommend it to you than by this observation, to shew that the life of faith does greatly consist in this peculiar exercise of it upon the death of Christ. And that,

1. Because Christ in his death, as the ordinance of God for the salvation of believing sinners, is the proper and peculiar object of faith, as it justifies and saves. Now when faith is in its exercise upon its direct immediate proper object, it is like a person that is feeding on his proper food, which gives refreshment, spirits and strength; for faith and its object are in Scripture set out as an appetite and food; and especially it is so represented to us in this ordinance, where the spiritual food of our souls is conveyed to our faith under the symbol and representation of food to our bodies, which we eat and drink. Therefore, brethren, our faith is in its proper place, it is about its proper work, it is directing the soul to its special food, when it is exercised about the death of Christ, as the ordinance of God for the salvation of sinners.

2. As the death of Christ is thus the immediate and direct object of our faith, for God has "set him forth as a propitiation for sin, through faith in his blood," which is the proper object of faith as it justifies; so the ultimate and supreme object of our faith is, the properties of God as manifested and glorified in the death of Christ; that you shall see how faith has its plain and full work in coming to this, "who loved me and gave himself for me." The properties of God are God himself; the properties of God as manifested and glorified, are God's name; and God himself and his name are the supreme and ultimate object of our faith and trust. All the inquiry then is, What special properties of the nature of God, God did design to manifest and glorify in the death of Christ, so as we should make them the spe-

cial ultimate object of our faith, that which faith will find rest and satisfaction in, and wherein it will give glory to God? For the reason why God has made faith the alone instrument, and no other grace, of justification, and so of salvation, is not because it is so fitted and suited to receive in us, as that it is the only grace whereby we give glory to God, and can do so.

Now let us see, that we may know how to exercise faith therein, what are those properties of the divine nature which God designs to manifest and glorify in the death of Christ, that our faith may stand in, and be fixed upon them. I find several things that God distinctly proposes of his divine excellency, for our faith to fix upon in the death of Christ.

(1.) His righteousness. Rom. iii. 25. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness." I shall not shew how, or wherein; but to me, this it is that manifests his righteousness in granting forgiveness of sin in the death of Christ, in that he caused all our iniquities to meet upon him. Remember, brethren, we are here to give God the glory he designed to himself in sending Christ to die for us; and he tells us plainly what it was, and therefore it is expected of us, that we should give glory to him. Let us labour to be in the actual exercise of faith, whereby we may declare the righteousness of God in this thing.

(2.) God designed to glorify his love. This is more particularly insisted on than any property of God in this matter. "God so loved the world, as to send his only begotten Son. God commended his love unto us, in that, when we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." There is no property of the nature of God which he doth so eminently design to glorify in the death of Christ, as his love. That we may know that "God is love; that the Father himself loves us;" he has sent Jesus Christ out of his eternal love to save sinners; and if we have not due apprehensions of these things, it is not our appearing in this place that will give glory to God.

(3.) God does design to glorify his grace or pardoning mercy, Eph. i. 6. "He hath made us accepted in the beloved, to the praise of the glory of his grace." This God purposed, to make his grace in pardoning sinners very glorious by giving Christ to die for us.

(4.) God designed to glorify his wisdom. Eph. i. 8. "He has abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence." Eph. iii. 10, there appeared the manifold wisdom of God. 1 Cor. i. 24. "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

Now let us gather up these things. The special ultimate act of faith whereby we are justified, are those divine properties of God's nature which he designed to manifest in the death of Christ, his righteousness, his love, his grace, his wisdom.

The reason therefore why the life of faith does consist in its exercise on the death of Christ, is, because the death of Christ is the immediate proper object of faith, as the ordinance of God for the salvation of sinners; and because the glorious properties of the nature of God, which are manifested in the death of Christ, are the ultimate object of our faith, wherein we give glory to him, and find rest to our own souls.

Let us then be called on and be stirred up to this exercise of faith upon this present occasion. And to that end,

1. We might consider the deplorable condition of all our souls without this blessed provision, and ordinance of God for our deliverance by the death of Christ. We had been in a deplorable condition, the wrath of God abiding on us, had not God made this a blessed way for our deliverance.

2. If you would be found acting faith in this matter, labour to come up to a firm, vigorous assent of your minds, not only that these things are true, but that this is the way wherein God will be glorified to eternity. The truth of it is, that person who is firmly satisfied, and heartily pleased, that this way of the death of Christ for the salvation of sinners by the forgiveness of sin, is the way whereby God is, and will be glorified, I say, that person is a true believer. Now let not your assent be

only to this thing, that it is true, that Christ came into the world to save sinners; but to this, that this is the way whereby God is and will be glorified. He will be glorified in pardoning such guilty creatures as we are, in imputing righteousness to such sinners as we are. He is glorified in laying all our iniquities on Christ. By this way, his righteousness, his love, his grace, and wisdom are all manifested; this is God's being glorified. If our souls come up to a free close with these things, that all these properties are manifested in this way, that is an act of faith, and may the Lord help us unto it.

3. Let us gather up our minds to this institution, whereby these things are represented to us. Here is represented the death of Christ, the immediate object of our faith, as God's ordinance. If the Lord help us to see it so represented to us, as that divine righteousness and wisdom, love and grace, do all centre therein and appear eminently to our souls, we shall have communion with God in this ordinance.



DISCOURSE XX.

September 3. 1676.

YOU have been minded of, and instructed in the nature and benefit of our love to God; and I shall take occasion thence a little to mind you of the love of Christ unto us, the love in an especial manner which he shewed in dying for us, which is that we are here gathered together to remember and celebrate, not barely the death of Christ, but that which is the life of that death, the love of Christ in his death. And I would ground it on that which the apostle speaks in

ROM. v. 5, 6.

The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

THIS is that which I know you all long for, and prize above life; “the loving kindness of God is better than life.” Why so? “For, (says he), when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”

An apprehension of the love of Christ as dying for us ungodly creatures, is that which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. Do not let your minds go upon uncertainties: when the Holy Ghost gives you a due apprehension of Christ’s love in dying for ungodly sinners, as we are, then is this love shed abroad in our hearts. The apostle there proceeds to shew how great this love was, in that Christ died: he died, not for good men, and righteous men, and for friends, but he died for the ungodly, for sinners, and for enemies. This was great love indeed. We are here to remember that love of Christ wherewith he gave himself to death for us, when we were enemies, and would have continued so to eternity, had he not loved us, and given himself for us.

Brethren, if we barely remember the love of Christ in the way of an ordinance, and our hearts be not powerfully affected with it, we are in danger of being disadvantaged by our attendance. Pray remember it; you know how plainly I use to speak on these occasions; I say, we have frequent opportunities of remembering the love of Christ in dying for us, in this ordinance representing of it; but if our hearts be not powerfully influenced and affected by it, we shall be losers by the frequency of ordinances.

I will add one word more; according as our hearts are affected with the love of Christ, so will be our love to Christ, and no otherwise. And truly, even that faith which discovers too much selfishness is very dangerous. If we come here to act faith, to look for no other effect

of it, but what evidence and sense we have of the pardon of our sins, how our consciences may be quieted and cleared, faith ends in *self*; it is dangerous lest it should be only a branch from, and commensurate with convictions. True faith acting itself on Christ in this ordinance, will work by love unto Christ: I would not say, principally, or in the first place; I know poor creatures are apt to look after themselves, and their own relief; but it will so work also: and truly, brethren, this it will not do, we shall not have faith working by love towards him, unless we have some sense of the love of Christ on our hearts.

How shall we know, whether our hearts are under the powerful influence of the love of Christ in dying for us? Why, the love of Christ in dying for us has three properties with it, which will have an influence on our souls, if we are affected with it.

1. It has a transforming power, property, and efficacy with it. They are plain truths I am speaking, but of great concern to our souls, to know whether we are affected with the love of Christ or not. If we are rightly affected with it, I say, it will transform and change our whole souls in some measure into the likeness of Christ. How so? I will tell you in the most familiar manner I am able: If you are affected with the love of Christ, it lays hold upon, and possesses your affections; the affections being possessed, stir up many thoughts; thoughts are the very image of the soul, represent it, to shew you what the soul is: and those things concerning which your thoughts do most abound, that carries the frame of the soul. Let a man profess what he will, if his thoughts are generally conversant about worldly things, he has an earthly and worldly mind; and if his thoughts are conversant about sensual things, he has a sensual and carnal mind; for whatever he may outwardly say, as he thinks so is he; there is the image and likeness of the soul.

Now, if we are affected with the love of Christ, it will teget in our souls many thoughts of Christ, in our lying down and in our rising up, in our beds, in our ways, on our occasions, as well as in ordinances. If indeed our hearts are affected with the love of Christ, our

thoughts of Christ will abound, and those thoughts will work again on our affections, and conform our souls more and more unto the image of Jesus Christ. That man who thinks much of the earth, because affected with it, his soul is like the earth; and that man who thinks much on the love of Christ, because he is affected with it, his soul is like Christ.

If it has not been thus with us, brethren, in our preparation, for this ordinance, or at any time, that thoughts of Christ have not abounded, verily there has been a failing in us. Let us strive for the future to amend it, that we may find the love of Christ begetting in us many thoughts of him, working upon our affections, and with a transforming power changing the frame of our souls into his own likeness.

Again, 2. The love of Christ, if we are affected with it, has an attractive power." John xii. 23. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." I cannot stay to shew you the drawing power and efficacy there is in the love of Christ when dying on the cross; but this I will say, it is that which converted the world of all that did believe. It was the love of Christ, set forth in his death as one crucified for them, that drew all men unto him. "When I am lifted up, when I have accomplished, manifested and evidenced the unspeakable love which I have for the sinful sons of men, in being lifted up for them, I will draw them unto me." If you have a true sense, brethren, of the love of Christ in dying for you, it will draw your souls unto him. Cant. i. 4. "Draw me, we will run after thee." I do not now speak to you about the first drawing of Christ, which is as unto believing; I hope Christ has so drawn all our souls; but the following efficacy of the love of Christ, to draw souls that do believe nearer unto him. Whoever is sensible of this attractive power of the death of Christ, it will have this efficacy upon him, it will have adherence and delight; it will cause him more to cleave to Christ. The soul will cleave to Christ with delight, that is affected with the attractive drawing power of his loving kindness in his death. There is a great deal in that word, "Cleave unto Christ with love and delight," with the best of our affections and cleave to our valua-

tions, to cleave to him with trust, and to him alone. I do but remind you of what you know, that you may reduce it into practice. Pray, in this ordinance, labour to have such a sense of the drawing power of the love of Christ in his death, that you may resolve to cleave unto him with full purpose of heart, to cleave unto this Christ who has thus loved us.

5. Whenever we are affected with the love of Christ, it is accompanied with a constraining power, 2 Cor. v. 14. "The love of Christ constraineth us," and that constraint is unto obedience; it constrains us to judge, that we ought to live to him who died for us. It is a blessed thing, brethren, to walk in our obedience under a sense of the constraining efficacy of the love of Christ. Take but this one word to discover to you, whether you walk in your obedience under a sense of the constraining power of Christ, it comprehends all others, 1 John v. 3. "His commandments are not grievous." When a soul works out of love, what it doth is not grievous. And the inward and outward commands of Christ will be grievous to all that are not under the constraining power and efficacy of his love.

I have no more to say, but only to tell you, that we should labour to have our hearts affected with the love of Christ in this ordinance. I have shewed you the danger, if it be otherwise; and given you some ways to examine your hearts, whether they are so affected or not. The Lord grant, that where they are, it may be increased; and where they are not, that God would renew it by his Spirit in us.



DISCOURSE XXI.

October 29. 1676.

WE have had, through the providence of God, so good and seasonable a word unto the present occasion, that there is no need, as well as but little time to offer any thing farther unto you. Yet a few words,

in compliance with what we have heard, may not be altogether unseasonable or unuseful.

Our business and duty is to set forth the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therein principally to call to mind his love. What you have heard may very well occasion us to think of that passage of the apostle, wherein he earnestly prays for them.

EPH. iii. 29.

And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.

THIS is a peculiar kind of expression; the meaning is, that we may know that, experimentally, which we cannot know comprehensively; that we know that in its power and effects, which we cannot comprehend in its nature and depths. A weary person may receive refreshment from a spring, who cannot fathom the depths of the ocean from whence it doth proceed. And if we would have our hearts in this ordinance, and at other times, affected with the love of Christ, which is the thing we are to aim at, (to know his love, and to experience the power of it), it is of great advantage to us to consider, that it is such a love as passeth knowledge, that our faith concerning it must issue in admiration, not comprehension.

I shall name two or three things, that may give a little sense of this love as it passeth knowledge.

1. The love of Christ is the fountain and spring of all the glory that is in heaven, or shall be there unto all eternity. God's eternal glory is eternally the same; "from everlasting to everlasting thou art God;" but all the created glory that is in heaven, or ever shall be there, springs out of the love of Christ. It is true, the angels were not redeemed by him, but they were confirmed by him. They were not recovered out of a lost estate by him, but they were continued in their first estate by him. Hence it is, that God "gathered all things in heaven and earth unto an head in him," Eph. i. 10. And there is a great deal to the same purpose in that expression of the apostle, when he had

mentioned "principalities and powers," Col. i. 7. "In him all things consist," they have their consistence in him. All would dissolve and fall to nothing, if they had not their consistence in Jesus Christ. Certainly this is a love that passes knowledge, that is the fountain and spring of all the glory that is in heaven. If God help us by faith to look within the veil, and to take a view of all those glories wherewith the Holy God is encompassed, we shall see that this love is the fountain and spring of them; the interposition of Christ saved the creation, and brought in that everlasting glory that shall dwell in heaven. God knows this love, God understands the way of it; but as to us it passes knowledge.

Again. 2. This love of Christ passes the comprehension and knowledge of angels; and therefore Peter tells us, 1 Pet i. 12. speaking of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that followed, "Which things, (says he), the angels desire to *bow down*, and look into." The angels in heaven live in an admiration of the love of Christ unto sinners, that is, that love he expressed in suffering, and in the glory that did ensue. And O! what thoughts ought we to have of this love, who have all the benefits of it? The angels had no benefit by the sufferings of Christ, but their benefit and advantage ensued on the assumption of the human nature to bring the creation into a consistence, and his interposition between God, and all his creatures. They admire and adore it. What ought such poor creatures as we are to do? It may well be said to pass our knowledge, for it passes the knowledge of all the angels in heaven.

3. It passes knowledge, in that the effects of it in Christ himself pass all our knowledge and comprehension. To give but two instances.

(1.) His condescension to assume our human nature passes all our comprehension. No man can fully understand the mystery of the assumption of our nature into the personal subsistence of the Son of God. Some dispute, whether we shall understand the mystery of the incarnation in heaven; here we believe it. It is love which passes knowledge, that the eternal Son of God should take our nature into personal union with himself; it is that we may admire and ought to admire; and God

help us, we are such poor earthly creatures, that we cannot admire it as we ought; though it be much in our nature to admire what we cannot comprehend.

(2.) We cannot fully understand his passion and sufferings. God alone knows what is in the curse of the law; we do not know it. God alone knows what is the true desert of sin; it cannot be fully understood by any but himself. They who undergo it, must suffer to eternity; there is no end; they never see, never know what sin deserved. How do we know then what Christ suffered, when the punishment due to our sin, when all our iniquities met upon him, with the curse of the law? God only knows what is in these things; the fruits and effects of this love in himself, in his incarnation and passion, are past our knowledge, therefore the love itself surpasses our knowledge.

4. Give me leave to say, the very fruits of it in ourselves do pass knowledge. No man that lives knows what there is in these three general heads of the fruits of Christ's love, in justification and pardon of sin, in the renovation and sanctification of our natures, and in the inhabitation and consolations of the Holy Spirit. No man living can find out these things to perfection. None of us fully understands and comprehends what it is to be justified in the sight of God, to have sin pardoned, to have our natures renewed, and transformed into the likeness of God, and to have the Holy Ghost dwell in us. The love of Christ therefore passes all knowledge, for the very fruits of it in ourselves are beyond what we can comprehend; there is a greatness in them we cannot reach unto. Why then, my brethren, let us labour to have our hearts affected with this love. If God would be pleased to give unto every one of us some sense and impression of the greatness of this love of Christ, glance it into our hearts, beam it upon us in this ordinance, we should have cause to bless him all the days of our lives. The faith and light of it issue in admiration; the light of glory will bring us to comprehension: Let us have such a sense as may cause us to admire what we cannot now comprehend.

(1.) I could speak something, but I will not now, to the actings of faith in admiration; it being the proper

nature of faith to issue itself in the admiration of that which is infinite. If we can get our souls up to an holy admiration of this love, we have some gracious sense of it upon our hearts, if we can go no farther.

(2.) Let us learn to run up all the mercies we are partakers of, whatsoever it be we value, to the proper spring, "Who loved me, and gave himself for me." If we have any relief, or supply, or refreshment of soul, in a sense of pardon of sin, in spiritual light or consolation, pray let us exercise ourselves to run up all these things to the fountain: it is all from the love of Christ, that unspeakable love which passes knowledge.

(3.) In this let us be ashamed, seeing the love of Christ to us is such as passes our knowledge, our love to him is so weak, that sometimes we know not whether we have any or not. For this let us be greatly humbled. This is not the way to answer that love which passes knowledge, to know not whether we love Christ again or not. Let us be ashamed for our want of love.

And *lastly*, Let us abound in praise and thanksgiving for his love, and all the fruits of it.

For my part I do not know, whether that vision in Rev. v. 9. does express the rejoicing of the church above, or the duty of the church below; but both, I am sure, are of so near affinity, that apply it to which you will, you do not miss it. And what do they there? why, it is said, "They sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals of it: for thou wast slain, and has redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests," &c. And it is said again, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing;" and again he repeats it in ver. 13. I say, I know not whether this be a representation of the rejoicing of the church above, or a representation of the duty of the church below; but I can conclude from it, that the enjoyment of the one and the duty of the other, consists greatly in continual giving praise and thanksgiving to Christ, for his unspeakable love in our redemption.

 DISCOURSE XXII.

February 18. 1676.

WE are met here to remember the death of Christ in the way and by the means that he himself hath appointed ; and in remembering the death of Christ, we are principally to remember the love of Christ, “ who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood ;” and that which on our part is required herein, is faith in Christ who died for us, and love to Christ, who loved us so, as to give himself an offering and a sacrifice to God for us.

1. That which I would now observe is this, (to make way for the stirring up of our love) that the person of Christ is the adequate complete object of the love of God, and of the whole creation that bears the image of God, I mean, the church of God above, the angels and saints ; and the church of God below in believers, which are the creation that has the image of God upon it.

The person of Christ is the first complete object of the love of God the Father. A great part (if I may so speak, and I must so speak) of the essential blessedness of the holy Trinity, consists in the mutual love of the Father and the Son, by the Holy Ghost, which is the love of them both.

That which I would now take notice of, I say, as the foundation of all, is this, that the divine nature in the person of the Son, is the only full, resting complete object of the love of God the Father. I will give you 2 place or two of scripture for it, and so go on to another instance. Prov. viii. 30. “ Then (saith he, that is, from everlasting,) I was by him, as one brought up with him ; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him,” that is, as the special object of his love ; as among you men one that is brought up with you, as your child is. The delight of the Father from all eternity was in the Son. The ineffable love and mutual delight of the Father and

the Son by the Spirit, is that which is the least notion we have of the blessedness of the eternal God. John i. 18. "The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father." Pray observe it, that I yet speak only of the divine person of Christ antecedent unto his incarnation, and the ineffable mutual love of the blessed persons in the holy Trinity, which Jesus Christ wonderfully sets out in John xvii. There is his relation unto God, he is the only begotten Son, by eternal generation; what follows? he is in the bosom of the Father, is in the Father's eternal infinite love. Herein is God's love; and every thing else of love is but a free act of the will of God, a free emanation from this eternal love between the Father and the Son. God never did any thing without himself, but the end of it was to manifest what is in himself. The old and new creation that God hath wrought, was to manifest what was in himself. God made this world to manifest his power and wisdom; God made the new world by Jesus Christ, to manifest his grace, his love, goodness, &c.

The sole reason why there is such a thing as love in the world, among the creatures, angels or men, that God ever implanted it in the nature of rational creatures, was, that it might shadow and represent the ineffable eternal love that the Father had unto the Son, and the Son unto the Father by the Spirit.

Contemplative men of old did always admire love, wherein they would have the life, lustre, and glory of all things to consist; but they could never see the rise of it: and they traced some things to this, that God necessarily loved himself; and it is true, it cannot otherwise be; but God's loving of himself, absolutely as God, is nothing but his eternal blessed acquiescence in the holy, self-sufficing properties of his nature. This they had some reach after; but of this eternal ineffable love of the Father to the Son, and of the Son to the Father by the Spirit, that they had no conjecture of. But this is the fountain and spring-head; and all such things as love in the old and new creation, as I said, is but to resemble and shadow out this great prototype of divine love. I acknowledge there is little discerned of these things, by reason of the weakness of our under-

standings; but the scripture having so directly declared to us the mutual love of the Father and the Son, (which truly is of such singular use, that I would fix persons upon it in conceiving of the doctrine of the Trinity), that it is matter of admiration and thankfulness to us. Here lies the foundation of all love, whereunto we hope to reduce our love unto Christ, viz. in the unchangeable love of the Father to the Son.

2. The person of Christ as vested with our nature, and undertaking the work of mediation, is the first object of the Father's love, wherein there is any mixture of any thing without himself.

The first love of God the Father to the Son is that we call *ad intra*, where the divine persons are objects of one another's actings; the Father knows the Son, and the Son knows the Father; the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father; and so consequently of the Holy Ghost, the medium of all these actings.

But now, I say, the first act of the love of God the Father, wherein there is any thing *ad extra*, or without the divine essence, is the person of Christ, considered as invested with our nature. And had not the love of God been fixed in the first place in all things upon the person of Christ, there would have been no redundancy, to us, nor communication of love unto us. From the first eternal love of God proceeds all love that was in the first creation; and from this second love of God to the person of Christ, as incarnate, proceeds all the love in the second creation. See how God expresses it in a prospect of what he should be, Isa. xlii. 1. "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth." And this is singular in the whole scripture, that God spake the same words twice from heaven immediately, and they were these, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" at his baptism, Mat. iii. 17. and at his entrance on his sufferings, Mat. xvii. 5. which was the voice which came from the excellent glory. I would observe this unto you, because I think it is what God would have us take notice of, the emphasis in the words, "Behold my servant, mine elect, my Son, my beloved Son! (what of him)? in whom I rest, in whom I am well pleased and delighted." All of them

emphatical words. Saith God, Let the fons of men (I speak it from heaven again and again) take notice of this that the infinite love of my whole soul is fixed on the person of Jesus Christ, as incarnate. And you will find the Lord Jesus Christ pleading this as the ground of that trust committed unto him, and all that he received, John iii. 35. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." John v. 20. "The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doth; and will shew him greater works than these." He lays the foundation of all the trust that God the Father committed unto him, in the peculiar love of the Father to him as the Son incarnate.

Truly I shall not go beyond this foundation, to manifest to you, that the person of Christ is the complete adequate object of the love of the Father. The great satisfaction of the soul of God, wherein he rests and delights, consists in love to Christ as incarnate.

I will make but this one inference from it; proportionable to the renovation of the image and likeness of God upon any of our souls, is our love to Jesus Christ. He that knows Jesus Christ most, is most like unto God, for there the soul of God rests, there is the complacency of God; and if we would be like to God, have pledges in ourselves of the renovation of this image upon us, it must be in the gracious exercise of our love to the person of Jesus Christ. And pray let me observe it to you, the world, that is full of enmity to God, doth not exercise its enmity against God immediately under the first notion of God, but exerciseth its enmity against God in Christ: and if we return to God by the renovation of his image, we do not exercise our love to God immediately as God, but our love to God by and in Christ; that ye through him might believe in God. Here is a trial, brethren, of our return to God, and of the renovation of his image in us, viz. in our love to Jesus Christ. There God and man do meet, there God and his church above and below centre. The Lord grant that this ordinance may be the means to stir up our hearts more to the exercise of this grace!

DISCOURSE XXIII.

July 8. 1677.

I SHALL speak to them who have a mind to be found performing their duty; but it may be, it doth not occur to them what is particularly required of them. They are such as are least acquainted with this mystery that I would have most respect unto, that nothing of God's provision in his house may be lost to his children, for want of understanding aright to come to his table, where he makes this provision.

I pray you, brethren, exercise your thoughts unto the institution of this ordinance, wherein you exercise your obedience; unto the proposition of Christ in this ordinance, wherein consists the peculiar acting of your faith; and unto the exhibition of Christ in this ordinance, which is the ground of your thankfulness.

What shall I do that I may please God now, please Jesus Christ, and benefit my own soul in the administration of this ordinance?

Why, 1. Consider the institution of it, wherein we have the authority of Jesus Christ put forth, and acting towards our souls. "Do this in remembrance of me." Labour therefore to bring your hearts into an actual obedience to the authority of Jesus Christ in what we are about. This the Lord Jesus doth require at our hands. We do not come here in a customary manner to satisfy our convictions, because we ought to come; we do not come here merely to make use of our privilege, but our hearts are to bow to the authority of Jesus Christ. Consider, I pray you, the institution of this ordinance, and labour to bring your souls into actual obedience to Jesus Christ. We do it because Christ has required it of us. If our hearts are in that frame, that we are next upon the command of Christ, to do what he has appointed, and we can recommend our consciences unto him, that it

is in obedience to his command that we are here, then our obedience is in exercise.

2. Consider the proposition that is made of Jesus Christ in this ordinance to us, that our faith may be in its proper exercise.

The Lord take off our hearts from the consideration of the outward signs merely. Christ in his love, Christ in his bloodshed, agony and prayer, Christ in his death is here proposed before us. "Ye shew forth the Lord's death." Who proposes it? He that hath appointed these things proposes it. And there is the engagement of the faithfulness of God and Christ in this proposition and tender that is made of Jesus Christ; and it is a peculiar way, and as I could prove, full of love, that God hath found out a way to propound Christ as dying, and crucified, to all our souls. Therefore stir up your hearts to this. To every one of you there is, by the grace and faithfulness of God, a proposal of Jesus Christ in his death, and all the benefits of it, unto your souls. The whole question is, Whether you will stir up your hearts to a new and fresh receiving of Jesus Christ, who is thus proposed and tendered unto you, evidently crucified before your eyes, offered to you by the love and faithfulness of God? But if we do not endeavour every one of us, in the participation of this ordinance, a fresh acceptance of Jesus Christ, we do what we can to make God a liar, as though he was not tendered unto us. The especial exercise of your faith in this ordinance, is upon the love, grace and faithfulness of God, proposing and tendering of Christ unto you, the death of Christ, and the benefits of Christ in this way which he has chosen; submit unto it, and embrace it.

3. As your obedience is required with respect to the institution; (we give this account before God, angels and men, that we are here in obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ), and as faith is required with respect to the proposition of Christ, whereby he is evidently proposed and tendered by God unto us; so in this ordinance, to them that believe, there is an exhibition of Christ: Christ is really exhibited and communicated to the souls of men, who exercise faith upon him in this

ordinance ; really exhibited with all the benefits of his death. And want of receiving by faith in particular Christ as exhibited and communicated in this ordinance, is the great ground of our want of profiting by it, and thriving under it ; of our want of receiving strength, joy, and life by it ; because we do not exercise ourselves to the receiving of Christ as he is exhibited, as God doth really give him out, and communicate him to them that do believe.

That there is such an exhibition of Christ, appears, (1.) By the sacramental relation there is between the outward elements and the thing signified. " This is my body, (says Christ ; this bread is so ; and) this is my blood." It is the body of Christ and the blood of Christ, that we are invited to the participation of. If there was no more in this ordinance exhibited, but only the outward elements, and not by virtue of sacramental relation upon God's institution, the body and blood of Christ, his life, and death, and merits exhibited unto us, we should come to the Lord's table like men in a dream eating and drinking, and be quite empty when we have done, for this bread and wine will not satisfy our souls.

(2.) As it is plain from the sign and the thing signified, that there is a grant, or a real communication of Jesus Christ unto the souls of them that do believe ; so it is evident from the nature of the exercise of faith in this ordinance ; it is by eating and drinking. Can you eat and drink unless something be really communicated ? You are called to eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of man ; unless really communicated, we cannot eat it nor drink it. We may have other apprehensions of these things, but our faith cannot be exercised in eating and drinking, which is a receiving of what is really exhibited and communicated. As truly, my brethren, as we do eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, which is really communicated to us, so every true believer doth receive Christ, his body and blood, in all the benefits of it, that are really exhibited by God unto the soul in this ordinance : and it is a means of communicating to faith.

We come to receive a crucified Christ, come to be made partakers of the body and blood of the Lord, to

have the Lord Jesus really united to our hearts more and more. The Lord open our hearts to embrace the tender, receive the exhibition, take in Jesus Christ as food, that he may be incorporated in our hearts by faith, that he may dwell in us plentifully, more and more; that we may go away refreshed by this heavenly food, this glorious feast of fat things which the Lord has made in his mount for his people. The whole of our comfort depends on our particular receiving of Christ by faith, and carrying him away by believing.



DISCOURSE XXIV.

September 30. 1677.

WE are met together again, by the patience and kindness of God, for the celebration of this great ordinance, and therein to shew forth the death of the Lord.

I have often spoken to you on this occasion concerning the nature of this ordinance, the expression of the love of God and Christ that is in it, and the especial acts of faith and love that are required of us in this ordinance.

I have one word now somewhat of another nature, but yet such as I judge not unseasonable; and it is to this purpose, that we, who so frequently enjoy the privilege of the representation of the death of Christ unto us, ought to be very diligent in enquiring after an experience of the power of the death of Christ in us. Without this, our privilege will not be to our advantage.

The power and efficacy of the death of Christ, which we now remember in a peculiar manner, is two-fold,

1. Towards God, as the consummation of the sacrifice of atonement. This we have often spoke to.
2. Towards our own souls, towards the church; and that is to be an example, a precept, a pattern of what is to be wrought in us. In this sense the power of the

death of Christ is its efficacy to conformity with Christ in his death. It is to be "crucified with Christ," as the apostle speaks, Gal. ii. 20. Power comes forth from the death of Christ, if received by faith in a due manner, to render us conformable to him in the death of sin in us. The apostle has a great and glorious word concerning himself, 2 Cor. iv. 10. "Always bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus." I acknowledge, the words are usually applied to the representation of the sufferings of Christ, in the sufferings of the ministers of the gospel, concerning which the apostle there discourses; but the antithesis in the following words, "that the life of Jesus might be manifest in our body," does certainly lead to a larger sense. Then, brethren, we may have an experience of the power of Christ in us, when we can say, we always carry about with us the dying of the Lord Jesus, to carry it in our meditation, to carry it in our conversation, to carry it in our constant universal endeavours for conformity to it; and without this we have not experience of the power of his death in us, and it will not avail us to have the nature of his death represented to us.

1. We are always to "carry about the dying of Jesus Christ," in our thoughts and meditations. O that our thoughts were much fixed upon it! I verily believe that the life of faith doth answer in proportion to our thoughts about the dying of Jesus. The dying of Jesus compriseth the love from whence he died, the death itself he died, and the end for which he died. Let us carry about us always thoughts hereof, for his sake who loved us, and who died for us. Meditate more on these things.

2. In our conversation. It is not a time to reflect upon any, unless I did it upon myself. But truly, brethren, I am afraid we do not carry about and manifest to all the dying of the Lord Jesus in our conversation; to perform all things, so as it may appear and be made manifest to ourselves and others, that our hearts are set upon his dying love, that we have not such quick, such active, and vigorous affections to the world, and the things of the world, nor that fury of diligence after them and in them, as other men have, and we have had; we cannot do it; the dying of the Lord Jesus crucifies:

our hearts. These are hard words I know; how far from our practice! But if we live not in an endeavour after it, in all things to manifest that our hearts are full of the dying of the Lord Jesus, we have not experience of the power of it in our souls. These things depend on one another. If we dwelt more upon this subject in our meditations, we should manifest it, and carry it about, and represent it more in our conversation.

3. Carry it about in a constant endeavour for conformity to Jesus Christ in all things in his death. Did Christ die, and shall sin live? Was he crucified in the world, and shall we have quick and lively affections to the world? O where is the temper and spirit of that apostle, who by "the cross of Christ was crucified to the world, and the world crucified to him?" If there be any among us that should be indulgent to the life of any one lust or corruption, that soul can have no experience of the power of the death of Christ in himself, cannot carry about him the dying of Christ. Endeavour to destroy sin, that we may be like unto Christ.

I will not make particular application of these things to all the concerns of our walk, but leave it with you, with this word, begging of you, and my own heart, and of God for us all, that having these blessed representations of the death of Christ to us, we may have no rest in our spirits, but when we have experience of the power of the death of Christ in us.



DISCOURSE XXV.

September 20. 1682.

IT is a common received notion among Christians, and it is true, that there is a peculiar communion with Christ in this ordinance, which we have in no other ordinance: that there is a peculiar acting of faith in this ordinance, which is in no other ordinance. This is the

faith of the whole church of Christ, and has been so in all ages. This is the greatest mystery of all the practicals of our Christian religion, a way of receiving Christ by eating and drinking, something peculiar that is not in prayer, that is not in the hearing of the word, nor in any other part of divine worship whatsoever; a peculiar participation of Christ, a peculiar acting of faith towards Christ. This participation of Christ is not carnal, but spiritual. In the beginning of the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, when he began to instruct them in the communication of himself, and the benefit of his mediation to believers, because it was a new thing, he expresses it by "eating his flesh, and drinking his blood," John vi. 53. "Unless ye eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of man, ye have no life in you." This offended and amazed them. They thought he taught them to eat his natural flesh and blood. "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" They thought he instructed them to be cannibals. Whereupon he gives that everlasting rule for the guidance of the church, which the church forsook, and thereby ruined itself; saith he, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak, they are spirit, and they are life." It is a spiritual communication, saith he, of myself unto you; but it is as intimate, and gives as real an incorporation, as if you did eat my flesh and drink my blood. The church forsaking this rule of a spiritual interpretation, ruined itself, and set up a monster, instead of this blessed mysterious ordinance.

We may enquire, therefore, how faith doth peculiarly act itself towards Christ in this ordinance, whereby we have a distinct participation of Christ, otherwise than we have by and in any other ordinance whatsoever. And I would mention four things unto you, which you may make use of.

1. That faith hath a peculiar respect to the sole authority of Christ in the institution of this ordinance.

All other ordinances draw upon the light of nature, and upon the moral law, as prayer, preaching the word, and singing of psalms to the praise of God; but this, that we should receive Jesus by eating of bread, and drinking of wine, has no respect to the light of na-

ture, or the moral law at all ; and we should as soon chuse to honour God by sacrifices, and eating the flesh of them, if it were not for the authority of Jesus Christ. Herein doth faith give honour to Christ in his kingly office. This is the most direct profession of the subjection of our souls and consciences to the authority of Christ, in all our religion. We can give no other reason, we can take no allusion from things, but merely this, Christ would have it so.

2. Faith hath a peculiar respect to the love of Christ in dying for us, making the atonement for us by his blood, and therein the glorifying of the wisdom, love, and grace of God the Father. Faith is led into special communion with Christ as dying for us to make the atonement ; and therein we give glory to Christ in his priestly office in a peculiar manner in this ordinance, it respecting the sacrifice of Christ, whereby he made atonement for us.

3. Faith hath respect to this special manner of the exhibition of Christ to the souls of believers, under the outward signs and symbols of bread and wine by his institution, making such a sacramental union between the thing signified and the sign, that the signs remaining to be what they are in themselves, they are unto us the thing that is signified, by virtue of the sacramental union that Christ hath appointed between his body and blood, and the benefits of it ; and this bread and wine, though not changed at all in themselves, yet they become to us by faith, not what they are in themselves, but what is signified by them, " the body and blood of Christ." Herein we give glory to Christ in his prophetic office. It is he who has revealed, taught, and instructed his church in this truth, which depends on the sacramental union which follows by his institution. That is the third thing wherein faith peculiarly acts itself in this ordinance

4. The fourth thing is, the mysteriouness, which I leave to your experience, for it is beyond expression, the mysterious reception of Christ in this peculiar way of exhibition. There is a reception of Christ as tendered in the promise of the gospel ; but here is a peculiar way of his exhibition under outward signs, and a mysterious

reception of him in them really, so as to come to a real substantial incorporation in our souls. This is that which believers ought to labour after an experience of in themselves; to find that indeed under these four considerations, they submit to the authority of Jesus Christ in a peculiar manner, giving him the glory of his kingly office; mixing faith with him as dying and making atonement by his blood, so giving him the glory and honour of his priestly office; much considering the sacramental union that is, by his institution, between the outward signs and the thing signified, thus glorifying him in his prophetic office; and raising up their souls to a mysterious reception and incorporation of him, receiving him to dwell in them, warming, cherishing, comforting and strengthening their hearts.

I have mentioned these things as those which lie in your practice, and to obviate that (if I may mention it) which you may be tried with. There is but one plausible pretence that our adversaries, who design to oppress us, have in this business: If, say they, there be not a real presence and a real substantial transmutation of the elements into the substance of the body and blood of Christ, shew you a way whereby you may have a peculiar communion with Christ, any more than in the word preached. We say, we have in these things experience of a peculiar communion with Christ, in a way made proper to this ordinance, which is not to be found in any other ordinance.

T H E E N D.



