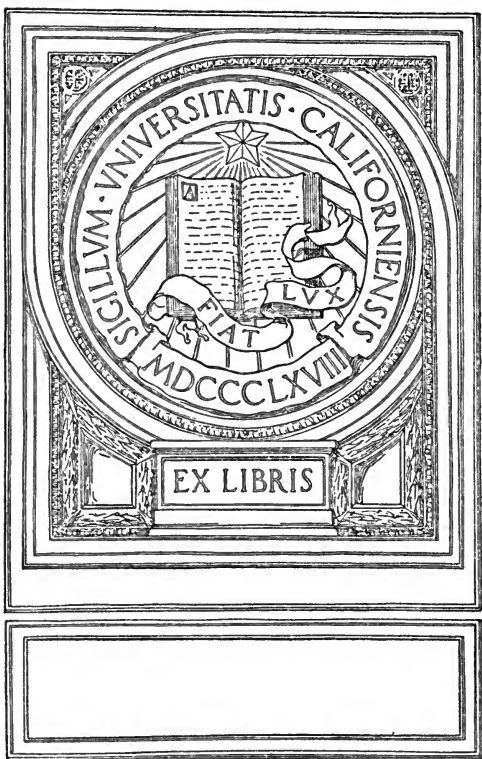


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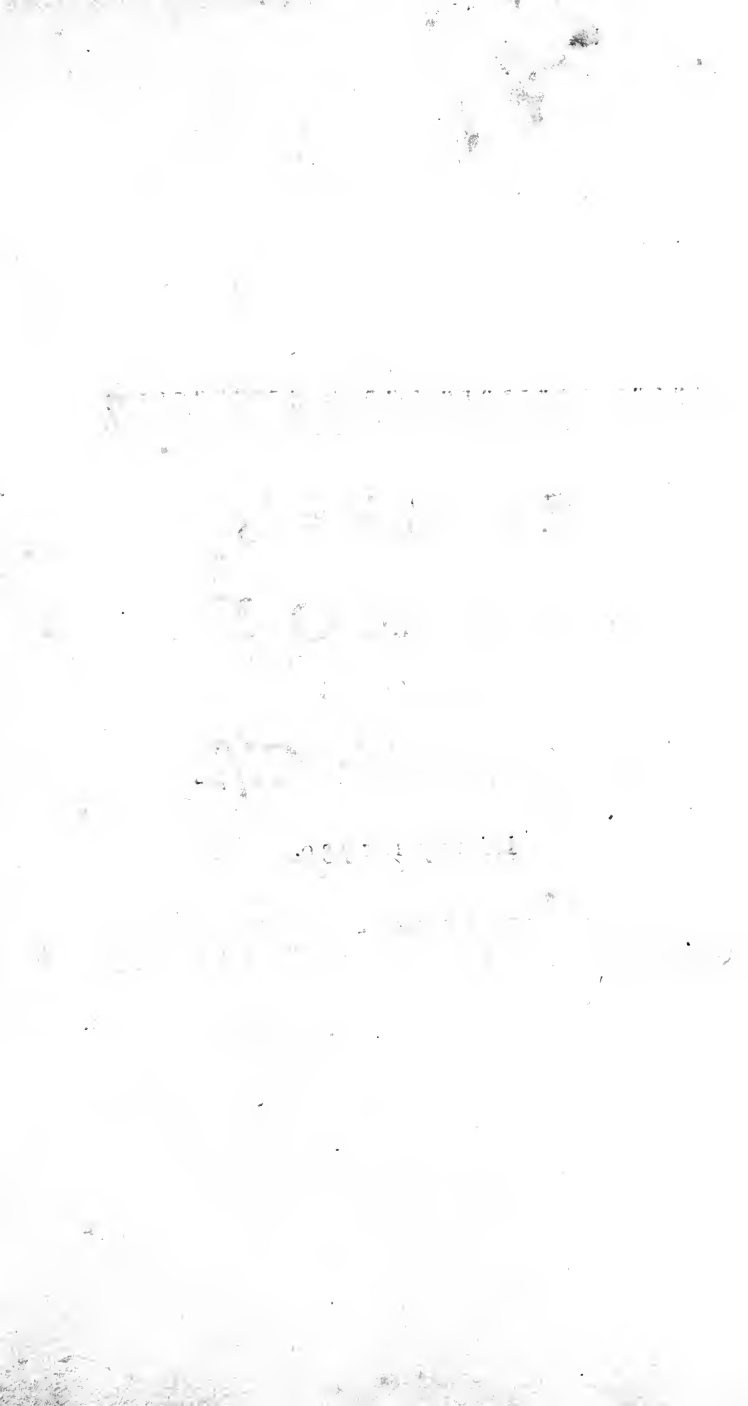




Dr. Colman's  
S E R M O N  
ON THE  
*Unspeakable Gift.*

*February 1. 1739.*





Unspeakable Gift of GOD;

A right

*Charitable and Bountiful Spirit*

TO THE

Poor and Needy Members

OF

JESUS CHRIST.

A

S E R M O N

Preached at the publick *Lecture* in Boston,  
February 1. 1739.

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By Benjamin Colman, D. D.

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Prov. xxii. 9. *He that hath a bountiful Eye shall be blessed, for he giveth of his Bread to the Poor.*  
Rom. v. 17. *They which receive Abundance of Grace and of the Gift of Righteousness, shall reign in Life by Jesus Christ.*

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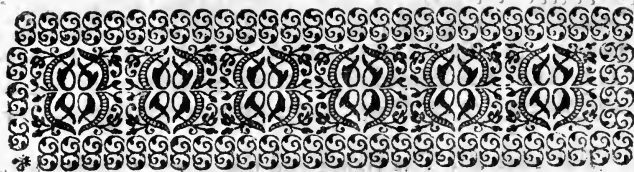
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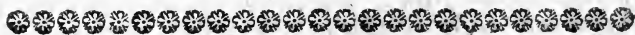
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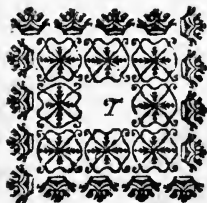
T H E

# Unspeakable Gift.



II. CORINTHIANS, ix. 15.

*Thanks be to GOD for his unspeakable Gift.*



*HANKS* is the *least* that can be render'd for any *Gift*; and *unspeakable* Thanks the least for a *Gift* that is unspeakable. Let us consider the particular *Gift* here spoken of, and the *Honour* here done it, the *Glory* put upon it.

Some would have it to mean *CHRIST* Himself, who is indeed the *greatest* *Gift* of God to fallen Man, ineffable, inconceivable. John iv. 10. *If thou knewest the Gift of God!* Eph. iii. 8. *What is the Height and Depth, and Length and Breadth of the Love of Christ, which passeth Knowledge.*

Some say *Grace*, the *regenerating* *Grace* of God; or (which is the same) the *HOLY SPIRIT* of God in all his *saving* *Gifts*, *Graces* and *Comforts*: And indeed all the  
*Fruits*

*Fruits of the Spirit* (a) are unspeakable Gifts, "Love, Peace, Joy, Longsuffering, Goodness, Meekness, &c. My Context (b) speaks of this Gift, "God is able to make ALL GRACE to abound to you, that ye always having an *Al sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good Work.*

But after all, The *Grace* and the *Gift by Grace* here spoken of, is neither more nor less than the particular *Grace of Charity and Liberality* to the Poor and Needy; an enlarged Heart and open Hand to relieve and supply them in their Wants and Necessities. ---- The whole *Chapter* is on this single *Subject* and Argument, touching *Ministring to the Saints*, v. 1. *as a Master of Bounty*, v. 5. *sowing bountifully*, v. 7. *giving to the Poor*, v. 9. *supplying the Wants of Saints*, v. 12. *liberal Distribution to all Men*: This is the *exceeding Grace* and *unspeakable Gift*, for which *Thanks* is here given to God.

And great is the *Honour and Glory* done it, in the *Epithet UNSPEAKABLE*, and in the *THANKSGIVING* to God for it.

"Who can by searching find out GOD, or any Gift of His, unto Perfection? Who can shew forth all his Praise? All is comprehended in the one Word LOVE. Yet my *Text* means not to dignify a Spirit of *Liberality* above the *other Exercises* of Grace, save only as the *Greatest* of all is *Charity* (c), which is but perfected at Death and *abides* for ever, when *Faith* and *Hope* are swallow'd up in *Vision*. Nevertheless it must be added, that *Love* in this particular *Mode* and *Ministration*, of which my *Text* speaks, will *soon fail*; for there are no *Objects* of *Charity* in *Heaven*, none *poor* or *needy* there: However, *Benevolence*, the *Soul* and *Essence* of *Charity*, *reigns* there in *Glory* for ever and ever.

Blessed be GOD that we have *something* and so much of it on *Earth*, in our *Way* to *Heaven*: "Thanks to *Him* for it, says my *Text*. The *Glory* is *God's*, for it is

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(a) *Gal.* v. 22. (b) *Ver.* 8. (c) *1 Cor.* xiii. 13.  
his

his Gift, & this is the Glory of the Gift that it is *his*; this makes it the *unspeakable* thing it is: Divine, Heavenly, Infinite, in its Origine, Influence and endless Effects.

GOD is the free and bountiful *Author* of this Grace in any, He *gives* it to Those that have it; the Ability and the Heart to do kind and liberal Things is from *Him*; He puts it into the Heart, and he enlarges it. "Even Power to *eat* our Bread is from Him, how much more to *give* of it to *others*, to *seven* and also to *eight* (d).

The *liberal Man* is God's Gift to the World; to the *Place* where he lives, to *distant* Places also, if he have a Hand full and *strong* eno' to scatter far and near. Some in the Churches of *Macedonia* were thus made to *differ* and excel: God ministred *seed* to them and they sowed plentifully; God *enriched* them unto all Bountifulness, and the *Thanksgiving* was abundant to God.

The *Praise* is not to the charitable Person, who *devises* the liberal Things, but to *God* who gives him the Heart. The good Man will be *far* from taking any of the Praise to himself, but to *God's Name* he gives the Glory. "It is not in me, said the Princely *Joseph*, when *Pharaoh* asked him of the *unspeakable Gift* he heard was in him; "God shall give *Pharaoh* an Answer of Peace (e): He honour'd himself the more in the Sight of *Pharaoh* and his *Princes* by assuming nothing to himself; "Can we find such a Man as this (said the King) in whom the Spirit of God is? for as much as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as Thou art.

We must have a great Care not to *idolise* those whom God pleases to honour, by sacrificing to them instead of God, who alone is to be worship'd. Yet the *Man* who is God's Hand, and his *Gift*, comes in for a civil Honour and Respect, a grateful Acknowledgment of his own Goodwill in shewing the *Kindnesses of God*: Of which our *Context* is full, "For to their *Power* and beyond

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(d) *Eccle.* iii. 13. xi. 2. (e) *Gen.* xli. 38.

“ they were *willing of themselves*, praying us to receive  
 “ the *Gift* and take on us the *Fellowship* ; “ Where-  
 “ fore shew *before the Churches* the Proof of your Love,  
 “ and of our *boasting* on your behalf ; for I know the  
 “ *Forwardness* of your Mind, and your Zeal has provo-  
 “ ked many : “ As it is written, He has dispers’d abroad,  
 “ he has given to the Poor, his *Righteousness* endureth  
 “ for ever, his *Horn* shall be exalted with Honour ( f )  
 “ While by the *Experiment* of this Ministration they  
 “ *glorify God* for your professed *Subjection* to the Gos-  
 “ pel ; *longing after you for the exceeding Grace of God*  
 “ *in you.*

Having thus set my *Text* in its true and best Light,  
 I shall endeavour to speak to this *Doctrine* from it,

“ That a right charitable and *liberal* Frame of Spirit  
 to the *poor* and needy is an *unspeakable Gift of God* ; for  
 which great *Thankfulness* is due to his *glorious Name*, and  
 abundant *Thanksgiving* should be fervently render’d in  
 the *Churches of the Saints.*”

I am therefore to shew,

1. What we are to understand by a *right charitable*  
and liberal Spirit ?
2. That it is an *unspeakable Gift of God.*
3. The abundant *Thanksgivings* to be render’d for it  
in the *Churches of Christ.*

I. By a *right charitable* and liberal Spirit, I understand  
 a Mind and Heart *prone and large*, free and ready in  
 Proportion to our *Ability* and the *Occasions* occurring to  
 us, to pity and *relieve* the Wants of the *Poor*, more e-  
 specially of the virtuous and *religious Poor.*

It is the *religious Exercise* of the *Grace* of Charity,  
 which we are to *preach* to you from the *Gospel* of Christ ;

and my *Context* confines me to *this* Consideration of it, "as the *Grace of God bestowed on the Churches*, and the *Fellowship of ministring to the Saints*. So that a *Principle of Grace* in the Heart, and the *Exercise* of it in the Life, are here supposed; That is to say, a giving to the poor and needy from *Faith in Christ* and his *Word*, from *Love* to Him and his *People*, upon the *Commandment* and *Promises* of the Gospel; in *Obedience* to the one, and *Hope* in the other.

It is not therefore meerly a *humane*, tender, generous *natural Temper*, or *acquired* Disposition towards a necessitous or compassionate Object; and yet *this* is a distinguishing *Gift* of Providence to some more than others; which renders 'em more *lovely* and of a superior Spirit; but we must suppose a Soul of this Disposition *sanctified*, and acting upon religious *Principles and Motives*; of one of *another* Disposition *changed* by the Power of Divine Grace into *this*; and then what rais'd and *enobled* Souls do the one and other become? *all their Things being done with Charity!* from a reigning Love to God and Goodness as such, as there is Opportunity unto *all Men*, but especially unto the *Household of Faith*, proving their Love before the *Churches*.

In this Case a special Exercise of proper Evangelical *Faith with Love* is supposed, as in the *Frame* of Spirit, so in the chosen *Objects*, poor *Saints* and Members of *Jesus Christ*, for *His* sake, and as unto *Him*, and as He will accept and reward another Day; "*Ye did it unto Me*. This is *Christ form'd in us*, his Spirit ruling in us, a *new Nature* given to us, acting in new Manner, on new Principles, Ends and Motives; such as the meer *natural* Man perceives not, in equal or greater Benefactions; a *Sacrifice holy and acceptable to God*.

It is *easy* to the Power of God and *worthy* of his *Mercy*, so to change the Heart of the naturally *Niggard & grudging*, into this *Riches* of Benignity and Beneficence; whereof there seem to have been *many Instances* in the *first Days* of the Gospel, upon the *pouring* out of the *Spirit*; when the *Multitude* of them that believed were

of *one* Heart and Soul ; neither said *any* of them, that ought of the things they possessed were their *own*, but they had all things *common*, Acts iv. *ult.* An extraordinary Spirit of *Love*, at an extraordinary Time and Occasion ! a wonderful Effusion of the HOLY GHOST, from the late crucified and ascended JESUS. The like therefore has not been known in *ordinary* Times, nor is it the *standing* Exercise of the *Spirit* in the sanctified. But the *Want* of what should be *common* among Christians at *all* Times, is a sad and *dark* Testimony of the *Poverty* of Grace ; for there certainly are among us People of *high Profession*, who have *no* Heart to do almost any thing at all, in a way of *Distribution* to the Poor, or for pious Uses ; no not a known Instance for Years together ; while God is liberally giving to them, and they can lay up and lay out and make Purchases ! but if you speak of *giving*, they *hide themselves from their own Flesh*, even tho' they be esteemed *Members of Christ* also.

Let us always see to it, that our *Principle and End* be right before God, genuine and truly *Christian* ; that neither *Vanity*, Affectation or Ostentation, nor yet meer *Humanity* and good Nature, be *pass'd on God* for gracious *Charity*, on Whom it cannot ; nor yet on *Men*, nor on *our selves*, which also is next to impossible under our Illuminations by the Gospel. Wherefore our *Lord*, according to the infinite Wisdom and Sanctity of God in Him, has warned us to *take heed how we do our Alms*, lest we have no Reward from *our Father in Heaven*, Matth. vi.

II. I am now to show, that this Evangelical Christian *charitable Frame* of Spirit is an *unspeakable Gift of God*.

And here,

i. Literally true it is, that *no Tongue* of Man can duely speak of it, or enough praise and *celebrate* it. It is above all our Thoughts and Words, we can neither think or speak of it as it merits. Such is every *Work* and Gift of God in the Kingdom of *Nature* and *Providence*.

“ See

“ See that thou *magnify* these visible Works, which *Eyes of Flesh* behold. “ *His Work is honourable and glorious, and his Praise endureth for Ever.* How much more his *Spiritual Work*, the *Gift by Grace* within thy Self and Others. The *Angels of God pry* silently into *this*, and we need *their Eyes and Tongues* to look into it and speak of it. “ Bless the Lord ye his *Angels* that excel in Strength ! and “ *awake up our Glory* too, though we be but *Babes and Sucklings* in comparison of Them ; for from *our Mind and Mouth* God has *ordained* Strength.---We *lisp* and stammer at a proper Word, and poorly apprehend many of the Great Words put into our Mouth. “ Let Him *teach* us what we shall say ! and shall it be *told* Him that we speak ! who can *utter* his mighty Acts, or shew forth all his Praise ! ---Accordingly the Apostle *labours* in my *Context*, to speak of the *Gift of God* ; seems at a *loss*, speaks abundantly, over and over, and knows not when he has said enough of the excellent Grace : “ *Inriched, says he, in every thing, to all Bountifulness, which is abundant by many* “ Thanksgivings to God, from those that *long* after “ you for the *exceeding* Grace of God in you.”--- If a Man would speak of a thing *unspeakable*, it must be just after *this manner* ; it being literally true, that *no Tongue of Man* can fully speak the Praises of *Christian Charity*.

2. *Unspeakable* is the *Good done* in the World by a right *charitable* Frame of Spirit. *Unspeakable* are the *Needs* which Sin has brought upon us, not only on the *poor and low* of the World, but also on *others*, even on the richest and highest. We *unspeakably* need one another's *Help* and *Service*, and *unspeakable* are the *Benefits* we receive from others in our *Necessities*. The *poor* serve the *rich* abundantly, more especially in their *Sicknesses* ; and very often do it *gratis*, for nothing, out of pure *Humanity, Respect* and *Compassion*, and are never requited : Sometimes from *Gratitude* for Favours received, and as often (I would wish) from a Principle of *Grace* within them, it being all the *Way* they have to express a *pious Love* to God & their Neighbours.--Others to whom God has given *Riches*, and *Largeness* of Heart

to do Good with it, give *Portions* to the Poor by sevens and eights, and by scores and hundreds ; *devising* liberal things, and casting their *Bread* upon the Waters. " The *Bowels* of the poor are refreshed by them, they " are Eyes to the *blind* and Feet to the *lame*, Parents to " the *Fatherless*, and they cause the *Widow's Heart* to " sing ; the Blessing of them that are ready to *perish* " comes on them, and of him that is *helpless*. They are as the Heat and Rain to a thirsty and cold Earth, as the *Light* of the Morning and the *Dews* of the Evening to those among whom they dwell, who pass their *Days and Nights* the better for their Neighbourhood. " Their *Glory* is *fresh* in them, and their *Bow* is re- " newed in their Hand." They live not to *Themselves*, but others *glean* by handfuls of what they plentifully sowe. God *multiply* their Seed sown, and *increase* the Fruits of their Righteousness ; while the *Loyns* of the Poor bless them, warm'd with the *Fleece* of their Flock. These are the Men of whom we shall *bear well* another Day, but how will they be able to *bear the Joy* of the blessed Words ! " *I was hungry and ye gave me Meat,* " *thirsty and ye gave me Drink, naked and ye clothed me,* " *a Stranger and ye took me in*". Unspeakable (you see) is the *Good done* in this needy World, and *Heaven* acknowledges it to be so, and accordingly *rates the Gift* in the Book of Account.

3. Unspeakable is *the Glory redounding to GOD* from a right Christian *charitable* Frame of Spirit, in the noble humble Exercise of it thro' the Earth, and therefore is it an *unspeakable Gift*. This is a *Reason* or Argument that rises much higher than the former ; for if it be a good and great Thing to do much Good to our Fellow-Creatures, how much more is it to be any Ways Instrumental in any *Glory and Honour* to the Name of GOD ? Yet *HE is glorified* (says my Context) by *Others*, on the Account of the Acts of *Bounty* done them by their merciful Neighbour.

The Great and bountiful God makes *much*, makes the *most* of our *little Alms* and Offerings to Him : As our *Saviour* did of the *Widow's two Mites* ; they were



a rich Offering in his Eye, and he magnify'd it and her. So God shines on his own Works wrought in us and by us, and puts great Honour on 'em, makes great Account of 'em. And so in the last Day he will glorify Himself in glorifying his Elect, "In as much as ye have done it to the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me."

We are bid to "let our Lights shine before Men, that they seeing our good Works may glorify our Father which is in Heaven. The liberal Man does so, but not to be seen of Men. There is that is manifest, and cannot be hid. Men do not light a Candle and put it under a Bushel. A good Man blesses God for the Light that shines on others, as well as on Himself. If one is enriched to all Bountifulness, it causes in others Thanksgiving to God; yea is abundant by many Thanksgivings to Him, says my Context: "They glorify God for your professed Subjection to the Gospel, and pray unto God for you."

Now the least Glory to God is an unspeakable thing. What is Man, and what the World he lives in, and what the Riches thereof, and you will say what the poor of it, that GOD should have Glory from them! "Behold He putteth no Trust in his Saints, and the Heavens are not clean in his Sight! how much less Man that is a Worm! What then can Man think or speak of, ask or pray for, like to this! Father in Heaven, thy Name be hallowed!-- for Thine is the Kingdom and Power and Glory for ever! Well is it made the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, in our Prayers. It must be the everlasting Law and Motive to us, respecting giving and receiving; 1 Peter iv. 11. If any Man minister, of the Ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; to whom be Praise and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

4. The Good to our selves is unspeakable, in a liberal and bountiful Spirit, and therefore it is an unspeakable Gift to us and in us. Unspeakable is the present Comfort  
to

to a good Man by this Gift, and unspeakable is the future and eternal Reward of it in the Life to come.

1. If we consider only the Pleasure and Comfort of it to a Man in *this* Life, to be of a merciful and bountiful Eye, it is to him an unspeakable Gift. He is satisfied in Himself, God answers him in the Joy of his Heart. The greatest Pleasure of Life is to be good and do good. The Words of our Lord Jesus are to be had in everlasting Remembrance, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The Man's State and Frame is more blessed; unless it be when the poor Man exceeds in Grace, in the manner of his receiving; and then the Tide turns on his Side.

Job tells us the Pleasure he found in Acts of Munificence in the Days of his Prosperity; and it was unspeakable: "When the Ear heard me, it blessed me! when the Eye saw me it gave witness to me! then said I, I shall die in my Nest, or multiply my Days as the Sand! my Root was spread out by the Waters, and the Dew lay all Night upon my Branch! my Glory was fresh in me, and my Bow was renewed in my Hand! they waited for me as for the Rain, and opened their Mouth wide as for the latter Rain! I chose out their Way and sat Chief, and dwelt as a King in his Army; as One that comforteth the Mourners."

Even all the bitter Sorrows of Job could not take away the Comfort of the Remembrance of his past Joys in Acts of Charity & Mercy. "If (said he) I had withheld the poor from his Desire,"-- O the Pleasure of yielding them their Desire, when it is pious and just, and the Power be in our Hand, and our Heart be big enough;---or "if I caused the Eyes of the Widow to fail! If I eat my morsel alone, and the Fatherless did not share with me! for from my Youth I was his Father, and Widow's Guide."---I tell you, that as the Heart knows its own Bitterness, so only the Heart of a Job knows the Comfort of a Conscience of such a Frame and Exercise, as this which his own Words have spoken, and who can add to them? How did all the Good he had ever done to the Poor return into his own Bosom, and flow out of his Lips from the

the *Abundance* in his *Heart* ! The *Objects* of *Charity* were always to him *as his own Bowels*, and how were his *Bowels refresh'd* hereby, at the *Time* and long after. He *felt* the *ruling Power* of *Grace*, and had *Confidence* toward *God*. The *Joy* of *Faith* and *Hope* accompanied and follow'd the *Exercise* of *Love* and *brotherly Kindness*.

2. But the *Great* and last, the *infinite and eternal Rewards* of *Grace*, to the *charitable* and *godly Man*, are in the *Blessedness* and *Glories* of *the World to come*, and these render the *Gift* of *Grace* to him and in him *unspeakable*. “ *Eye* has not seen this, nor *Ear* heard it, nor can it enter into our *Hearts* to conceive of it. “ *When the Son of Man* shall come in *his Glory*, and “ *fashion* his *Elect* and *Merciful Ones* after *his own glorious Body*, and say to 'em in the *Hearing* of all his *holy Angels*,----“ *Come ye blessed* of my *Father*, inherit the “ *Kingdom* prepared for you from the *Foundation* of the “ *World* ! for *I was hungry* and ye gave me *Meat*, &c. --- O with what *Rapture* will they make the *humble Answer*, “ *Lord*, when saw we thee *hungry* and *fed* thee, or *thirsty* and gave thee *Drink* ?---The *Day* must reveal it, what the *Joy* of the *Lord* and of his *Members* will then be ! then they shall be *recompenc'd*, at the *Resurrection* of the *Just*. It is worth *waiting* for the *Joy*s of that blessed *Day*, which will be given in *full Measure*, *pressed down and running over*. “ *Then* he that has sown *bountifully* shall reap *bountifully* : Then not a *Cup* of “ *Water* given as to a *Disciple* of *Christ* shall be forgotten. The *Rewards* of free *Grace* will be found “ *nothing less* than a *Crown* and *Kingdom*, a *Crown* of *Glory eternal* in the *Heavens*. How unknown, *unspeakable*, *unsearchable* is this ! it is *high as Heaven*, what can't thou *know* ? *Infinite* as *GOD Himself*, who is *thy SHIELD* and *exceeding great Reward* ; O *Seed* of *generous Abraham* ! It is a *far exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*.----We find and see many *temporal* things *unsearchable*, how much more those that are *unseen and eternal*. Wherefore,

III. The *highest Thanksgivings* are due from us to the *blessed God*, for this *his unspeakable Gift* to any of the Children of Men ; and should be *fervently render'd* to Him in the *Churches* of his Saints. “ *Thanks be to God for his unspeakable Gift.*”

But (as was said before) *what Thanks can we render*, when the Gift is *unspeakable*? O 'tis *above all our Praises and Blessings* ! Yet as the *Levites* said to the August Congregation, Nehem ix. 5. “ *Stand up and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever ! and blessed be thy glorious Name which is exalted above all Praise.*”

I shall only say *two Things* here,

1. They that *receive* the Gift should be very *thankful* to God for it. The charitable Person should himself give *Thanks* to God for making him so, while yet he *abases* himself before the Lord, as an unprofitable Creature, and behaves humble and lowly before *Men*. Yet ought he to glorify God for any *Heart* to do good, and for any *Means* to do it. He must assume nothing to *himself*, but ascribe all to *God* ; of *Whom* and *to Whom* are all things. “ For what hast *thou* which is not received ? and if received, whereof hast thou to *glory* ? The Glory belongs to Him who has given to *thee*, that *thou* may'st give to others. As, suppose a rich and charitable Person puts into my Hand a *Sum* or Sums of Money to distribute unto others in Want ; it is *his Gift* and Bounty, and not mine ; and *I* ought to be thankful to Him together with those to whom I distribute. In like manner if GOD give *You* Ability and a Heart to do good to others, you owe the *first Thanks* to God, and shou'd be ready to say with the *Church*, “ *Not unto us, O Lord, not to us, but to thy Name be Glory.*”

*You, my Brethren!* that are honoured of God to *give* unto the poor, might have been your selves, and so your Families, among the *indigent* and necessitous ! You might have been *Receivers* of the Charities of others, the Objects of their *Compassion*.

Or

Or yet *worse*, You might have been among the niggardly and *covetous* in the midst of Riches; not able to eat of your own Bread, and less to give unto others! An *Evil* too often seen and felt, a Misery too common under the *Sun*, which yet shines liberally on the niggard Soul.

Or still worse, You might have been among the *fraudulent and unjust*, the Cheat, the Thief and the Robber; or (which is little better) the Gripe and the Extortioner; the Spoiler of the Widow, the motherless and fatherless! But who has made you to *differ*? made Thee a *Benefactor* and Blessing to the World, among these Plagues and Curses in it? GOD, who is rich in Mercy, and *Sovereign* in his Gifts and Grace to Men; *He* has done it! "Who has Mercy because he *will* have Mercy. He that made *Abel Cain's* Brother, and gave to *Abraham* and *Job* and *Moses* their *Grandeur* of Heart.

Let *free Grace* therefore have all the Glory; as the Apostle teaches us, Ephes. 3. 18. *To me, who am less than the least of all Saints is this Grace given.* So thou "by the *Grace* of God art what thou art, and his *Grace* given thee has not been *in vain*! And if you labour more than others, yet not *you*, but the *Grace* of God in You.---So when *David* had done a *kingly* part, and his *Princes* a very *princely* one, in way of Offerings out of their Estates; then *David* said before the Lord, 1 Chron. xxix. 14. "But who am I O Lord God; and what is my People, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort! for all things come of Thee and of thy own have we given thee.--- Thus they that receive the Gift, should give *Thanks* for it.

2. Others, but especially the *poor and needy*, they should be very *thankful* to God. The *Charitable* are *God's Gifts to Men*, even to the *rebellious*; (and indeed such themselves among their *Brethren*) that the Lord God might dwell among us. I may lawfully transfer these Words from *Ministers* in the Church, to the *liberal* in the Flocks; for it is the same God and the same *Grace* that forms both the one and the other, to serve the

*Needs of Souls and Bodies.* “ We do you to wit therefore of the *Grace of God* bestowed on the *Churches*, in both. The same *Holy Spirit* that descended on the *Apostles* in *Tongues of Fire*, came down on the *Multitude of Believers*; at that memorable Time, and they had *all things common*. And now the *ordinary Gifts* of your *Ministers* for the Service of your Souls, and the ordinary Spirit of *Charity* in our Churches, are from the same Fulness, of *Christ*; of Whom all do receive and Grace upon Grace. He puts the *earnest Care* for Soul and Body into the one and other; whether it be *Titus* or *Gaius*, doing faithfully for the *Brethren* or *Strangers*.

The Gifts and Graces of *others*, and the Use God pleases to make of them, should be *pleasant* to us and *admired* by us; and we should rejoice in all that we see of God in them. We should prize the good *Examples* they give us, give God the *Glory* of them, and be excited to a holy Imitation. 1. *Thess.* iii. 9. *For what Thanks can we render unto God for you? for all the Joy wherewith we joy before our God for your sakes.*

The *poor* especially should be very *thankful to God*, for his unspeakable Gift to *them*, in all the *Charities* of the rich and bountiful. They should religiously accept the Gift of Heaven in *those* whom they must call their *Benefactors*. They should look thro' and above *Men* unto God, who gives by their Hands. They must no more *idolize* Men, than they would bow down to an *Image* of Wood or Gold; no more than they would *kiss the Calves*, or their *Hand* to the *Sun* or *Moon* in their Brightness; for this were to deny the *most high* and first Benefactor. “ *Why look ye so earnestly at us?* said *Peter* and *John* to the wondring and almost worshipping People at the Gate of the Temple, when they had in the Name of *Jesus* given more than Silver or Gold to the *Cripple*, even *Feet* to walk and leap. What is a bountiful *Donor* to us, but a *Steward* and *Almoner* of God, his kind and open Hand! Who shall have the *Praise*? the *King* that orders his *Medals* to be strowed among the Crowd, or the *Servitor* that scatters 'em at his Command? *Jacob* saw the Face of God in *Esau's* Affection,  
when

when he *ran* with open Arms and Eyes full of Tears to embrace him. So let the *poor* see the Face and Hand of *God*, in all the Heart and Care of *others* for them. They are what *God* makes 'em, and he has made 'em *such* for you.

*God* knows the irreligious *poor*, ungrateful to Him, *unthankful and unboly*, who receive and eat and give him not Thanks. It may be they *bow* to Men, and *treble* their Thanks to them and *blefs* 'em, and yet do *not* lift their Hearts at all to *God*. It may be they neither *pray* for themselves or others in secret, altho' their *Dependance* is so great on Providence and its Instruments; nor do they *blefs* *God* when he sends 'em in Supplies --- *God* *values* the Thanks of the *Poor* as much as of the *Rich*, and they as much *owe* it to Him. Let 'em learn the Song of *Hannah*, and sing it with her gracious Spirit, 1 Sam. 2. init " *My Heart rejoices in the Lord, my Horn is exalted in the Lord : He maketh poor and maketh rich ; the hungry cease, and the rich have hired out themselves for Bread.*

Having thus at large consider'd the *unspeakable Gift* of *God*, in a right *charitable* Frame of Spirit, and the *Thanksgiving* and Praise due from us unto *God* therefor, I might naturally go into a large *Compass* of Meditation on *other* the *unspeakable Gifts* of *God* to us, all of which are more or less related unto *this* that I have been speaking of; and it may be I could not well go into a more proper and profitable *Application of the Subject*.

As,

1. Look we *within our selves*, into our own *Souls* and *Bodies*, fram'd as they are for *Thanksgiving* to *God*, and for all *Offices of Humanity and Charity* to our Neighbours; what a *Gift of God* is this *Mind* and *Heart*, and these *Eyes* and *Hands*; first to lift up to *God*, and then to look and reach out to *his poor*! this *social Nature* for worshipping and communicating! In every *Relation* and in all *Offices of Human Life*, *publick* and *private*, wherein *God* has plac'd us to *serve* and *blefs* one another; what *Gifts of God* *unspeakable* ought every One to be unto

his *Correlate* and therein to the *Community*! from the *Confort*, *Parent* and *Child*, up to the *King* on the *Throne*; and down again from all that *rule* under Him, to the *lowest* Subject in the *State*!----What a *wide Compass* of unspeakable Blessings wou'd every Person, in every Order, present us with? all under the *Law of Kindn. f.*, and all their *Things done with Charity*.

2. What an *unspeakable Gift* therefore is a good *Government*, good *Magistrates*, wise, pious, faithful, public-spirited *Rulers*; great and good *Kings*, *Princes*, *Nobles*, *Governours*, *Legislators*, and *Judges*: Whom we are bid to *pray* for, and are bound to give *Thanks* for; while under them we are living *quiet and peaceable Lives*, in all *Godliness and Honesty*. 2 Sam. xxiii. 1,---4. *He shall be as the Light of the Morning when the Sun ariseth, even a Morning without Clouds; and as the tender Grass springing out of the Earth by clear shining after Rain.* Such *Gifts* from Heaven were *Moses* and *Joshua*, *Samuel* and *David*, *Hezekiah* and *Nebemiah* to the *Israel* of God, in their *Generation*.

3. What an *unspeakable Gift* of God to us is our *Church-State*, our *spiritual* Relation in Christ, our *Fellowship* in the *Gospel*, our *Brotherhood*, the *Vocation* wherewith we are called! to be a *spiritual House*, a *Kingdom of Priests*, a *chosen Generation*, a *peculiar People and Treasure*, to shew forth the *Praises* of our God and Saviour. Your *Sabbaths*, the preached *Gospel*, the *Ordinances* of our God, and the *Ministers* of Religion; these are among the *Gifts* from the *Ascended Jesus*. As it is written, --- "I gave them my *Sabbaths* for a *Sign* between Me and them that I am the Lord that doth *sanctify* them (g): He gave his *Word* unto *Jacob*, his *Statutes* and *Judgments* unto *Israel*, He has not done so by many a *People*: He gave *Prophets*, *Apostles*, *Evangelists*, *Pastors* and *Teachers*, for the perfecting of the *Saints*, for the *Work* of the *Ministry*,

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(g) Ezek. xx. 12. Psal. cxlvii. 19. Eph. iv. 8, 11. 2 Cor. iv. 7.



“ for the Edifying the Body of Christ. *Enoch; Moses and Aaron, Elijah and Elisha, Peter and John and Paul,* and many after them, in their Spirit, have been invaluable Gifts to the Church ; a *Treasure in Earthen Vessels,* that the *Excellency of the Power* may be of God and not of Man. Nor have there been wanting in the Churches of Christ, nor ever shall be, such Gifts from among their gracious *Members,* to and of whom we may take up the *illustrious Words* of the *Apostle* to the *Philippians* and the *Thessalonians,* in our Thanksgivings to God (h): “ I thank  
 “ my God upon every Remembrance of you, for your  
 “ *Fellowship* in the Gospel ! and we give Thanks always  
 “ for you all, remembering without ceasing your *Work of*  
 “ *Faith,* and *Labour of Love,* and *Patience of Hope* in  
 “ our Lord *Jesus Christ* ; and ye became followers of us  
 “ and of the *Lord,* having received the *Word* with much  
 “ *Affliction* and *Joy* in the *Holy Ghost* ; because your  
 “ *Faith* groweth exceedingly, and your *Charity* one to  
 “ another aboundeth ; so that we glory in You in the  
 “ Churches of God for your *Patience and Faith.* Thus the *meanest and poorest,* on worldly Accounts, in the *visible Church,* became *unspeakable Gifts* of Grace to it ; and will be found so in the Church of the *First-born,* whose *Names* are written in Heaven. .

But to leave all things here below, and to ascend up far above all Heavens, I add

4. and lastly, The unspeakable Gift of CHRIST and of the HOLY SPIRIT, the *Saviour and Sanctifier* of Souls ; which *two are one,* equal in *Godhead and Glory.* Here triumph with me, my *Hearers,* in the adoring Contemplation of the *ineffable* Gift of God, his own *Eternal Son,* the *Only-begotten of the Father,* whose *Glory* was beheld in his *Miracles of Mercy* to the *Bodies* of Men, but more in his *Compassions* to their *Souls* ; his holy *Ministry, Labours and Sufferings* for their *Salvation* ; to save our *Souls* from *spiritual and eternal Death,* to cover a multitude of *Sins,* to make *Reconciliation* for

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( h ) *Phil.* i. 3, 1 *Thes.* i. 3. 2. i. 3.

Iniquity, to bring in an Everlasting *Righteousness* for the Justification of Sinners. The crucified *Jesus* is such a Gift of God to the Sons of Men, as infinitely transcends the Tongues of *Angels*, when they would give Him the Glory of it. They desire to look into it, and give *Glory in the Highest*. The *Elders* with them prepare new Songs for ever, and cast their Crowns before the Throne.

How then shall the Tongues of *Men* below be able to speak of the Gift of God to us in the *Incarnation, Obedience, Death, Resurrection and Intercession* of CHRIST, or of his *Coming again* in Glory for the Salvation of those that believe in Him!— Here all Words are swallowed up, we are struck mute, & Praise sits silent. *Isai. ix. 6. To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder: And his Name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace!*

This, *this* ( my Brethren ) is the unspeakable Gift of God unto us, to be in in *Everlasting Remembrance* with us in all our *Worship* before Him, secret, private and public; every Lord's-Day and all our Communion-Days: In every Ordinance of *Worship* He is offer'd to us for our thankful *Acceptance*, to be of God made unto us *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption!* and we must be making the Offering of our Selves to Him, as bought with a Price, *living Sacrifices, which is our reasonable Service, holy and acceptable to God.* Grace to do this, is an *unspeakable Gift* indeed.

Therefore we must give equal Glory to the HOLY GHOST, yielding our Selves to Him, as the blessed *Sanctifier, proceeding from the Father and the Son!* One with the REDEEMER in *Godhead and everlasting Love* to Souls. *John xiv. 16. The Comforter, whom I will send unto You from the Father, He shall receive of Mine and shew it unto you.*

This Heavenly Gift rested on *Moses and the Elders, Patriarchs and Prophets*, sanctified and inspired them. He

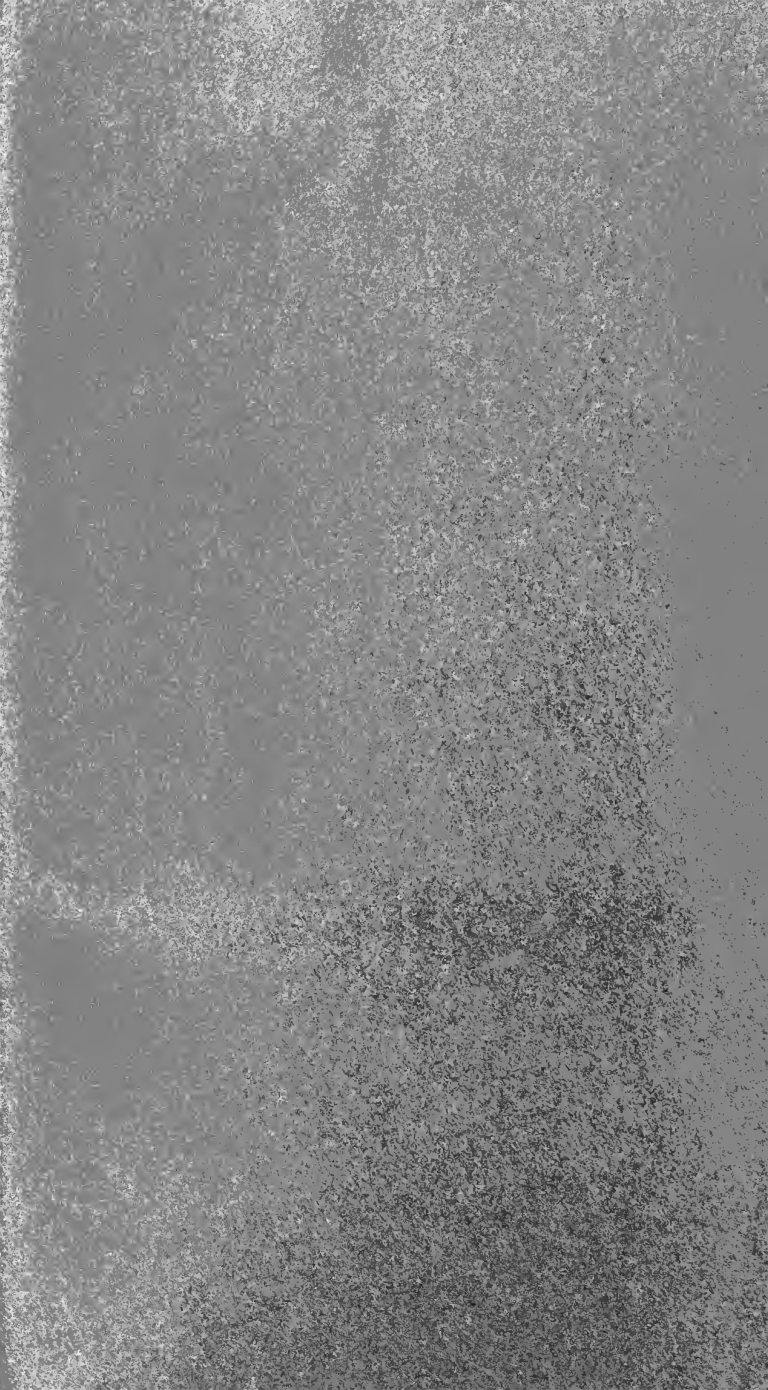
He has formed every *Saint* thro' all the Ages of the Church. But the grand *Effusion* was the Glory of the *New Testament*, and the *Promise* is still flowing down to us: *Isai. xlv. 3.* "I will pour *Water* upon him that is " *thirsty*, and *Floods* upon the *dry Ground*; I will pour " my *SPiRiT* upon your *Seed*, and my *Blessing* upon " your *Offspring*: And *one* shall say I am the *Lord's*, " and another shall *subscribe* with his *Hand* to the *Lord*, &c. ---- *Souls* can need nor ask more. *Christ* has no more to offer to us. *John vii. 37.* *In the last and great Day of the Feast* *Jesus* stood and cried, saying, " *If any Man thirst*, let him come unto me and drink, and out of his *Belly* shall flow *Rivers of living Water*: *This spake He of the SPiRiT* which they that believe on him shall receive.

*CHRIST* and the *HOLY GHOST* are the *One*, inseparable, undivided, infinite, eternal, and therefore *unspeakable Gift of GOD*. Let us wait for it as for the *Rain*, and open our *Mouth wide* for it as for the *latter Rain*. *God fill us* with this *Blessing of Blessings*. *Revel. xxii. 17.* " *The Spirit and the Bride* say, *Come*; and let him that *heareth* say, *Come*; and let him that is *athirst* come; and *whosoever* will let him take of the *Water of Life* freely.

F I N I S.









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