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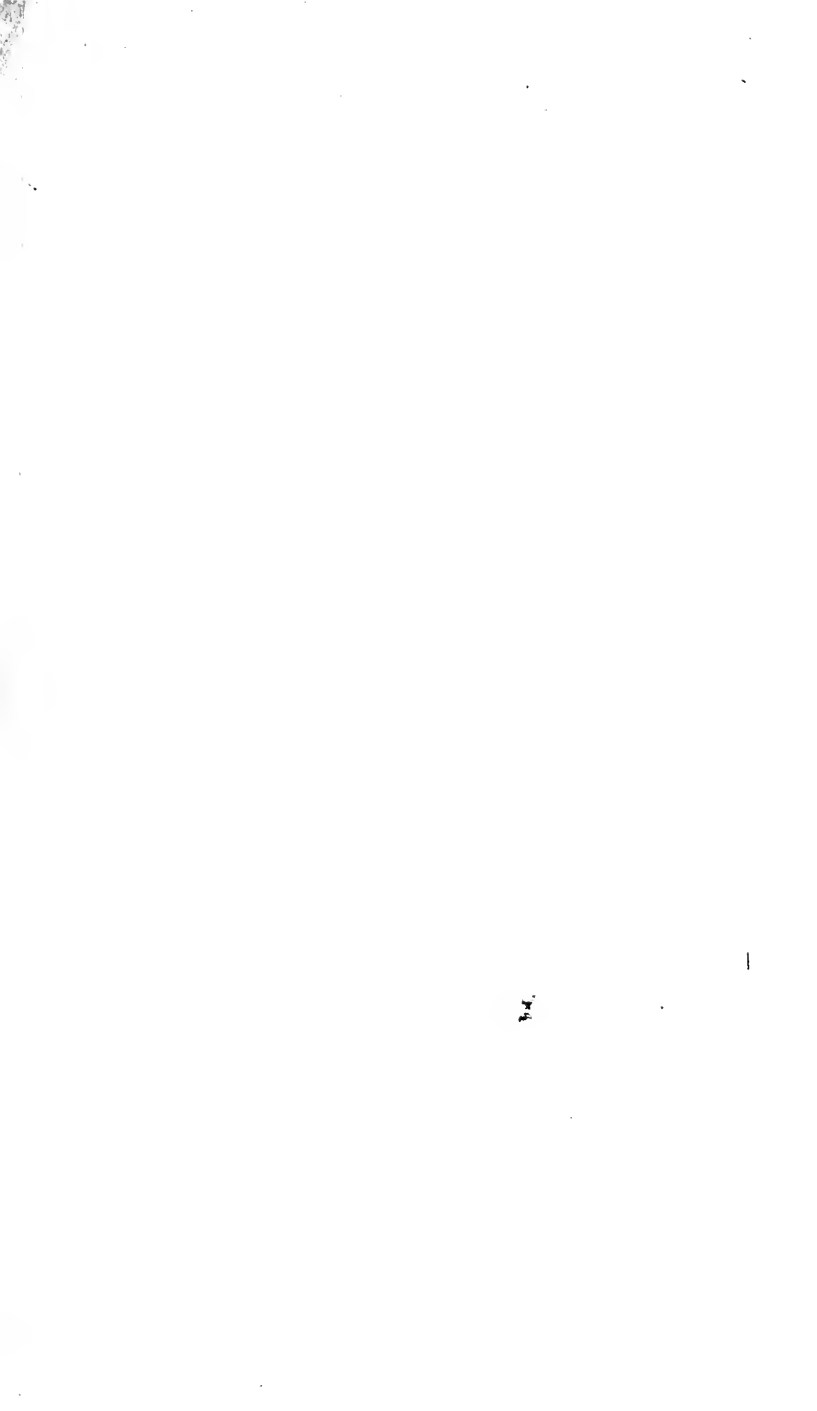
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RETHDRAWN



# SERMONS

ON THE

Following SUBJECTS,

VIZ.

Of that Belief which is necessary to Baptism.	The Qualifications of Those that shall be saved.
The Design and End of Baptism is Newness of Life.	That the Terms of Salvation are offered to All Men.
Of being baptized into the Name of any Person.	The Qualifications necessary to receive the Terms of Salvation.
The Nature, End and Design of the Holy Communion,	Mens not accepting the Terms of Salvation is from Themselves.
Of the Catholick Church of Christ.	Of the Nature of true Christian Zeal.
Of the Number of Those that shall be saved.	

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By *SAMUEL CLARKE*, D. D.  
late Rector of St *James's, Westminster.*

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*Published from the AUTHOR's Manuscript,*  
By *JOHN CLARKE*, D. D. Dean of *Sarum.*

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zed

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SERMON



# S E R M O N I.

Of that Belief which is necessary  
to Baptism.



St MARK XVI. 16.

*He that believeth and is baptized,  
shall be saved; But he that be-  
lieveth not, shall be damned.*



THESE Words, together with S E R M.  
the Verse foregoing, are an I.  
*Abridgement* of our Savi-  
our's last instructions and  
directions to his Disciples,  
a little before his Departure from  
them and Ascension into Heaven: *He*  
VOL. IV. B *said*

SERM. said unto them, Go ye into all the World,  
 I. and preach the Gospel to every creature:  
 He that believeth and is baptized, shall  
 be saved; But he that believeth not, shall  
 be damned. And that they are nothing  
 more than such a brief Summary or  
*Abridgment* of his Discourse, is evident,  
 both from the *whole Tenor* of the Go-  
 spels in *general*, wherein almost *All* his  
 Discourses are recorded after This man-  
 ner, in One more briefly, in Another  
 more at large; and *particularly* from  
 comparing the Account the several Go-  
 spels give us, of *this very Particular*.

FOR *St Matthew* in *His Gospel*, has  
 left us upon record some *other* parts of  
 the same Discourse, ch. xxviii. 18, *All*  
*Power*, says our Lord, *is given unto me*  
*in Heaven and in Earth: Go ye therefore*  
*and teach all Nations, baptizing them in*  
*the Name of the Father, and of the Son,*  
*and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them*  
*to observe all things whatsoever I have*  
*commanded you; and lo, I am with you*  
*always, even unto the end of the World.*  
 The Words, *Teaching them to observe*  
 all

*all things whatsoever I have commanded* S E R M.  
*you, show that even This also, is but* I.  
another short Abridgment of the same  
Discourse.

St *Luke*, in *His* Gospel, gives us a still more particular Account, how our Lord appeared to his Disciples in the way to *Emmaus*, and beginning at *Moses* and all the Prophets, expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, ch. xxiv. 27. And afterwards at another Appearance before his Ascending, ver. 45, *Then opened he their Understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures; And said unto them; Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; And that Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name among all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem; And ye are Witnesses of these things.*

St *John* adds several other Circumstances; of his particularly convincing St *Thomas*; of his appearing at several other times to his Apostles; and of his

S E R M using the following Words to them in  
 I. his last Instructions, ch. xx. 21, *As my  
 Father hath sent me, even so send I you;  
 — Whosoever Sins ye remit, they are  
 remitted unto them; and whosoever Sins  
 ye retain, they are retained.* That is;  
 whosoever receiveth the Doctrine I send  
 you to preach, for the Remission of Sins,  
 and complieth with the Terms thereof,  
 his Sins shall be forgiven: Or, as the  
 same Sense is expressed by other Words  
 in the Text, *He that believeth, and is  
 baptized, shall be saved.* But whoso-  
 ever rejecteth your Doctrine, and com-  
 plieth not with the Conditions therein  
 offered him from God; his Sins shall be  
 retained, and he must consequently pe-  
 rish. In the Phrase of the Text; *he that  
 believeth not, shall be damned.*

St Luke, in his History of the *Acts*,  
 tells us yet further, that our Lord was  
 seen of his Disciples after his Passion  
 for *forty days* together, *Acts* i. 3; and  
 that That time was spent in instructing  
 them in *the Things pertaining to the  
 Kingdom of God.*

FROM these several Passages compared together, 'tis evident, that St *Mark* did not intend the Words of the Text should be taken to be the *very* Words, and the *whole* of the Words, which our Saviour spake; but on the contrary, that they should be understood only as an *Abridgment* of his last instructions to his Disciples; and so not be taken in their bare literal Signification, but as well known by common Use, in a short and abbreviate manner of speaking, to comprehend more than they might otherwise seem at first sight to express. In order to understand therefore their full meaning, we ought to take Notice, that to the Words *Believe* and *be Baptized*, St *Luke*, in relating our Saviour's giving these very same Instructions to his Apostles, adds *Repentance* for the Remission of Sins; And St *Matthew* adds further, Observing *all things whatsoever I have commanded you*. And thence it will appear, that, by *believing* and *being baptized*, St *Mark* plainly means, *Believing, Repenting, and Obeying the Gospel*. All

S E R M. which, there was no need to express at length; because it was perfectly well understood in the common Use and Acceptation of each of those Words among Christians, that the part was always supposed to be put, in a brief way of speaking, for the whole; and that, wherever any *One* of these Words was used, it always signified the same as if all *Three* were expressed. The Reason whereof is plain; Because in reality these things cannot be separated from each other; To *believe* the Gospel, without *repenting* and *obeying* it, being *not* indeed *believing* it, but only *pretending* to do so. And hence it is, that, throughout the whole New Testament, *Faith* generally signifies, not bare abstract Belief, but the whole Obligation of the Christian Religion, including *Repentance*, *Fidelity*, and *Obedience*; just as *Repentance* likewise signifies, not the bare Sorrow for Sin, but the actual *forsaking* it also, and the effectual *reforming* our manners. *Baptism* also must always be understood to signify, not the bare Rite, the



the outward Form or Ceremony, *the* S E R M.  
*washing away of the Filth of the Flesh;* I.  
 but *the Answer of a good Conscience to-*  
*wards God:* Not the being baptized  
 with *Water* only, but the being *born*  
*of Water and of the Spirit:* Not the be-  
 ing baptized only into the Name of *the*  
*Father and of the Son and of the Holy*  
*Ghost;* but the being *taught* also to ob-  
 serve *whatsoever I have commanded you;*  
 as our Saviour adds in the very Words  
 of Institution, *St Matt. xxviii. 20. To*  
*believe* therefore, and to *be baptized;* is  
 to believe *the Gospel,* and to enter into  
 a *solemn Obligation* to obey it. And as,  
 under the *Law,* to him that transgressed  
 the Law, his *Circumcision* (says the A-  
 postle) *is made Uncircumcision;* so under  
 the *Gospel,* to him that obeys not the  
 Gospel, his *Baptism* is *no Baptism* to any  
 spiritual Purpose, but a mere natural  
 Washing of the Body, without Fruit or  
 Efficacy. In like manner on the other  
 side, the *Unbelief* of them who in Scri-  
 pture are condemned for *Not believing,*  
 is not the bare Negative Disbelief of

S E R M. what men do not clearly Know, or  
 I. have not sufficient Means of coming to  
 the Knowledge of; but always, either  
 an obstinate rejecting of what is distinctly  
 proposed to them, and, through the  
 Love of Vice, refusing to consider what  
 might be sufficiently proved to them;  
 or else, and indeed more usually, it signifies,  
 the Disobedience of those who  
 hypocritically profess, or perhaps care-  
 lessly fancy themselves, to be Believers.  
 In either of these Senses, *He that believeth not*, saith our Saviour, *shall be damned*. And there was no need of adding in this second Clause, as he had done in the first, any mention of *Baptism*: Because, in the *first* Case, *Believing* is *not* sufficient without entering into the Obligation to obey, and therefore *Both* were necessary to be distinctly mentioned; but, in the *latter* case, *Unbelief* implies *in course* the Neglecting or the renouncing of *Baptism*, and therefore it was sufficient that that alone was expressed. The full meaning therefore of the Words of the Text, compared with  
 the



the passages in the *other* Gospels, where-  
in the same History is recorded, is This.  
He that believes the Doctrine of the  
Gospel when preached to him, and by  
Baptism enters into an Obligation to live  
suitably to that Belief, and verifies that  
Obligation by his following Practice, in  
a Life of Virtue, Righteousness and Cha-  
rity; the same shall be saved: But he  
that rejects the Doctrine of the Gospel,  
when duly and reasonably proposed to  
him; or pretending to embrace it, yet  
obeys it not; (Both which, in Scripture-  
phrase, are equally stiled *Unbelief*;) the  
same shall be damned.

THE general Meaning of the Words  
being thus briefly explained, I shall in  
the following Discourse, for the more  
particular justifying the several Parts of  
This Explication, and for the more clear-  
ly illustrating so universal and important  
a Doctrine, endeavour to show distinctly,  
*1st*, What the *Thing to be believed*, or  
what the *Subject-matter* of that Belief  
is, which our Saviour here declares to  
be so necessary to Salvation. *2dly*, What  
the

S E R M. the *Manner* of the Belief, or what the  
 I. *Nature and Extent* of that *Act* of Believing is, which is here so indispensably required. 3dly, Whence it comes to pass, that *Believing*, which in other cases is a Matter of Indifference, of Prudence or Understanding only, and not of Morality; yet in the Case of Religion, is so highly esteemed: And These with regard to the *former* part of the Words; *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.* Then with regard to the latter part of the Words; *He that believeth not, shall be damned;* I shall inquire 1st, What is the full and proper meaning of this Phrase of *not believing*; and 2dly, Whence it comes to pass, that *Unbelief* is in Scripture always so severely censured, as being the greatest of Crimes.

IN the 1st place, It is a matter of the greatest importance, to inquire *What the Thing to be believed*, or what the *Subject-matter* of that Belief is, which our Saviour here declares to be so necessary to Salvation. And because it is  
 neces-

necessary to every man's Salvation, to whom the Gospel is duly preached; 'tis therefore evident at first Sight, that it must of Necessity be something, which every man is equally capable of understanding. For that God should make any thing necessary to any man's Salvation, which That man, to whom it is necessary, is not made capable of understanding and knowing; is contrary to common Sense, and to the Nature of God the righteous Judge. The Doctrine of the Gospel therefore, on the Belief whereof our Saviour in the Text makes *all mens* Salvation to depend; (that is, the Salvation of *all men to whom* that Doctrine is duly and reasonably proposed;) is not, cannot be, any Matter of Intricacy and Difficulty, any thing that requires Learning or Subtilty to apprehend; but 'tis a Doctrine of *Practice*, a Doctrine of *Virtue* and *Righteousness*, proposed as of Necessity to be embraced by All men alike; by the Learned and the Ignorant, by the Rich and the Poor, by the Wise and the Simple, by the  
Teacher

S E R M.  
I.  
~


SERM. Teacher and by the Meanest of Them  
 I. that are taught. For since they All  
 have Souls alike to be saved, and must  
 All appear equally before the Judgment-  
 Seat of Christ; 'tis plain they must All  
 understand the Rule by which they are  
 to be judged; and That Rule must con-  
 sequently be level to the Capacities of  
 them All. *Degrees* indeed of Know-  
 ledge there are; and accordingly to  
 whom much or little is given, of him  
 proportionably will much or little be re-  
 quired. But as to the main *Body* of the  
 Rule, the great and *Fundamental* Do-  
 ctrines of Religion, the things *covenanted*  
*about* at Baptism, the things to be known  
 and believed as of *general* absolute *Ne-*  
*cessity* to Salvation; these cannot but be  
 equally intelligible to persons of all Ca-  
 pacities. And accordingly the Chara-  
 cter the Scripture gives us of the Doctrine  
 of the Gospel, is This; that it is made  
*plain that he that runs may read it*, Hab.  
 ii. 2. And in the Prophecy of *Jerem-*  
*miah*, ch. xxxi. 33, applied by St Paul,  
*Heb. viii. 11, I will put my laws into*  
*their*

*their mind, saith the Lord, and write* S E R M.  
*them in their Hearts; — and they shall* I.  
*not teach every man his Neighbour, and*  
*every man his Brother, saying, Know the*  
*Lord; For all shall know me from the*  
*least to the greatest. And again, Deut.*  
*xxx. 11, expressly applied by the Apostle*  
*to the Doctrine of Christ, Rom. x. 6, The*  
*commandment which I command thee This*  
*day, is not bidden from thee, neither is it*  
*far off; it is not in Heaven, that thou*  
*shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to*  
*Heaven, and bring it unto us, that we*  
*may hear it and do it? Neither is it be-*  
*yond the Sea, that thou shouldst say, Who*  
*shall go over the Sea for us, and bring it*  
*unto us, that we may hear it and do it?*  
*But the Word is very nigh unto thee,*  
*even in thy mouth and in thy heart, that*  
*thou mayest do it. And here, 'tis very*  
*obvious to ask; if the Doctrine, of*  
*which our Saviour declares, that he who*  
*believes and is baptized into it, shall be*  
*saved, be so very plain, and nigh unto us;*  
*Where then is it expressly and explicitly*  
*to be found? and what is it, that every*  
*sincere, every well-disposed person, may*  
*so*

S E R M. so easily understand; and, by embracing  
 I. and being guided by it, be undoubtedly  
 saved? I answer: 'Tis as to its ultimate  
 and most essential parts implanted in our  
 very nature and Reason. 'Tis more distinctly  
 and authoritatively delivered to us in  
 the Discourses of our Saviour, and in the  
 Writings of the Apostles; and repeated  
 over and over again, and inculcated perpetually  
 throughout the whole Scripture. The  
 Sermons of our Saviour himself in the  
 Gospels, are so plain and intelligible, that  
 hardly any well-disposed person *can* misunderstand  
 them. In the Epistles of the  
 Apostles, the plain and universal necessary  
 Doctrines, are intermixed indeed  
 with particular and more difficult determinations  
 of certain points of Controversy, peculiarly  
 necessary and well-known in Those Times;  
 useful and instructive at *all* times to All  
 that have Capacities and Abilities to consider  
 the several Occasions of their being written;  
 but not absolutely and indispensably  
 needful to be exactly understood by every  
 single Christian for his own Salvation.  
 The Primitive Church therefore, used



to select out of These, the universally necessary and Fundamental Doctrines, wherein to instruct All persons, who, by believing and being baptized, were desirous to secure to themselves the Promise in the Text, that, by so doing, they should be saved. In which Matter, that the Authority of the Doctrines revealed immediately from God, might be diminished as little as possible by any mixture of human Fallibility; they kept as near as could be, to the very Words themselves, the undoubted and indisputable Words of Scripture. And the Sum of the Doctrines so expressed, as of Necessity to be believed by All to whom they were preached, was after This or the like manner. That there is One God, the Father and Lord of All things, the Maker of Heaven and Earth; the Preserver, Governour, and Judge of All; who is above All, and through All, and in us All. That by the Sins and Impieties of Men, this Supreme Governour of the World, who is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity, was justly offended;

S E R M.  
I.  


S E R M. fended; and They consequently, be-  
 I. come the Objects of his Anger and Dis-  
 pleasure. That yet compassionating the  
 Frailty of our Nature, he resolved to  
 have Mercy upon sinful Man, in such a  
 manner, as not to give countenance or  
 encouragement to Sin; and accordingly  
 sent forth his own Son, the Brightness  
 of his Glory, and the Express Image of  
 his Person, both to condemn Sin in the  
 Flesh, and at the same time to obtain  
 pardon for it, by the shedding of his  
 own blood. That, to this end, the Son  
 of God freely and willingly left the bo-  
 som of his Father, was incarnate and  
 made in the likeness of Man, became  
 subject to all the infirmities and weak-  
 nesses of our Nature; lived therein ho-  
 lily and purely, without spot of Sin;  
 preached and declared the Will of his  
 Father to Mankind; set an Example of  
 all Virtue, Righteousness and Patience  
 in his Conversation; gave himself up in-  
 to the Hands of Wicked Men, to be  
 crucified and slain for our Sins; rose a-  
 gain the third day from the Dead; as-  
 cended

cended up into Heaven, and sat down on the right Hand of the Throne of God; and sent forth his Holy Spirit, (the same Spirit of God, which spake of old by the Prophets,) to inspire his Apostles in like manner, and inable them with Power and Authority to preach Repentance and Remission of Sins in his Name, to all Nations. That by the same Spirit, he now governs and sanctifies his Church, and will continue to do so unto the End of the World. At which Time he shall come again in the glory of his Father, and raise the whole World from the Dead, and shall judge every One according to his Works. The Devil, and all those Angels which followed him in his first Transgression; and all wicked Men, who have suffered themselves to be seduced by him; the impious and the profane, the unrighteous and unjust, the unholy and the impure; these he shall condemn to be cast into the furnace of Fire; where they shall every one be punished with exact Justice according to their several Deserts. But All holy and

S E R M. good Men; who under the several Dispensations of God's true Religion in all Ages and in all Nations from the beginning of the World, either in Obedience to the Light of Nature, with *Enoch* and *Noah* and *Job* and the Patriarchs; or under the Law, with *Moses* and the Prophets; or under the Gospel, after the Example of the Apostles and Disciples of our Lord, have in Piety and Devotion, in Righteousness, Equity and Charity, in Holiness and Purity of Life, served God and kept his Commandments, either from the beginning of their Lives, or from the time of their forsaking their Sins by Repentance; these he shall reward with everlasting and inexpressible Happiness, each in their several Degree, in the eternal Kingdom of his Father; in that general Assembly and Church of the First-born, where the Spirits of just men made perfect, together with the innumerable company of Angels, and with Jesus the Mediator and great High-Priest of the New Covenant, shall stand continually in the presence of God the Judge

Judge of All, and shall serve him before <sup>S</sup> E R M.  
his Throne for ever. This is that Form  
of Sound Words, that Summary of <sup>I.</sup>  
necessary Truth, which the Apostle exhorts  
all men to hold fast. This is that uni-  
versal Doctrine, in the Profession of  
which consists the Unity of the Catho-  
lick Church of Christ under all Diffe-  
rences of external Forms, and under all  
Variety of Opinions in other and less  
important matters, in all Ages and tho-  
rough all Nations over the Face of the  
whole Earth. This is that Doctrine,  
which whosoever sincerely believes, and  
verifies that belief by a suitable Pra-  
ctice, shall be saved. *Other* Doctrines  
there are, delivered in Scripture, useful  
*for reproof, for correction, for instruction*  
in many particular Cases; but not indis-  
pensably necessary to be understood by  
every man. And still other Doctrines  
there are, and Explications of Doctrines,  
delivered by the Authority of *Men*;  
sometimes profitable indeed and helpful  
for the understanding of Scripture, but  
more frequently occasioning nothing but

S E R M. vain Contentions and empty Disputes;  
 I. which hinder rather than promote mens  
 Salvation. At least *Necessary to Salva-*  
*tion*, there cannot any thing be, besides  
 that general Doctrine before-mentioned;  
 which All men can as universally under-  
 stand, as they are universally concerned  
 to look after their own Salvation; and  
 of which our Lord declares, that *He*  
*that believeth and is Baptized* into it,  
*shall be saved.*

T H I S therefore may suffice concern-  
 ing the 1<sup>st</sup> Particular, *viz.* What the  
*Thing to be believed*, or what the *Sub-*  
*ject-Matter* of that Belief is, which  
 our Saviour here declares to be so  
 necessary to Salvation. 2<sup>dly</sup>, I am to  
 consider in the next place, what the  
*Manner* of the Belief, or what the *Na-*  
*ture and Extent* of that *Act* of Believing  
 is, which is here so indispensably re-  
 quired. And to Him that seriously con-  
 siders the Scriptures upon this Head, it  
 will plainly appear, that therein is al-  
 ways intended such a firm and rational  
 Perswasion, as is *founded* upon reason-  
 able

able and good grounds, and produces suitable and proper Effects. There have been some so unreasonable, as, from these Words of our Saviour, *He that believeth shall be saved*; and from other passages of Scripture, wherein men are said to be justified by Faith; and, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved; to conclude that mere Credulity, how inconsiderate soever, and how little effect soever it has upon their lives, will entitle them to Salvation. But tho' in a short and concise manner of speaking, the Part is indeed sometimes thus put for the Whole, yet very often the Whole is fully expressed; and, where it is not, yet Reason and the general Tenor of Scripture shows, that it is always understood. I say therefore, that to Believe, constantly implies these two Things. 1<sup>st</sup>, a Firm Perswasion, founded upon reasonable and good grounds. And This in opposition to such a careless Credulity, as, like a Foundation in the Sand, quickly suffers whatever is built upon it to fall to the Ground. *The Simple believeth*


S E R M.  
I.  
~~~~~

ACTS xvi.  
31.


SER M. *lieveth every word, but the prudent man  
I. looketh well to his going, Prov. xiv. 15.*

The Bereans are commended, *Acts xvii. 11*, for *searching the Scriptures of the Old Testament daily, whether the things taught them by the Apostles were so or not.* (Far from That Popish Notion, of believing at a venture as the Church believes; they are commended, for not having an implicit Faith even in the *Apostles* themselves, but *searching the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*) And St *Thomas's* careful and inquisitive Faith, was by our Saviour himself thought fit to be confirmed in the following singular and most affectionate manner, *St Job. xx. 27. Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing.* He does indeed, in the next Words, pronounce *Them still More* blessed, *who have not seen, and yet have believed.* But his meaning therein, is not to recommend a careless and inconsiderate Credulity, which he elsewhere compares to Corn sown



sown upon a Rock, which springs up S E R M.  
indeed suddenly, but soon withers for I.  
want of Root; but his Design on the   
contrary, is highly to commend the Di-  
ligence of those, who, having not the  
opportunity which St Thomas had; and  
considering, that *Faith* is most properly  
the *Substance of things hoped for*, the Heb. xi. 1.  
*Evidence of things not seen*; and that Rom. viii.  
*Hope that is seen, is not Hope; for what* <sup>24</sup>  
*a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?*  
his Design, I say, is to commend the Di-  
ligence of those, who *hoping for that they*  
*see not, do with Patience wait for it*, Rom.  
viii. 25; who beholding *the Promises a-*  
*far off*, and being perswaded of them, en-  
dure with Moses, (Heb. xi. 13, 27,) as  
seeing him which is invisible; in a word,  
who, by *inquiring and searching dili-*  
*gently*, (as St Peter expresses it, 1 Pet. i.  
8,) attain to a satisfactory and rational  
conviction of the Truth of the Doctrine  
of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;  
whom, having not seen, they love; in  
whom, though now they see him not, yet  
believing they rejoice with joy unspeak-  
able,

S E R M. *able and full of Glory.* They consider, the Purity and Excellency of the Doctrine itself, and its agreeableness to Reason, and to the Nature and Attributes of God: They ponder the Evidence of the Miracles he worked; which, though they behold not Themselves, yet they find attested by the greatest and most remarkable Testimony that was ever given to any Fact in the World: They examine the Prophecies which went before concerning him, and compare all the Actions of his Life with those antient Predictions; *Searching what Things, and what manner of Time the Spirit of Christ which was in the Prophets did signify, when it testified before-hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow,* 1 Pet. i. 11. They consider also the Prophecies that He himself delivered, and his Apostles after him; and compare them with the whole Series of Events, and general Dispensations of Providence through all the Ages of the World. And by these means they work in themselves a Firm Perswasion, *founded upon*  
 reasona-

reasonable and good grounds; which is S E R M.  
the 1<sup>st</sup> thing, that I said *Believing*, in I.  
the Scripture-sense, constantly implies. 

The 2<sup>d</sup> is, that it be such a Perswasion of Mind, as *produces* suitable and proper *Effects*: *He that believeth, and is baptized.* But This; together with the Reasons, why *Believing*, in this case, is so highly esteemed and rewarded; *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved*; and the consideration of its contrary, *Unbelief*; and the reasons why That is declared so criminal and so severely condemned; *He that believeth not, shall be damned*; must be referred to a farther Opportunity.







# SERMON II.

Of that Belief which is necessary  
to Baptism.




St MARK xvi. 16.

*He that believeth and is baptized,  
shall be saved; But he that be-  
lieveth not, shall be damned.*



IN a Former Discourse upon SERMON  
these Words, I proposed to II.  
consider, 1<sup>st</sup>, What the *Thing*  
*to be believed*, or what the  
*Subject-matter* of that Belief is, which  
our Saviour here declares to be so neces-  
sary to Salvation. 2<sup>dly</sup>, What the *Man-  
ner*

S E R M. *ner* of the Belief, or what the *Nature*  
 II. *and Extent* of that *Act* of Believing is,  
 which is here so indispensably required.  
 3dly, Whence it comes to pass, that *Be-*  
*lieving*, which in other cases is a Mat-  
 ter of Indifference, of Prudence or Un-  
 derstanding only, and not of Morality;  
 yet in the Case of Religion, is so highly  
 esteemed. And These with regard to  
 the 1st part of the Words; *He that be-*  
*lieveth and is baptized*, shall be saved.  
 Then with Regard to the Latter part of  
 the Words; *he that believeth not*, shall be  
*damned*; 1st, What is the full and pro-  
 per meaning of this Phrase of *not be-*  
*lieving*; and 2dly, Whence it comes to-  
 pass, that *Unbelief* is in Scripture always  
 so severely censured, as being the great-  
 est of Crimes. In the 1st place, What  
 the *Thing to be believed*, or what the  
*Subject-Matter* of that Belief is, which  
 our Saviour here declares to be so neces-  
 sary to Salvation, I have already ex-  
 plained. 2dly, As to the *Manner* of the  
 Belief, or what the *Nature and Extent*  
 of that *Act* of Believing is, which is here  
 so

so indispensably required; I observed S E R M.  
 that, in Scripture-sense, it always im- II.  
 ports such a firm and rational Perswasion   
 of Mind, as is *founded* upon reasonable  
 and good *grounds*, and *produces* suitable  
 and proper *Effects*. The Explication of  
 the former part of this Proposition, I  
 have already gone through; *viz.* that  
*Belief*, in Scripture-sense, always im-  
 ports such a firm and rational Perswa-  
 sion of Mind, as is *founded* upon reason-  
 able and good *grounds*. It remains that  
 I proceed at this Time, to show that it  
 also constantly signifies such a Perswa-  
 sion, as *produces* suitable and proper *Ef-*  
*fects*.

AND This is evident in the first place,  
 from the very *Nature* and *Reason* of the  
 Thing. For, as the Shadow or Image  
 of a Man, is not the Man himself; nor  
 a dead Corpse, the Person, whose Body  
 only it is: And, in all other Cases,  
 Things are valued only by their Power  
 and Efficacy; and are what they are, not  
 by the mere denomination or external  
 Appearance, but by their real Nature and  
 inward

S E R M. inward Virtues or Qualities: So *Faith*,  
 II. is not a bare empty Assent to the Truth  
 of the Gospel, a Means considered separate from its intended End; but 'tis such an *Effectual* Assent of the *Understanding*, as by a regular Operation influences and determines the *Will*, and thereby governs the Man's *Life and Actions*; shewing forth itself in the Fruits of true Virtue. And He of whom our Saviour declares in the Text, that he *shall be saved* because he *believeth*; is not he who proposes to believe, what in his Actions he has no regard to; but he who by the Fruit and Effects of a Christian and Good Life, shews that he really has within himself That Faith, which is the Root, the Spring, and the Cause of such Actions.

ALL which, as it is evident from the *Nature and Reason* of the thing itself, so it is farther apparent from our Saviour's adding those Words, *And is baptized. He that believeth, and is baptized*; That is, which believeth the Gospel, and entreteth into a solemn Obligation



*necessary to Baptism.*

31

tion to obey it, and verifies That Obligation by a suitable Practice in the following Course of his Life; He *shall be saved*. For so the Apostle expressly explains it; that the *Baptism* which saves us, is not the putting away the Filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God, 1 Pet. iii. 21. And our Saviour himself paraphraseth his own Command, (*baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,*) by the Words immediately following; *Matt. xxviii. 20, Teaching them to Observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* And in his Discourse with *Nicodemus*, St *Job. iii. 5, Except a man be born, saith he, of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* The Baptism of Water, is but the Sign or Emblem; the Baptism of the *Spirit*, is the reality or thing signified. And what *That* means, *viz.* the being *Baptized* or *Born* of the *Spirit*, the Apostle tells us, 2 *Th. ii. 13, God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit,*

S E R M.

II.

SER M. *Spirit, and Belief of the Truth.* What our Saviour, in the words of the Text, calls *believing* and being *baptized*; and in St *John's* Gospel, being *baptized with Water and the Spirit*; St *Paul* here styles *Belief of the Truth*, and *Sanctification of the Spirit*. And what *That Sanctification* is, he explains still more distinctly, 1 Cor. vi. 11, *Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God?—And such were some of you; But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God.* Hence Baptism is called, *the Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins*; And Baptized persons who answer their Profession, are said to have *washed their robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.* The literal meaning of which figurative expression, is thus set down by the Prophet; *Is. i. 16, Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well;—Then though your Sins be*  
as

Rev. vii.  
14.

as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; S E R M.  
 though they be red like crimson, they shall II.  
 be as wool. Now, as the Scripture thus  
 fully explains *This* part of our Saviour's  
 Words, *he that is Baptized*, to signify a  
 man's entring into a solemn Obligation  
 to obey the Gospel, and his verifying  
 That Obligation by a suitable Practice;  
 so does it, in numberless places, as clear-  
 ly explain those *other* Words also, *he*  
*that Believeth*, to signify always such a  
 Perswasion of Mind, as stops not with-  
 out producing its proper *Effects*. What  
 is here called *Believing*, is elsewhere ex-  
 pressed more distinctly, *Repent ye, and*  
*believe the Gospel*, St Mar. i. 15. In an-  
 other place, 'tis styled *believing with the*  
*Heart unto Righteousness, and with the*  
*Mouth making confession unto Salvation*,  
 Rom. x. 10. In other places, 'tis called  
 believing and persevering; Heb. x. 39,  
*We are not of them who draw back unto*  
*perdition, but of them that believe to the*  
*saving of the Soul*; where *believing* being  
 opposed to *drawing back*, must of neces-  
 sity signify *That Perseverance* which is

S E R M. the effect of True Faith. And 1 Cor.  
 II. XV. 2, *By which ye are saved, if ye keep  
 in memory what I preached unto you, unless  
 ye have believed in vain.* In the sixth  
 chapter of St John's Gospel, what our  
 Saviour says, ver. 40 and 47, *He that  
 believeth on me, hath everlasting life;* is  
 at the 54th verse repeated in another form  
 of Expression, *Whoso eateth my flesh and  
 drinketh my blood, hath eternal Life:*  
 That is; He who in a constant Imita-  
 tion of me and Obedience to my Com-  
 mands, continues united to me by a Vi-  
 tal Participation, as Members of the Bo-  
 dy with their Head; *he* has the promise  
 of eternal Life remaining in him. In  
 other passages of Scripture, what is meant  
 by *believing*, sufficiently appears from  
 the parallel Expressions, by which it is  
 described. *Acts* vi. 7, 'tis being obedient  
 to the Faith; and again, *Rom.* i. 5, *the  
 Obedience of Faith.* Ch. ix. 30, 'tis call-  
 led *the Righteousness of Faith;* and *Phil.*  
 iii. 9, *the righteousness which is of God  
 by Faith.* 1 *Tim.* i. 19, 'tis *Faith and a  
 good Conscience;* and ch. iii. 9, *Faith in  
 a pure*

a pure conscience. Gal. v. 6, 'tis Faith S E R M.  
 which worketh by Love; and Tit. iii. 8, II.  
 They which have believed in God, must be  
 careful to maintain good Works. In  
 these and numberless other the like pla-  
 ces, sufficient Care is taken to satisfy all  
 reasonable Persons, that *Belief* is in the  
 Gospel always valued, not by its *Denom-*  
*ination*, but by its *Effects*. And yet,  
 to prevent all Possibility of Mistake in  
 a matter of such extreme importance,  
 there is still a clearer and more express  
 way of speaking, for explication of this  
 Doctrine, made use of by St *James*,  
 ch. ii. of his Epistle; where he tells us,  
 that *Faith without Works* can no more  
*save* a man, than good Words without  
 Deeds can feed the Hungry, or cloath the  
 Naked, ver. 14, 15; that even the *De-*  
*vils* themselves *believe*, and tremble, ver.  
 19; that *Abraham our Father* was *justi-*  
*fied by Works*, or (which is the same  
 thing) was *therefore* justified by Faith,  
 because by *Works* was his *Faith* made *per-*  
*fect*, ver. 21, 22; that, *as the Body with-*  
*out the Spirit is dead, so Faith without*

S E R M. *Works is dead also, ver. 26. And by our*  
 II. *Saviour himself, St Matt. vii. 21. Not*  
 every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that Doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven; and ver. 26, he that heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, that built his House upon the Sand. From which clear and decisive Expressions it appears most evidently, that when St Paul says we are justified by Faith without the deeds of the Law, he must be understood to mean by Faith, not a bare speculative Belief, but such Belief and Moral Obedience to the Commands of the Gospel, as are opposed to the ceremonial Works of the Mosaic Law: And that, when 'tis said, Acts xiii. 39, that by Christ, All who believe, are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses; it must be understood, All who so believe, as to repent and forsake those Sins, from which they hope to be justified by that Faith. And that when 'tis said, Acts xv. 9, that

9, that God *purified* the hearts of the Gentiles, by *Faith*; it must needs be understood of *such* a Faith, as St Peter describes in his First Epistle, ch. i. 21, 22, when he says, *you who by Christ do believe in God, — have purified your souls in obeying the Truth.* All which explanations of the Word, *Believing*; are further confirmed, by the like Use of *other* Phrases in Scripture; where *Other* single Virtues, as *Hope, Love, Fear, the Knowledge of God, and calling upon the Name of the Lord,* are by a like Figure put for the whole of Religion: As they are plainly declared to be, either by the *Manner of Expression* itself in the places where they are mentioned, or by *distinct Explication* in other passages. *Hope*, when it is used to signify a *Virtue*, can for That only Reason be supposed to be so, because the Ground or Foundation on which it is built, is the *having obeyed* the Commandments of God. *Fear*, in like manner, when it is not a Passion, but a *Virtue*, evidently signifies such a filial or reverential Fear, as is the same with Obedience. Our *Love of God*, is by our

S E R M.  
II.  


SERM

II.

nd ver.

15. 23

Saviour himself distinctly defined, St *Job.* xiv. 21, *He that bath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me*; and by the Apostle, 1 *Job.* v. 3, *This is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments.* In like manner, the *Knowledge of God*, 1 *Joh.* ii. 3, 4; *Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a Liar, and the Truth is not in him.* And what is affirmed, *Acts* ii. 21, that *whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord, shall be saved*; is by our Saviour fully explained in the place before-cited, *Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that Doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven.* By the same Analogy therefore, *Belief* also must always be understood to signify, not, barely an empty Assent, but such a Conviction of the Understanding, as fails not to operate by a suitable Obedience of the Will and Actions.

AND This may suffice for Explication of the *second* particular in the Text,  
 What



What the *Manner* of the Belief, or what S E R M. the *Nature* and *Extent* of that *Act* of II. Believing is, which is here so indispensably required; namely, that it is such a firm and rational Perswasion of Mind, as is *founded* upon reasonable and good *grounds*, and produces suitable and proper *Effects*.

THE 3<sup>d</sup> Particular to be considered, was, whence it comes to pass, that *Believing*, which in other cases is a Matter of Indifference, of Prudence or Understanding only, and not of Morality; yet in the case of Religion is so highly esteemed; *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.* And the Reasons are;

1<sup>st</sup>, BECAUSE, in practical Matters, it is an Act, not of the *Understanding* only, but partly of the *Will* also, to attend and be willing to submit to reasonable Evidence; to lay aside the Prejudices of Lusts and Passions; to suffer Reason and Argument to prevail over worldly Interests; and to embrace a Doctrine of Truth and Right, merely upon the Evidence of its being such,

S E R M. without regard to temporal Considerations. *Believing*, in matters of strict Demonstration, is an Act, not of Choice, but of Necessity. In Questions of uncertain Speculation, 'tis a thing merely indifferent, neither good nor evil, or, at most, a part of Prudence or Imprudence only. But in matters of Practice, to Believe and be guided by Reason and Evidence, not by Inclination and Passion; as 'tis the most proper and natural, so 'tis one of the most commendable and excellent Actions of a rational Being. Hence in Scripture, the singular Commendation given the *Bereans*, *Acts xvii. 11.* is founded upon This, that *they searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so or not.* And the high Encomium bestowed upon *Abraham's Faith* is upon this ground, *Heb. xi. 19*, that he *Accounted*, (the word in the original is, he *Reasoned within himself*, and was *satisfied*,) *that God was able to raise up his Son Isaac again, even from the Dead:* And our Saviour's Approbation of the *Canaanitish Woman*, *O Woman, great is thy Faith,*

Faith, Mat. xv. 28, was occasioned by her arguing reasonably, that as *even the dogs eat of the Crumbs that fall from the childrens table*, so she, though an Alien from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, yet might hope for some small portion of Blessing from the Messiah, who was sent into the World by the common creator of All men. And the extraordinary Character he gives the *Centurion*; *I have not found so great Faith, no, not in Israel*, Mat. viii. 10, was upon This account, that he *reasoned himself* into a Belief of Jesus's power to heal Diseases at a *Distance*, by considering that even *he himself* also, though a Person infinitely inferior to our Lord, yet had *Servants* under him, so that he needed not to go in his own Person, but could *say to This man, Go, and be goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh*. The particular Commendation given to these Persons Faith, was, that it was not a rash Credulity, but a reasonable, considerate, and well-grounded Belief. And accordingly the Scripture, in other places, directs us to try *the Spirits, whether*

S E R M.  
II.  


SERM. *ther they are of God, 1 Joh. iv. 1; and*  
 II. *exhorts us to be ready always to give an*  
 answer to every man that asks us a reason of the hope that is in us, 1 Pet. iii. 15. And the Sluggard on the contrary, who considers nothing carefully, is justly reproved for being wiser in his own Conceit, than seven men that can render a Reason, Prov. xxvi. 16. God himself, in his Dealings with mankind, appeals to them by the Prophet, to consider and show themselves men: Mic. vi. 2, *The Lord has a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel: And, Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord, If. i. 18.* He expects of them, a reasonable service, founded upon a just and reasonable Belief; and Both these, are the proper and most commendable Acts of reasonable Creatures.

zly, ANOTHER reason, why Faith is in Scripture always so highly commended, is because, in the Scripture-Sense of the Word, it is always supposed to arise and begin from a Willingness of knowing and being informed in the

Will

Will of God, and ends in actual Obedience to his Commands so made known. Which being both the *Foundation* and the highest *Improvement* of Virtue, 'tis no wonder if upon *That Part*, which by way of eminence is frequently put for the *Whole*, so great Commendations are bestowed in Scripture. 2 Chr. xx. 20. *Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; Believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.* The meaning is, *Observe and obey them*; obey the commandments, which *They* deliver you from God; (in like manner as our Saviour in the Text, *Believe and be baptized*, and verify that Obligation in the Sense before-explained;) So shall ye be Partakers of the Promise annex.

AND This, concerning the former part of the Words, *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.* In the latter part of the Words, *He that believeth not, shall be damned*; it is to be considered, 1<sup>st</sup>, What is the full and proper meaning of this Phrase of *not believing*; and 2<sup>dly</sup>, Whence it comes to pass,

S E R M.  
II.  


S E R M. pafs, that *Unbelief* is in Scripture always so feverely censured, as being the greatest of Crimes.

II.  



THE latter of these will be cleared by the Explication of the former, *viz.* what is the full and proper meaning of this Phrase of *not believing*.

AND This is indeed a very great and important Inquiry; because there is no Sin, against which severer Judgments are denounced in Scripture, than against *Unbelief*. Among those who are to have their part in a Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone, the *unbelieving* are placed in the first Rank, Rev. xxi. 8. *The fearful and unbelieving and the abominable and murderers*, and so on. And when our Saviour expresses his highest indignation against that evil Servant, who began to beat his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink and be drunken; as if he had nothing *more severe* to terrify him withal, he threatens to *cut him in sunder*, and appoint him his portion with Unbelievers, as with the worst of Offenders; St *Luk.* xii: 46. 'Tis evident therefore,

therefore, that by *Unbelief*, in this and S E R M. other places of Scripture, cannot be II. meant that bare negative *want of Belief*; which, with regard to the Whole *Gospel*, is the case of all those to whom it never was preached; and, with regard to any particular *Doctrine whatsoever*, is the Case of those to whom that *Doctrine* was never clearly made known and reasonably explained. For, *not to believe* what a Man has not *good and sufficient Reason* to believe, can never be so much as any Crime at all. And *the Judge of all the Earth will do what is right, and with Equity will be judge the Nations.* And, *to whom little is given, of him will not be much required.* And St Paul expressly declares, that *when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these, having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves; and that their uncircumcision shall be counted for circumcision,* Rom. ii. 14, 26: So that tho' there is indeed *no other Name given under Heaven, by which we must be saved,* but that of *Christ only;*  
yet

S E R M. yet by that very Name may those possi-  
 II. bly have Benefit, who never had any ex-  
 ~~~~~ plicit Knowledge of him. But by *Un-  
 belief* therefore in Scripture, is always  
 meant one of the two following things;  
 Either *1st*, in *general*, such an obstinate  
 Rejecting of the Whole Gospel and of  
 the gracious Terms thereof, as arises  
 from a vitious and wilful refusing to at-  
 tend to and examine the Evidence of it;  
 Or *2dly* such a Disbelief of the *Parti-  
 culars* of God's Promises, in those who  
 profess to imbrace the *Whole*, as hinders  
 them from *obeying* the Doctrine, which  
 they would seem to receive. The *first*  
*was* the Case of the Pharisees, in our Sa-  
 viour's time; and *is Now* the Case of all  
 vitious Infidels in Christian Countries,  
 who refuse to examine and consider the  
 Reasonableness of the uncorrupted Do-  
 ctrine of the Gospel, as delivered by  
 Christ and his Apostles, separate from  
 the uncertain Doctrines and Comments  
 of *Men*. The *latter*, *was* the Case of  
 the Jews of old, who in the Wilderness  
 were so often charged with *Unbelief*;  
 and



and *Now is the Case* of all professed S E R M.  
Christians, whose Works do not prove II.  
their Faith to be real. 

As to those who *wholly* reject the Gospel, when duly and reasonably preach'd to them; That the *Unbelief* They are charged with in Scripture, is always a vitious Refusing to examine; appears from all the Texts, wherein such Unbelief is mentioned. For so our Saviour, when he had declared to *Nicodemus*, that *he who believeth not in the Name of the only begotten Son of God, is condemned already*; immediately explains it by adding, *And this is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and men* Job xxiv.  
*loved darkness rather than Light, because* <sup>13.</sup>  
*their Deeds were evil*, St Joh. iii. 18. And again, ch. xii. 46. *I am come, saith he, a Light into the World, that whosoever believeth on me, should not abide in Darkness; And if any man hear my Words, and believe not, I judge him not; — the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.* And ch. xv. 24. *If I had not done among* Joh. x. 37.  
*them*

S E R M. *them the Works that none other man did,*  
 II. *they had not had Sin; but now they have*  
 both seen and hated, both me and my Father. And the same thing is expressed in those other places of Scripture, where men are said therefore to cast God's words behind them, because they hate to be reformed; and that they believe not the Truth, because they have pleasure in unrighteousness, 2 Th. ii. 12.

AND hence it is, that the Word, *not believing*, comes in the *secondary* Sense to be used frequently, not only for Rejecting the *Whole* Gospel, but also to signify such a partial Disbelief of the *Particulars* of God's Promises, in those who profess to embrace the *Whole*, as hinders them from *obeying* the Doctrine, which they would seem to receive. So that in Scripture nothing is more common, than in like manner as *He* is stiled *Fool*, who *acts* not according to what he *knows and understands*; so to call Him *Unbeliever*, who *practises* not what he professes to believe. What our Saviour threatens, St Luk. xii. 46. *shall appoint him his portion*

*tion with the Unbelievers, is in St Matt.* SERM.  
thus expressed, ch. xxiv. 51. *shall ap-* II.  
*point him his portion with the hypocrites.*

In like manner, *Eph. v. 6.* What in the margin is translated, *cometh the Wrath of God upon the children of Unbelief,* is in the Text itself, *the children of Disobedience.* The Jews in the Wilderness, tho' they could not possibly disbelieve what they saw with their own Eyes, yet for their Disobedience they are in Scripture called *Unbelievers*: *Jude 5.* *The Lord having saved the People out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not.* And *Heb. iii. 19.* *We see they could not enter in, because of Unbelief;* And ver. 18. *To whom sware he, that they should not enter into his Rest, but to them that believed not?* That is, as 'tis explained in the *verse* before; *them that had sinned.* Again, ch. iv. 6. *They entred not in, because of Unbelief; i. e. of Disobedience.* And the same Phrase is used concerning their Posterity in the days of *Hoshea*, 2 Kings xvii. 14. *They would not hear, i. e. would not obey;*

S E R M. *but hardened their neck, like to the neck*  
 II. *of the Fathers, who did not believe in*  
*the Lord their God. And the Apostle*  
*applies it in the same Sense to Us Chri-*  
*stians, Heb. iv. 11. Let Us labour therefore*  
*to enter into that Rest, lest any man fall*  
*after the same example of Unbelief; in*  
*the margin it is, after the same example*  
*of Disobedience. And ch. iii. 12. Take*  
*heed, brethren, lest there be in any of You*  
*an evil Heart of Unbelief in departing*  
*from the living God; i. e. as he explains*  
*it in the following verse, in being hard-*  
*ened (as The Others were) thro' the De-*  
*ceitfulness of Sin.*

AND now, the Nature of *Unbelief*  
 being thus explained, it thence suffici-  
 ently appears (which was the *Last* thing  
 proposed) how it comes to pass, that *not*  
*believing* is always in Scripture so severely  
 censured, as being the greatest of Crimes.  
 For, the Doctrine of Christ being ex-  
 tremely reasonable in itself, (the Doctrine  
 of Christ, I say, as delivered in Scrip-  
 ture in its original Simplicity, and sepa-  
 rate from the uncertain additional Do-  
 ctrines

doctrines and Comments of Men;) This doctrine being extremely reasonable in itself, and being proved moreover by the strongest Evidence in the World; All those to whom That Evidence is fairly proposed; and the Reasonableness of the Doctrine truly represented, if they obstinately reject it, and the gracious Terms thereof; they plainly do despite to the Spirit of God; And their Love of Vice being the only Cause of their Unbelief, 'tis consequently of the same Nature, and accordingly called in Scripture promiscuously by the same Name, with the *Disobedience* of Believers. And therefore they are joined together, as in their Crime, so in their Punishment; they that know *not God*, and they that obey *not the Gospel*. And 'tis very reasonable, that as *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved*; so he that *believeth not*, in the Sense which has been Now explained, *should on the contrary be damned*.

S E R M.  
II.  


SERM.

II.

THAT which remains is, by way of Inference, 1<sup>st</sup>, to exhort those who call themselves *Deists*, or Followers of *natural Religion* only, without regard to the Gospel, to consider seriously what it is they reject; and when they have separated the undisputed *Doctrines of Christ* from the uncertain *Opinions of contentious Men*, Then to judge, whether despising this gracious Offer of the divine Goodness, be not *rejecting the Counsel of God against themselves*, and foolishly *forsaking their own Mercies*. 2<sup>dly</sup>, To exhort all those who profess themselves *Christians*, above all things to live *worthy of their holy profession*; to *let their light shine before men*, that others seeing their good works, may glorify their Father which is in heaven; at least, to give no Offence to *Them that are without*, lest thro' Them the Name of God be blasphemed among the Gentiles, as it is written, Rom. iii. 24. And *Lastly*, to exhort those who *Teach Christianity* to others, that, since hindring others from believ-

ing

ing, is of the same guilt as not believ-S E R M.  
ing ourselves; therefore we be very dili-  
gent to represent the Doctrine of Christ II.  
as reasonable and plain, as he himself  
has represented it; desiring with *Moses*,  
that *All the Lord's people were Prophets*; Num. xi.  
and not imitating the Romish and Scho-  
lastick Writers, who make their own 29  
Doctrines, Traditions, and Explications  
of Doctrines, of the same Authority  
with the Word of God; and, instead  
of teaching all men (after the Apostle's  
example) to be *ready to give an Answer*  
*to every man that asketh them a Reason of*  
*the Hope that is in them*, persuade them  
on the contrary to believe so much the  
more implicitly and with the greater  
Confidence, as the things they impose  
on them are the more *unreasonable* and  
absurd to be believed. From such Fol-  
lies and Impieties, which promote no-  
thing but Scepticism and Infidelity, let  
*Us* turn away ourselves; Always remem-  
bring our Saviour's Admonition, that  
*we are the Salt of the Earth; But if the*

SERM. *Salt itself has lost its savour, wherewith*

II. *shall things be seasoned; It is neither fit*

Mat. v. 13. *for the land, nor yet for the dunghil, but*

Luk. xiv. *to be cast out and to be trodden under foot*

34.  
Col. iv. 5, *of men.*

6.

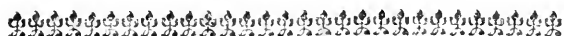






# SERMON III.

The Design and End of Baptism  
is newness of Life.



Rom. vi. 3, 4.

*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his Death? Therefore we are buried with him by Baptism into Death, that like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the glory of the Father, even so We also should walk in Newness of Life.*



HE Apostle having in the foregoing chapter, with great variety of emphatical expressions, set forth the exceeding goodness and compassion of

S E R M.  
III.



God towards Mankind, in causing the

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S E R M. Righteousness of the *Second Adam* to become in its consequences *more effectual* towards the *recovery and salvation* of Sinners, than the introducing of Sin into the World by the *First Adam* had been instrumental towards their *Destruction*; He in *This* chapter proceeds to answer a very great and dangerous Objection, and to prevent a most fatal Corruption and Abuse, which he foresaw would arise in ill minds upon the Doctrine he preached; and which in Fact, to great Numbers of those who call themselves Christians, has caused the Gospel itself, instead of being *the Saviour of Life unto Life*, to become on the contrary the *Savour of Death unto Death*. Ver. 1, *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in Sin, that Grace may abound?* The *Inference* to vitious and corrupt minds is very natural and obvious. If God has sent his Son into the World to die for the Sins of Men; if Christ has given himself a sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction, for the Sins of the whole World; is it not  
a ren-

a rendering *honour* to Christ, to rely entirely upon *his* Merits; and to depend more upon *his* Satisfaction, than upon *Any* Virtuous Practice of our own? Is it not (they will say) a *Magnifying* of the Mercy of God, to think that a Vicious Life will be easily pardoned to those who *fully* rely upon the *Merits of Christ?* and may we not therefore *continue in Sin, that Grace may abound?* To This the Apostle, not without just indignation, replies, ver. 2, *God forbid: how shall we that are dead to Sin, live any longer therein?* A Christian (he supposes,) *as* Such, even *essentially* to his being a Disciple of Christ, has *put off* That *Body of Sin* which Christ came to destroy; and can no more, with *Any* Consistency to his profession, live in the practice of any known Vice, than a man *naturally dead* can perform any *natural action of life.* Know ye not, that *so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his Death? Therefore we are buried with him by Baptism into Death, that like as Christ was raised*

SER. M. raised up from the dead, by the Glory  
 III. (that is, by the glorious Power) of the  
 Father, even so We also should walk in  
 Newness of Life.

IN which words there are *Three* Particulars principally remarkable. 1<sup>st</sup>, The Apostle here supposes, that the Great *End* and *Design* of the Gospel is to bring men to *Amendment* and *Newness of Life*. 2<sup>dly</sup>, He urges the consideration of the *Death* and *Resurrection of Christ*, as a Great *Argument* to promote This End. And 3<sup>dly</sup>, He alleges, that the Great *Design* of *Baptism* in particular, is to *re-mind* us perpetually of This Argument, and to *inforce* it upon us.

I. *First*, THE Apostle here supposes, that the Great *End* and *Design* of the Gospel, is to bring men to *Amendment* and *Newness of Life*: Even so We also should walk in *Newness of Life*. The only reason why God, who stands in need of Nothing, and is infinitely Self-sufficient to his own Happiness, ever created any rational Creatures at all, is, that by following the Light of the Reason


son he has given them, and by imitating S E R M.  
the moral Perfections of God, and by III.  
obeying his Commandments in the Prac-  
tice of Virtue and Righteousness; they  
might (as *St Peter* expresses it) *become*  
*Partakers of the Divine Nature*, that is,  
might have such Degrees communicated  
to them of their Creator's Happiness as  
*irrational* Beings are by their nature in-  
capable of. Now the Perfections of God  
being absolutely unchangeable, and the  
nature of Good and Evil essentially in-  
variable; 'tis manifest that That Practice  
of Virtue and Righteousness, That Wor-  
ship of God who ruleth over All, and  
That Justice and Goodness due from  
One Creature towards Another, in which  
the Essence of True Religion consists;  
must among *All* rational Beings, in *All*  
parts of the Universe, and in *All* periods  
of Time, be eternally and universally the  
Same. Had *All* creatures therefore *Al-*  
*ways* continued innocent and virtuous,  
the Form and Method of Religion could  
never have admitted of Any Change.  
And for the same reason, when, upon the  
account

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SER M. account of *Sin*, the Mercy of God has  
 III. vouchsafed to appoint any particular method or institution of religion, in order to the acceptance and reconciliation of *Sinners*; 'tis evident that the ultimate *End* and *Design* of every such method or institution of religion can possibly be no Other, than the recovery or bringing back of such Persons to the same State, in which they would originally have been fixed, had there been No Transgression. Our Saviour expresses this Notion very emphatically, St *Luke* v. 35, *They that are whole, need not a physician, but they that are sick; I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.* Virtue is the *Life* and *Health* of the Soul: And as, in *all* cases in *general*, the ultimate End of whatever is intended for *restoration* or *recovery*, is always the attaining of that first and natural State, the Loss of which occasions a *Want* of Restoration or Recovery; so in *particular*, the End and Design of that religion, which the Gospel has appointed for the reconciliation of Sinners, is summed up in what

what the Text here styles *Newness of* S E R M.  
*Life*. For, for This purpose, says the III.  
Apostle, *the Son of God was manifested,*  
*that he might destroy the Works of the*  
*Devil,* 1 Joh. iii. 8: *The Works of the*  
*Devil;* that is, all those *Sinful Habits*  
*and Vicious Practices of Men,* which they  
commit either through the *Temptation,*  
or after the *Example,* or agreeably to  
the *Inclinations and Desires* of the Wick-  
ed One. Again: *Tit. ii. 14,* *Our Savi-*  
*our Jesus Christ,* says St Paul, *gave him-*  
*self for us* (to This End,) *that he might*  
*redeem us from all iniquity, and purify*  
*to himself a peculiar people, zealous of*  
*good works.* And the same thing he  
elsewhere expresses in a very elegant and  
sublime figure; *Eph. ii. 10.* *We are his*  
*Workmanship,* created in *Christ Jesus un-*  
*to good Works,* which God hath before  
ordained that we should walk in them.  
And so particular a *Stress* is laid upon  
this Great Truth, that the Scripture ex-  
pressly declares, it had been better for  
men *never* to have heard the Gospel *at*  
*all,* than that it should not produce in  
them


SERMON. them the Fruit of a Virtuous Life.

III.  2 Pet. ii. 20, *It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them.*

FROM what has been said upon *This* Head, evidently appears the Folly of making a comparative *opposition* (as Some have done) between *Christianity* and *Morality*. For if the Great *End* and *Design* of the Gospel, is to bring men to *Amendment* and *Newness of Life*; and *Newness of Life* is only another Name for the *Practice of Virtue*, which is *Morality*; 'tis plain there can be no other opposition made between *Christianity* and *Morality*, than between the *Means* and the *End*. Much less ought true Virtue to be *lightly spoken* of, when compared with any *positive Duty*, or *ritual Performance* whatsoever: Because This is the same Absurdity, as preferring the *Means* which are in order to any *End*, before the *End* itself to be obtained by those *Means*.

ALSO



ALSO from what has been said upon S E R M.  
*This Head*, appears the Vanity of sub- III.  
 stituting any thing *else* in matters of re-   
 ligious, upon which finally to build our  
 Hopes, besides the Fruits of true *Virtue*  
 and *Righteousness* of Life. For if the  
 great and ultimate End of the Gospel, is  
 to bring men to *Repentance*, and *Amend-*  
*ment* of manners; 'tis evident that what-  
 ever falls short of this End, and proves  
 ineffectual to it, cannot be finally *good*  
*and profitable unto men*. *Professing* the  
 Religion of Christ is nothing, if men  
 be not thereby made *better* than if they  
 professed it *not*. Having *professed in*  
*the Name of Christ*, and *in his Name* ha-  
 ving *cast out Devils*, and *in his Name*  
*done many wonderful Works*, is of no im-  
 portance, if at the same time the Person  
 be a Practiser of those *Works of Iniquity*  
 which the *Works of Christ* were intended  
 to destroy. Lastly, *Laying hold upon*  
*Christ*, and *depending upon him* with a  
*strong and confident Faith* is of no Be-  
 nefit, if *That Faith* which is the *Root*,  
 or *Tree* that ought to bring forth the  
 Fruits

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S E R M. *Fruits of Righteousness, be itself misunderstood as supplying the Want of That*  
 III. *Fruit, which it is the only Excellency of the Root to produce.*

AND thus having explained the *First Particular* in the Text, that the *Great End and Design* of the Gospel, is to bring men to *Amendment and Newness of Life*; I proceed now to observe in the

II. *Second place*, That the Apostle here urges *particularly* the consideration of the *Death and Resurrection of Christ*, as a *Great Argument* to promote this End: *That, like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the glory* (that is by the *glorious Power*) *of the Father, even so We also should walk in Newness of Life.* The Doctrine of Christ is *one continued Exhortation*, and his Life a perpetual *Example of Goodness, Righteousness and all Virtue.* And the Design of his *Death and Resurrection*, is, by making an *Atonement for past Sins*, and establishing for the future a gracious *Covenant of Repentance*, to prevail with men effectually, by all the Arguments of *Life and Death,*

Death, to turn from the ways of *Sin* SER. M.  
*and Destruction*, into the Paths of *Virtue* III.  
*and everlasting Happiness*. He died for 2 Cor. v.  
*All* (saith St Paul) *that they which live*, <sup>15,</sup>  
*should not henceforth live unto themselves,*  
*but unto Him which died for them, and*  
*rose again.* And St Peter in his First  
 Epistle, ch. iv. 1, *Forasmuch then as*  
*Christ* (says he) *has 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.* By the Death of Christ,  
 God has made the severest Declaration  
 possible, of his *Hatred against Sin*; and  
 at the same time given the strongest at-  
 testation to the Truth of that Evange-  
 lical Doctrine, which indispenfably re-  
 quires *Amendment* for the *future*, upon  
 the *forgiveness* of what is *past*. Heb. ix.  
 14, *The Blood of Christ, — purges your*  
*conscience from dead works, to serve the*  
*Living God.* It eases the conscience, by  
 giving men assurance of pardon; not

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S E R M. that thereby they may become acceptable  
 III. to God, without the Practice of Virtue;  
 but that they may more effectually be  
 encouraged, by true Repentance and A-  
 mendment, to serve God for the future  
 in Newness of Life. Before the Coming  
 of Christ, the *Whole World*, in a man-  
 ner, *lay in Wickedness*: The *Heathens*, ge-  
 nerally speaking, being involved in the  
 most enormous Vices; and the *Jews* al-  
 so having far departed from true Virtue,  
 by placing their Religion more in *typical*  
 Purifications, than in that *real* Purity  
 which those types were intended to re-  
 present. The Reformation of *Both* These,  
 through the Preaching of That Doctrine  
 which our Lord sealed with his *Death*,  
 and confirmed by his *Resurrection*; the  
 Apostle sets forth in a most lively and  
 elegant manner, in his *Epistle to the E-*  
*phesians*, ch. ii. As to the converted  
*Heathens*; *Ye* (says he) *being in times*  
*past Gentiles in the Flesh*, — *were with-*  
*out Christ, being Aliens from the common-*  
*wealth of Israel, and Strangers from the*  
*Covenants of Promise, having no Hope,*  
*and*

VER. 11.

and without God in the World; — walk-  
 ing according to the course of this World,  
 according to — the Spirit that now work-  
 eth in the children of disobedience: — But  
 Now, — ye who sometimes were far off,  
 are made nigh by the Blood of Christ.  
 And as to the converted Jews; We also  
 (says he) had our conversation in times  
 past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the  
 Desires of the flesh and of the mind; and  
 were by Nature the children of wrath,  
 even as Others; But God, who is rich in  
 mercy, — hath quickned us together with  
 Christ. These latter words, and were by  
 Nature the children of Wrath, have by  
 Some been very absurdly understood, as  
 if men were Born children of Wrath,  
 and were of God created originally wick-  
 ed: Whereas the evident Meaning of the  
 Apostle is, that wicked and debauched  
 men, before their conversion to Christi-  
 anity, were by the Practice of those  
 Vices which *Habit* had made as it were  
*natural* to them, become Enemies to  
 God, and children of Wrath. But Christ,  
 by his death, obtained pardon for as ma-

S E R M.

III.

ver. 2.

ver. 13.

ver. 3.

SERM. ny of them, as, by putting away those  
 III. Vices, would *die unto Sin*; and, by his  
 resurrection, he gave assurance of eternal *life* to All, who in the *moral* sense, would first *rise with him unto Newness and Holiness of life*. According to the Analogy of which figurative expressions, *all Sins* in general are in Scripture frequently styled *dead works*; and *wicked men* are described as being *dead in Sin*; and they who have *forsaken their Vices*, are *dead to Sin*; and converted *Jews*, are *dead from the rudiments of the World*, and *dead to the Law*, that they may *live to God*: And all Sinners who have *reformed their lives*, are said to be *crucified with Christ*, and to have *crucified the flesh with the affections and Lusts*; and that they are *dead, and their Life is hid with Christ in God*; and that they are *quickned with Christ*; and *risen with Christ*, and the like. And upon these figures of Speech, are grounded the following Exhortations; 2 *Tim. ii. 11*, *It is a faithful Saying; if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him*:  
 And

And Rom. viii. 10, *If Christ be in you,* S E R M. III.  
(that is, if ye be Christians indeed,) *the Body is dead [διὰ] as to Sin, but the Spirit is life because of [or as to] Righteousness:* And in the words immediately following my Text; *If we have been planted together in the likeness of his Death, we shall be also in the likeness of his Resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man (that is, our former vitious course of life) is crucified with him, that the body of Sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve Sin: — Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Let not Sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the Lusts thereof.*

FROM what has been said upon *This* Head, there naturally and plainly arises This important Inference; that one of the *greatest* and most *pernicious* corruptions possible of the Christian Religion; is *That kind of Reliance upon the Merits of Christ,* in which *wicked Christians* place their Hopes of Salvation, instead of obeying the *Commandments of Christ*

SER M. delivered in his Gospel. Next to Total  
 III. Infidelity, the greatest Enemy of true  
 Religion is *Superstition*: And of *all* Superstitions, the most pernicious is That which *turns the grace of God into Wantonness*; which (as the Apostle elsewhere expresses it) makes *Christ the Minister of Sin*, that is, makes even the Gospel itself an Incouragement to Wickedness. Now This is directly the case of all those professed Christians, who, while they live vitiously, still *rely upon the Merits of Christ* for Salvation; or, as the Apostle expresses it, *continue in Sin that Grace may abound*. Which is subverting intirely the whole Design of Religion. For Christ came into the World to procure pardon of *past Sin*, for *no other* reason but that he might more effectually prevent it for the *future*. And there *can* be no greater *Mockery* of God and Religion, than to turn That *Goodness* of God declared in the Gospel, which was intended as the Great Motive to lead men to Repentance; to turn it into an argument for *Security* in continuing in Sin.

*Rom.*



Rom. ii. 4. Despisest thou the Riches of S E R M.  
his goodness, and forbearance, and long- III.  
suffering; not knowing that the goodness  
of God leadeth thee to Repentance? But  
after thy hardness and impenitent heart  
treasurest up unto thyself wrath against  
the day of wrath, and revelation of the  
righteous judgment of God.

THIS therefore is the *Second* Parti-  
cular remarkable in the Text; namely  
the consideration of the *Death and Re-*  
*surrection of Christ*, here insisted upon  
as an *Argument*, to perswade men to  
*Repentance and Amendment of Life*. The

*III. Third and Last* thing I proposed  
to take notice of in the words, is the A-  
postle's here urging finally, that the  
Great Design of Baptism in particular,  
is to remind us perpetually of *This* Argu-  
ment, and to *inforce* it upon us: *Know*  
*ye not, thas as many of us as were bap-*  
*tized into Jesus Christ, were baptized in-*  
*to his Death? Therefore we are buried*  
*with Him by Baptism into death, that*  
*like as Christ was raised up from the dead*  
*by the glory (by the glorious Power) of*

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S E R M. *the Father, even so We also should walk in*  
 III. *Newness of Life.* Our Lord, when he  
 sent forth his Disciples to preach the Gospel to all Nations, commanded them to Baptize every one that was converted, *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:* That is, to cause them to enter by Baptism into a solemn obligation, to dedicate themselves to the Service of God in *That* Method of religion, which the *Son of God* came into the World to establish, and confirmed by Prophecies and Miracles of the *Holy Ghost.* The Sacrament of *Baptism* therefore, according to this institution of our Lord, is emphatically *significant* of our Duty, and most aptly fitted to *remind* us of it perpetually, in the *three following respects.* 1<sup>st</sup>, As being *in general* a solemn *initiation* into the Profession of *That religion*, the Great *End of which* is Holiness of Life. 2<sup>dly</sup>, As *typifying*, in a *particular* manner, the necessity of *moral Purity* and Righteousness of *life*, by the similitude of washing the *Body* with *water.* And 3<sup>dly</sup>,  
 (which

(which is what the Apostle peculiarly S E R M. insists upon in the Text;) Baptism, as III. being an *emblem* or *representation* of Men's *dying* with Christ, and *rising* with him again; is a continual memorial of our obligation to *put off* the *body of Sin*, and to *put on* the *new man*, (that is, a virtuous course of life;) *which after God*, (that is, according to the example and commandments of God,) *is created in righteousness and true Holiness.*

1st, *Baptism* is in general a solemn *initiation* into the Profession of *That Religion*, the *Great End* of which is *Holiness of Life*. If therefore *That End* be not attained, there is then no Benefit in having been initiated into *That Religion*, the *Only Use* whereof is for the obtaining *That End*.

2dly, BAPTISM typifies, in a *particular* manner, the necessity of *Moral Purity* and *Righteousness of life*, by the similitude of washing the *Body* with *Water*. And as, in *all* cases, a *type* or *representation* is nothing, without the *reality*

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S E R M. *reality of the thing intended to be signified thereby; so in this present point*  
 III. *the Scripture is always particularly careful, to express wherein the Real efficacy of this Sacrament consists. In the Prophetick Description, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 27. after the figurative phrases, then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; immediately follows the explication, from all your Idols will I cleanse you, and — cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. Our Lord himself, in the very words of institution; Go ye (says he) and baptize all nations, — teaching them to do whatsoever I have commanded you: And again; Except a man be born of the Spirit, as well as Water, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. The Apostle St Paul accordingly, describing Christ's sanctifying and cleansing his Church with the washing of water by the Word; immediately adds, by way of explication, that he might present it to himself — Holy, and without Blemish, Eph. v. 26. And elsewhere, speaking*

I Cor. vi. 11. ing


speaking of *particular Christians*, he puts, *washed, sanctified, justified*, as Synonymous Terms. And in his Epistle to *Titus*, he mentions the *washing of regeneration* and the *renewal of the Holy Ghost*, as two phrases equally, and without any difference of signification, expressing the effect of That Kindness and Love, — which God our Saviour shed on us abundantly through *Jesus Christ our Saviour*, ch. iii. 4, 5, 6. In the epistle to the *Hebrews*, having our Bodies washed with pure Water, and our Hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience are used as Phrases of the same import, ch. x. 22. And *St Peter*, still more expressly, (1 *Pet.* iii. 21.) declares the *Baptism*, which saves us, to be, not the putting away of the filth of the *Flesh*, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.

3dly, (WHICH is the Argument peculiarly insisted upon in the text;) *Baptism*, as an emblem of men's dying with *Christ* and rising with him again, is a continual memorial of our obligation to put off the body of *Sin*, and to walk with *Christ* in  
*newness*

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S E R M. *newness of life.* This Argument the Apostle pursues at large, through the whole chapter. And in *Other* of his epistles; *Col. ii. 12.* Buried *with him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him.* *Gal. iii. 27.* *As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* And *Eph. iv. 22.* *That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, (that is, your antient manner of living), which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your Mind,*

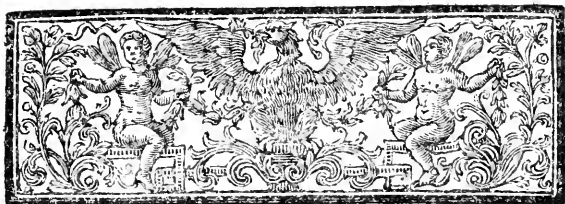
T H E *Application* of what has been said upon this *Last General* head, is; that, at the *first* Preaching of the Gospel, the persons brought to Baptism being such as had been converted from among the Jews or Heathens; whereas *Now* they are generally such as have been born of Christian Parents; 'tis always to be understood, that all the similitudes and comparisons, all the reasonings and arguments, drawn *in Scripture* from the nature and Form, from the designs and obligations of Baptism; must *Now* be applied

applied to Christians, at such time as SERM.  
they profess themselves to be Disciples of III.  
Christ, and followers of his Religion,   
with *understanding, knowledge and choice.*  
Which matter, if duly considered, would  
have a great Effect upon the Hearts and  
Lives of all reasonable persons. And that  
it *may* have such Effect, God of his in-  
finite Mercy grant, &c.









# S E R M O N I V.

Of being baptized into the Name  
of any Person.



I COR. i. 13.

-----or were ye baptized in the  
name of Paul?



THE Apostle is in this Chap-  
ter reproving the *Corinthi-  
ans*, for their unreasonable  
Animosities and Divisions a-  
mong themselves, so con-  
trary to the nature and obligations of  
their Holy Profession, so unbecoming  
the

S E R M.  
IV.

S E R M. the Name and Character of Christians.

IV. They had *all* been instructed in one and the same *Faith*; They had *all* been baptized with one and the same *Baptism*; They had *all* professed themselves Disciples of One only *Lord and Saviour*, Jesus Christ: And yet afterwards, falling into Parties, and laying stress upon particularities, and valuing themselves upon adhering, one to *One* Form or Method of teaching, and Others to *Another*; they by degrees forgot the *Great* and *Fundamental* Obligations of Christianity, and departed from the Simplicity of their *common* Religion. One was for following *Paul*, Another for *Apollos*, and a third for *Cephas*. This Beginning of Foolish Divisions and needless Animosities, This Breach of Christian Charity and universal Love, the Apostle very largely and severely reproveth in This and the following Chapters: And no where with greater elegance and more affectionate sharpness, than in the words of the Text: *Is Christ, says he, divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized*

zed

*zed in the Name of Paul? I thank God* S E R M.  
*that I baptized none of you, but Crispus* IV.  
*and Gaius; Lest any should say, that I*  
*had baptized in my own Name.*

IN Discourſing upon which words, I ſhall conſider, 1<sup>ſt</sup>, What the Meaning of *This Phraſe* is in general, being *baptized in, or into the Name* of any Perſon. 2<sup>dly</sup>, What Effect, the conſideration of our being All baptized particularly into the Name of *Chriſt*, ought to have upon us. And 3<sup>dly</sup>, What the *Nature* of *That Corruption* is, and what the *ill conſe- quences* of it, which *St Paul* here re- proves in the *Corinthians* by *This ſharp and ſevere Queſtion*; *Were ye baptized in the Name of Paul?*

1<sup>ſt</sup>, As to the Meaning of this Phraſe in general, of being *baptized in, or in- to the Name* of any perſon; 'tis to be ob- ſerved, that Baptiſm, by an expreſſive emblem, or figure, of waſhing the *Body* with Water, ſignifies and represents a Change in the *Mind* of the baptized Perſon, from *One* ſort of Profeſſion or Practice to *Another*. And becauſe This

S E R M. Change in the Person's Mind, This resolution of *forsaking* One State of life, *one* sort of Profession or Practice, and *entering upon Another*, is, in This case, supposed to be worked and effected, by the Preaching, Admonition, or Exhortation of Some *Teacher*, who either by Reason and Argument and Doctrinal Perswasion, or by Evidence of Authority and Divine Commission, convinces Men that the Change he indeavours to work in them, will be acceptable and well-pleasing to God; hence the Action of *Baptism*, or the external Signification of this inward Change, is stiled a *being baptized in, or into the Name* of the *Teacher*, whose *Disciple*, or the *Follower* of whose Doctrine, the baptized person hereby professes himself to be. Thus the children of *Israel*, because when they passed thro' the red Sea, and were conducted in the Wilderness by a Cloud, they in this whole matter professed themselves to be Followers of That Religion which God taught them by *Moses*; therefore they are said by the Apostle to have

have been *All* baptized unto *Moses*, in *the Cloud* and in *the Sea*. And they who by the preaching of *John the Baptist*, were prevailed upon to repent and amend their lives, through a firm Belief of the Promises God had given them of the Messiah then speedily to appear; were *baptized*, as the Scripture expresses it, *into John's Baptism*; and called *The Disciples of John*. In like manner, they who afterward by the Preaching of *Christ* and *his Apostles*, were converted to the Belief and Profession of the Gospel; were baptized *in the Name*, or *into the Name*, of *the Father*, and of *the Son*, and of *the Holy Ghost*. That is; They made a solemn Profession of their Believing the Doctrines, and of their Resolving to obey the Precepts of That Religion, which *God the Father Almighty* revealed and taught by his *Son Jesus Christ*, and confirmed by the miraculous Testimonies of the *Holy Ghost*. Which being the same thing as, briefly and in Other words, professing themselves *Christians*, or *Disciples of Christ*; they are therefore elsewhere spoken of,

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~~~~~

S E R M. in a general and less distinct manner of  
 IV. expression, as having been baptized *in*  
 Acts viii. *the Name of the Lord Jesus*, or, *in the*  
 16. *Name of Jesus Christ, for the remission*  
 xix. 5. *of Sins*, Acts ii. 38. And those nume-  
 Acts ii. 21. where we read, that *whosoever shall call*  
 Rom. x. on *the Name of the Lord, shall be saved*;  
 13. and where Christians are distinguished by  
 Acts vi. 14. the character, of those who call *on the*  
 21. Name of the Lord Jesus; are, accord-  
 1 Cor. i. 2. ing to the true sense of the Original,  
 plainly of the same import with That  
 Other expression, Acts xv. 17. *All the*  
*Gentiles, upon whom my Name is called,*  
*saieth the Lord*; that is, all those who  
 have sincerely embraced the Profession of  
 Christ's religion, and are accordingly  
 baptized into an obligation to obey it.  
 And thus therefore in the Text likewise;  
 the Question here put by the Apostle,  
*Were ye baptized in the Name of Paul?*  
 is as much as if he had said, Am I your  
 Master? Are ye My Disciples? do ye  
 profess a religion of Mine? have I  
 taught you any doctrine of my Own?

AND

AND This may suffice for explication of the *first* particular; what the Meaning of this Phrase is in *general*, of being *baptized in or into the Name of any person.*

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2. THE *Second* thing I proposed, was, to inquire *What Effect*, the consideration of our being All baptized *particularly* into the Name of *Christ*, ought to have upon us. And *This* evidently is, that we ought to look upon ourselves as *His* Disciples, obliged to hearken to *His* Doctrine, to follow *His* Instructions, to obey *His* Commandments.

THE *Original* Authority and Dominion of *God* over the Universe, over *All rational* Creatures; and *Their* consequent Duty and Subjection to *Him*; St *Paul* elegantly expresses, by stiling *Them* the *Family in Heaven and Earth*, and *Him* the *Father*, of whom That *whole Family is named*, Eph. iii. 15. They bear *his Name*; that is, they are *His* Property, they derive from him, they depend upon him, they acknowledge *him* as their Head, their Father, the Author

S E R M. of their Being, and their Supreme Go-  
 IV. vernour; In virtue of which relation,

All Honour, All Obedience, All Subjecti-  
 on, is necessarily and uniformly due to  
 him from Them. And This in their *na-  
 tural* capacity, as they are *in general* his  
 Creatures, or the Work of his Hands.  
 In the *religious* sense, and where there  
 comes *more particularly* a *distinction* to  
 be made, between those who are only  
 subject by *necessity* to God's kingdom of  
*Nature*, and those who are subject by  
*Choice* to his Kingdom of *Grace*; the  
 Scripture speaks of these latter, as, in a  
 special and more peculiar manner, bear-  
 ing the *Name* of God, or standing in a  
 nearer and more proper relation to him.  
*Him that overcometh*, saith our Saviour,  
*will I make a pillar in the Temple of my*  
*God, and I will write upon him the Name*  
*of my God*, Rev. iii. 12. And else-  
 where, the whole Body of our Lord's  
 sincere Followers are distinguished, as  
 ch. xii. 1. *having his Father's Name written in*  
*their Foreheads*. And in the description  
 of the Happiness of their final state, one  
 principal



principal character made use of is, that S E R M. they shall see *the Face of God, and his* IV. Name shall be in their foreheads. ch. xxii. 4. The Meaning is; they shall be received and acknowledged by him as his Sons and his Servants, as being in a more particular manner his Family or Household. *The Tabernacle of God shall be with them, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God,* Rev. xxi. 3.

By the same Analogy, bearing likewise the Name of *Christ*, or having been *baptized in His Name*, signifies a constant acknowledgment and profession of *His* relation to *Us*, and *Ours* towards *Him*. That *He* is our Saviour and Lord, our Mediatour and Advocate, the only Revealer of the Will of God to us in the present time, and by him constituted our Judge at the last day. And that consequently *We* are his Disciples and Followers; who are to receive from *him* the doctrine of true Religion; to look upon *him* as the Way, the Truth, and

S E R M. the Life; to adhere stedfastly to what *he*  
 IV. has taught us, and to practise carefully  
 what *he* has commanded. St *Luke*, in  
 his history of the *Acts*, tells us, that *the*  
*Disciples were called Christians first in*  
*Antioch*, ch. xi. 26. By their *Adversaries*,  
 it was intended as a Name of *Re-*  
*proach*; By *Themselves*, it was esteemed  
 as a Title of the highest *Dignity*: By  
*Both*, it was understood not to be a bare  
 empty Name; but to be expressive and  
 declarative of their adhering to Christ's  
 Doctrine, and of their observing his  
 Laws. Our Lord himself, speaking of  
 those, who, whether few or many in  
 number, should in their Teaching adhere  
 strictly to the Rule and Doctrine of  
 Truth; insomuch that *whatsoever they*  
*should bind on earth, should be bound in*  
*Heaven, and whatsoever they should loose*  
*on Earth, should be loosed in Heaven*; (as  
 in the case of men's preaching the *Sin-*  
*cere and uncorrupt Doctrine* of Truth it  
 must needs be;) He expresses it, by their  
 being gathered together *in his Name*:  
 Matt. xviii. 20. *Where two or three are*  
*gathered*

gathered together in my Name, *there* S E R M.  
*am I in the midst of them.* He does IV.  
not mean, Where-ever men *call themselves*  
*Christians, or say unto him, Lord,*  
*Lord;* but where-ever they really *are,*  
what *That Name* signifies; and *Do,* as  
he has taught them, *the Will of his*  
*Father which is in Heaven.* That *pro-*  
*fessing* the Name of Christ, or being  
baptized into Jesus Christ, is nothing,  
without being sincerely solicitous to un-  
derstand what his Doctrine truly is, and  
careful to obey the Laws he has given  
us, St *Paul* declares to us in a very af-  
fectionate manner, *Rom. vi. 3, Know ye*  
*not that so many of us as were baptized*  
*into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his*  
*Death?—knowing this, that our old man*  
*is crucified with him, that the Body of*  
*Sin might be destroyed, that henceforth*  
*we should not serve Sin.* And again,  
*Gal. iii. 27, As many of you as have been*  
*baptized into Christ, have put on Christ;*  
that is, have put yourselves under an  
obligation of laying aside all other Di-  
stinctions, and of being united upon the  
foot

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foot of obedience to his alone Commands: *There is henceforth neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free;— for ye are all One in Christ Jesus: One, not in Title and Denomination only, but in reality of sincere affection; One, in Faith; One, in Charity; One, in uniform Obedience to the Commands of Christ; without which, 'tis of no moment to have been called by his Name. The same method of arguing, is again insisted upon by the same Apostle, 2 Tim. ii. 19, Having this Seal,---Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity. The manner of expression, having This Seal, is a remarkable allusion to certain figurative passages of Scripture, some of which I have already mentioned. For as St John in his Vision, saw the Servants of God sealed in their foreheads; and the true Disciples of Christ, having his Father's Name written in their foreheads; and St Paul himself, in some other of his epistles, speaks of sincere Christians as being sealed by the Holy Ghost unto the day of redemption;*

so here likewise, *The Foundation*, says he, S E R M.  
or *the Covenant, of God, standeth sure,* IV.  
*having This Seal, — Let every one that*  
*nameth the name of Christ, depart from*  
*iniquity:* His meaning is; Let no man  
think, that his title to God's covenanted  
mercies, depends upon his bearing the  
*Name* of a Christian; but upon his be-  
ing constantly influenced by That con-  
sideration, to be *in reality* what That  
Name denotes, a practiser of universal  
righteousness, meekness and charity. As  
a sort of *Memorial* of This obligation,  
a Custom has long prevailed in the Chri-  
stian Church, that every person, at the  
time he is baptized, should have given  
him what we call a *Christian Name*.  
And the Design was prudent; that our  
very *Name* should remind us of our  
Holy Profession; And because Christians  
received their *own Name* at the time they  
were baptized into the *Name of our Lord*;  
that therefore they should never hear  
their *own Name* mentioned, without be-  
ing put in mind of their being dedicated  
to *his*. The very *Name* therefore and  
*Title*

SER M. Title of a Christian, is a great Reproach  
 IV. to every man, who, in his Life and  
 Conversation, takes no care to *answer*  
*the signification*, and to *verify the inten-*  
*tion* of it; but intirely forgets or disho-  
 nours the *Thing*, while the *Word* or  
*Name* is perpetually in his mouth.

AND thus having at large explained  
*What Effect* the consideration of our  
 being *All* baptized into the Name of  
*Christ*, ought to have upon us; It re-  
 mains now in the


3d and last place, That I proceed to  
 show what the *Nature* of *That corrup-*  
*tion* is, and what the *ill consequences* of  
 it, which *St Paul* here reproves in the  
*Corinthians* by this sharp and severe que-  
 stion; *Were ye baptized* in the Name of  
*Paul*? And This, from what has been  
 already said, is very apparent. For if  
 being baptized in the Name of *Christ*,  
 signifies being Disciples and Followers of  
*Him*; by the same reason, being bap-  
 tized in the name of *any other* person or  
 persons, signifies likewise being Follow-  
 ers of *Him* or *Them*. And for Christi-  
 ans

ans, who were baptized in the Name of *Christ*, to behave themselves nevertheless in such a manner, as if they took themselves to have been baptized in the Name of *other Teachers*; evidently denotes all such mutual *Schisms* and *Differences*, as arise among Christians from their following and being fond of the *Doctrines of Men*; the Doctrines either of *particular men*, or of any *Numbers* or *Bodies* of men whatsoever. *It has been declared unto me of you, my Brethren*, says the Apostle in the words just before my Text, *that there are Contentions among you*, ver. 11. *What* those contentions were, he explains in ver. 12; My Meaning (says he) is This; I hear, *that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ*. Some were for following *one man's Doctrine*, and some *another's*. To This Folly of theirs, he gives a very sharp Reproof, in the 13th verse, in which are the words of my Text: *Is Christ* (says he) *divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?*  
*I thank*

S E R M. *I thank God that I baptized none of you,*  
 IV. *but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should*  
 say, *that I had baptized in my own Name.*

Had these their differences, (which St Paul calls *Schisms*;) had they regarded, not *single persons*, but *Bodies of Men*; the case would still have been exactly the same. Had every one of them said, *I am of the Church of Corinth, and I of Ephesus, and I of Philippi, and I of Rome*: St Paul would still have given them the very same reproof; *Is Christ divided? was the City or People of Corinth crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the City or People of Corinth?* In like manner, could St Paul hear men contending and pleading, that one of them was *for the Council of Trent*, Another *for the Synod of Dort*, and a Third, *for That of Constantinople*; he would still make the very same Reply; *Is Christ divided? was the Council of Trent crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the Synod of Constantinople or Dort?* Were it lawful for *Any man, or any Number of Men*, to have *Any Doctrines* of their own, or any Followers



Followers to be distinguished by *Their* S E R M.  
Denomination; 'twould be reasonable to IV.  
think, that the *Apostles* certainly might,   
of All others, best have claimed That  
privilege. Yet St *Paul*, we find, was  
very careful, was very sollicitous, not to  
give any occasion to have it thought,  
that there was any such thing as the  
*Doctrines of Paul*, much less any such  
thing as the *Doctrines of the Church of*  
*Corinth* or *Rome*, or of Any other than  
*Christ* only, *who Alone* was crucified for  
*us*, and in *whose name only* we were bap-  
*tized*, and not in the *Name*, or into the  
*Doctrines*, of any other Teachers what-  
soever. For my own part, says he, *I*  
*determined*, not to know any thing among  
*you*, save *Jesus Christ*, and him crucifi-  
*ed*:—*And my speech*, and my preaching,  
*was not with enticing words of man's*  
*wisdom*;—*that your faith should not*  
*stand in the wisdom of men*, but in the  
*power of God*, ch. ii. 2. He disclaims all  
power in himself, to add any thing to  
the Doctrine of Christ; any notions, any  
particularities, any distinguishing doc-  
trines

S E R M. trines of his own. The Doctrine of  
 IV. *Christ*, who alone *was crucified for them*,  
 and in whose name they were All bapti-  
 zed; he *supposes*, they All understood  
 and embraced: Otherwise they were not  
 capable of being Members of Christ's  
 Church, in the Sense that persons of  
 riper years were admitted so to be. The  
 doctrine of *Christ*, I say, into which they  
 were baptized, he *supposes* they All un-  
 derstood; namely, the Doctrine of *Re-  
 pentance from Dead Works*, and of *Faith  
 towards God*; of the *Resurrection of the  
 Dead*, and of *eternal Judgment*. And  
 as to any *additional* doctrines, by which  
 One party of Christians might be distin-  
 guished from another; which he else-  
 where calls, *unlearned* questions; in the  
 original it is, *untaught*, things which  
 were no part of the *instruction* of a  
*Christian*; As to these, he Thus expresses  
 his Sentiments; I fear, says he, lest by  
 any means, as the Serpent beguiled Eve  
 through his Subtilty, so your minds should  
 be corrupted from the Simplicity that is  
 in Christ. For, Other foundation can no  
 man

ἀπαίδετος-

701.

2 Tim. ii.

21, not

taught at  
Baptism.

2 Cor. xi.

3.

1 Cor. iii.

11.

*man lay, than That is laid, which is Je-* SER M.  
*sus Christ. And though We ourselves,* IV.  
*says he, or an Angel from heaven, preach*  
*any other Gospel unto you, than that which*  
*we have preached unto you, let him be ac-*  
*cursed. By preaching another Gospel, he*  
*does not mean setting up a new Religi-*  
*on in opposition to Christianity; but, as*  
*he expressly explains himself in the verse*  
*foregoing, Gal. i. 6, 7, he directs his dis-*  
*course against Those, who called men to*  
*another Gospel, which is not another;*  
*That is, who to the Gospel of Christ*  
*added their own peculiar Doctrines as*  
*Marks of distinction among Christians,*  
*thereby giving unavoidable occasion to*  
*Divisions and mutual Schisms in the Bo-*  
*dy of Christ; Directly contrary to that*  
*Great Precept of our Lord, Mat. xxiii.*  
*9, Call no man your Father upon the*  
*Earth, for One is your Father which is*  
*in Heaven, Neither be ye called Masters,*  
*for One is your Master, even Christ. As*  
*Christ alone was crucified for us, so in*  
*His Name only, (says the Apostle,) into*  
*His Doctrine only, were we baptized;*

S E R M. and not into the particular doctrines of  
 IV. any *other* man, or any *Sect* of men whatsoever. This is the Root of Christian Unity, the *Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, the Unity of the One undivided and undefiled Spouse of Christ; which is the Temple, the House, the Church of the Living God; dispersed in All Ages, and in All places, over the face of the whole Earth; and yet united in One Holy Bond, in One indissoluble Tie, of Truth and Charity. For notwithstanding the numberless mutual *Schisms* and *Differences*, among the various worldly *Sects* or Bodies of men, who place the Sum of their religion in following the doctrines and ceremonies each of their own *Sect*; yet concerning all real and sincere Christians in every place, who, without laying any Stress on the Traditions of men, endeavour carefully to study and understand the Doctrine, and to obey the Laws and Commandments of *Christ*, into whom alone they were baptized; (and who consequently are the *True Church* of Christ;) concerning

cerning *These*, I say, the similitude used SER. M.  
 by St Paul is still and always true, that IV.  
*as the Body (of a man) is One, and hath*  
*many members, and all the members of*  
*that One body, being many, are One body,*  
*so also is Christ; For by one Spirit are*  
*we all baptized into One body, — and*  
*have been all made to drink into \* One*  
*Spirit: So that, as to the Fundamentals*  
 of religion (upon which alone compare  
 These persons lay any considerable stress,) they 1 Cor. x.  
 are all of them entirely *One body and*  
*One Spirit, even as they are called in*  
*One hope of their calling; having One*  
*Lord, One Faith, one Baptism, One*  
*God and Father of all, who is above all,*  
*and through all, and in them all, Eph.*  
*iv. 4. Men of evil and corrupt minds,*  
 even in St Paul's days, began to depart  
 from this *Simplicity* of the doctrine of  
 Christ, and to form themselves into Sects  
 and Parties under different denominati-  
 ons, occasioning mutual Schisms and un-  
 charitable Divisions among Christians:  
 Ch. iii. of this 1 Cor. ver. 3, *Whereas,*  
 says he, *there is among you envying and*

SERM. *strife and divisions; are ye not carnal,*  
 IV. *and walk as men?* That is, do ye not  
 behave yourselves more like the profane  
 and corrupt Infidels of This present  
 World, than like Disciples of Christ?  
*For while One says, I am of Paul, and*  
*Another, I am of Apollos, are ye not car-*  
*nal?* That is, Do ye not show your-  
 selves more concerned for particular  
*Parties,* than for propagating universal-  
 ly the *Truth* of Christ, and the *Practice*  
 of That Doctrin which is according to  
 Holiness. In *later* and more corrupt  
 Ages, this evil Spirit has continually in-  
 creased among those who call themselves  
 Christians. And the *Consequences,* the  
*natural* and *necessary* Consequences of  
 it, have been Animosities, Contentions,  
 Hatred, Schisms, Wars, Fightings, Per-  
 secutions, Ravages, and Devastations of  
 the World. The *Remedy,* is *One* only;  
 a *very obvious* remedy, and the *only pos-*  
*sible* one; even *This,* prescribed by the  
 Apostle in the Text; that *All Christians,*  
 every *single* Christian, and *All Bodies* of  
 Christians, whether small or great, would  
 seri-

*the Name of any Person.*

101

seriously consider, that as *Christ alone* SERM.  
was *crucified* for them, so in His *Name* IV.  
*only* were they *All baptized*, and not in

the *Name of Paul*, or of any *other* man,  
or of any *Seēt of men*, whatsoever: And  
that consequently they ought *All* to con-  
tinue in the *Simplicity* of the Profession  
and Practice of That Gospel, into which  
they were *All* baptized; without con-  
tentionously adding, each of them their

*own* peculiar Doctrines, to the Doctrine  
of *Christ*; which must unavoidably be  
the Occasion of never-ceasing divisions.  
In the *Great Foundations* of Faith and  
Practice, they do already agree. In  
*other* matters, if every one would but  
allow to *Others*, what he knows and  
expects should in Christian Charity be

by Them allowed to *Him*; however  
men might and cannot but differ about  
many *Things*, yet with regard to each  
other's *persons* they might easily (ac-  
cording to St Paul's advice) be of *the* Rom. xi.  
*same mind one towards another, perfectly* 16.  
*joined together in the same mind and in*  
*the same judgment*, 1 Cor. i. 10; holding

SERM. *the unity of the Spirit in the bond of*  
IV. *peace.* So the Apostle expresses it with  
great accuracy: Holding, not *unity of*  
*opinion* in the bond of *ignorance*, nor  
*unity of practice* in the bond of *hypocri-*  
*crisy*; but *the Unity of the Spirit*, the  
*unity of a Christian and Charitable Spirit*,  
in the bond of *Peace*.







# SERMON V.

The Nature, End and Design of  
the Holy Communion.



I COR. XI. 25.

*After the same manner also he took  
the cup, when he had supped,  
saying, This Cup is the new Te-  
stament in my Blood; This do ye,  
as oft as you drink it, in remem-  
brance of me.*



THE great End of our Savi-  
our's coming into the World,  
was to deliver men from  
that yoke of ceremonious  
performances, which *neither they nor*  
H 4 *their*

S E R M.  
V.

SER M. *their Fathers were able to bear*: and to  
 V. establish Religion upon the Foot of Vir-  
 tue and everlasting Righteousness. The  
 World had from the beginning been so  
 addicted to ritual and external obser-  
 vances, and laid so great stress on sensitive  
 and outward parts of Worship; that  
 God, in condescension to their infirmity,  
 and considering the hardness of their  
 Hearts, had for several ages thought fit  
 to prove the obedience of his peculiar  
 people the Jews, by giving them such  
 positive precepts, as had not in them-  
 selves any real and intrinsic worth; but  
 their obligation depended wholly, upon  
 their being positively commanded. These  
 rites, were external and sensible; suited  
 to the capacity of such persons, whose  
 minds could not immediately relish the  
 more sublime and spiritual parts of Re-  
 ligion. A willing and diligent observ-  
 ance of them, was indeed an evident  
 proof of an obedient and sincere Mind;  
 and a wilful neglect of them, when  
 commanded, a manifest token of a stiff-  
 necked, stubborn, and perverse genera-  
 tion;

tion; but yet they were not, *in their own nature*, Acts of Piety; or conduced any thing, *of themselves*, towards the perfecting of the Soul, and making it like unto God. Hence, tho' these things *were not to be left undone*; yet the *weightier matters of the Law*, were always *judgment, mercy, and truth*. To these, God continually exhorted his people by the Prophets; and declared upon all occasions, that their ritual observations, *in comparison of these more important Duties*, were of no value; and *without them*, were even abominations in his Sight. *Thinkest thou that I will eat bulls flesh, or drink the blood of Goats?* No; *But offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most High.* Pf. l. 13. God did therefore, by a Succession of Prophets, wean the Jews by degrees, as they were able to bear it, from their too high esteem of ritual and ceremonious performances; and inculcated to them the true and spiritual nature of Religion; till at last, in the fulness of time, when the World was prepared for the reception

S E R M.  
V.  
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S E R M. <sup>V.</sup> on of the Gospel, he wholly abolished those rites by the coming of his Son, whom he *sent forth* into the World made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons. Our Religion therefore *Now* consists not in such outward and ceremonial parts of Worship, whose observance was difficult, and their signification oft-times obscure. We know that *God is a Spirit; and they that will worship him acceptably, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth.* The Perfection of our Religion, is to imitate the Life of God in Holiness, and *having escaped the corruption that is in the World through lust, i. e. thro' the Temptations of Ambition, Covetousness and Sensuality; having escaped These, to become partakers of the divine nature.* The *Promises* of the Gospel are almost wholly spiritual; and its Precepts accordingly are so excellent, as, not only by virtue of God's promise and appointment, but even in their *own Nature* also, to fit and prepare us for that truly spiritual life in Heaven. But then,

as we are not yet actually in the state of Perfection, but only in a state of preparation for it; as we are here confined to these earthly Bodies, and to converse with sensible and corporeal objects; so the inward devotion of our Minds, must be excited and expressed, by outward acts of Religion. We *must glorify God both in our Body and in our Spirit, which are God's*, 1 Cor. vi. 20. No less therefore do *They* err, who would exclude all outward Acts of Worship from true Religion, than they who place Religion (as the greatest part of Men are apt to do) almost wholly in them. Our Minds must be filled with a due honour, and reverence towards God; and that disposition must be maintained and show forth itself, in proper Acts of external worship. And here our Saviour has not confined us, to difficult and burdensom forms; but only that *all things be done decently and in order*. We are not obliged to such positive and ritual observances, as the Jews of old; but only to show forth the religious affections of our minds

S E R M.  
V.  
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S E R M. minds in such outward acts, as are in  
 V. their own nature apt to *excite* that devo-  
 tion, and to *express* it. There are no  
 more than two positive institutions in the  
 Christian Church, as of necessity *general-ly*  
 to Salvation; Baptism and the Lord's  
 Supper; And these, so extremely signi-  
 ficant, and the connexion between the  
 Sign and the thing signified so evident,  
 that they can hardly be called barely po-  
 sitive institutions. By the *One*, we are  
 admitted into the Society of Christians,  
 and made members of the mystical Body  
 of Christ; By the *Other*, we are con-  
 firmed and established in that state; and  
 receive spiritual nourishment, as mem-  
 bers united to the Head; being made  
 partakers of the benefits of his Death  
 and Passion.

THE Words of the Text, are part of  
 the History St *Paul* gives us of the insti-  
 tution of his latter Sacrament; exactly  
 agreeable to the Account that three of the  
 Evangelists give us, of the same institu-  
 tion. The Occasion of the Apostle's re-  
 peating it in this place, was the disorderly  
 manner

manner of the *Corinthians* communica-  
ting; who, by reason of many divisions  
among themselves, and thro' the pride of  
the rich despising the poor, received this  
Holy Sacrament without a Devotion  
suitable to so sacred an institution; *not*  
*discerning*, (as the Apostle expresses it  
ver. 29) *the Lord's Body*; not distin-  
guishing it sufficiently from a worldly  
or common feast; not considering the  
Solemnity, and Design of the Action;  
not having their minds prepared with  
worthy Qualifications, to approach with  
due Reverence the Table of the Lord.  
In order to remedy this their carelessness,  
and prevent the like unbecoming beha-  
viour for the future; the Apostle  
thought no Argument more proper, than  
to repeat to them the *very words* of our  
Lord's institution: Which containing in  
*themselves* a plain account of the End  
and Design of this Holy Sacrament,  
could not but put them to shame, and  
be a strong reproof of their unworthy  
behaviour; that they should so soon for-  
get the *main and principal* intent of  
their

S E R M.  
V.  


SER. M. their coming together; and err, not in  
 V. an external circumstance, or in a matter  
 of form; but in such a particular, as  
 shew them to have neglected that admonition and precept, which in express words, was a part, and a principal part, of the *institution itself*; *This do in remembrance of me*. For it was not possible, they should at the very time of their religious assembly have run into *excess*; if they had considered, that what they were then doing, was in *remembrance* of the *Death and Passion of Christ*, who gave himself a Ransom for them to that very End, that he might redeem them from all worldly and inordinate desires: It was not possible, they should at the very time of their receiving the Holy Communion, have despised their poor Brethren, and treated them uncharitably and with contempt; if they had considered, that the Action they were then about, was a Solemn *shewing forth the Lord's Death*, a solemn profession of their belief in a crucified Saviour, a publick declaration of their Hope of Salvation



vation only thro' the merits of *his* Death, who died equally for poor and rich, for the mean and for the honourable; and made it his last Desire and Commandment before his Death, that they who would be *his* Disciples, should love one another *without distinction* of worldly considerations, and be Examples of Charity to the whole World. Nothing therefore could be a juster and stronger reproof, to the *present* careless and uncharitable behaviour of the *Corinthians*; nothing more instructive to them, how to behave themselves worthily and becomingly for the *future*; than to repeat, as *St Paul* here does, the solemn words themselves of our Lord's own institution; which so plainly and with such Authority express the nature and design of his Holy Sacrament. *For I have received, (saith he) 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;*

S E R M.  
V.  
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SERM. you; *This do in remembrance of Me:*

V. *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: In remembrance of me; i. e. in commemoration of my Death and Passion; shewing forth, (as the Apostle expresses it in the following verse,) the Lord's Death till he come.*

IN discoursing upon these Words, the

1<sup>st</sup> Thing proper to be observed in them and considered, is the *general Nature, End, and Design* of this Holy Communion: expressed by our Saviour in these Phrases, *This is my Body, which is broken for you; and This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood; This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me: Do it in remembrance of Me; i. e. Let it be a perpetual solemn Commemoration* of my Death and Passion; and a continual Occasion of your meditating upon the spiritual Benefits purchased to you thereby: Meditate seriously

riously and devoutly, upon the wonderful Love of *God*, the Supreme Lord and Father of all, in sending freely into the World no meaner a person than his own Son, to become a Sacrifice and Propitiation for all Sins forsaken and amended. Meditate upon the Love also of *Christ*, in submitting willingly to this good pleasure of his Father; in submitting willingly to *Death*, even the Death of the *Cross*, to accomplish this merciful and gracious Design: *For greater Love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his Friends*, St Joh. xv. 13. Think with a Just Sense upon the Humility and Condescension of *him*, who being in the form of *God*, i. e. who being the person by whom God from the Beginning created and governs all things, yet did not affect to appear in that form, to appear like unto *God*, to appear (as he might have done) in the glory of his Father; but voluntarily made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man,

S E R M.  
V.  


S E R M. *he humbled himself, and became obedient  
V. unto Death, even the Death of the Cross.*

Consider, with due affection of mind, the vile and heinous nature of *Sin*; consider it with the highest indignation, and with the firmest resolutions against it; which, in the Wisdom of the Almighty's Government, was the Occasion of such a Humiliation to the beloved Son of God, in order to expiate and purchase pardon, for it: And let your frequent *eating this Bread, and drinking this Cup*, be a constant Remembrancer to your Thoughts, an Assistance to your Devotion, and a perpetual renewing of these spiritual meditations. *Do this, in remembrance of Me.* The Mind of Man, in this present State, is so constantly and so strongly affected by the impressions of Sensible Objects which perpetually surround it, that it can very difficultly conceive of things spiritual, purely and abstractedly by themselves: It is so closely united with Matter, and its attention so continually and powerfully sollicitated by external and corporeal objects; that to meditate  
with

with any closeness and application of S E R M.  
Mind on things remote from Sense, V.  
(though indeed the most natural and  
proper operation of the Soul,) is yet  
become one of the hardest parts of our  
Duty, and the want of it one of the  
greatest occasions of Sin. The chief  
Reason, why men, who seem convinced  
in their minds of the Truth and Im-  
portance of Religion, of the certainty  
of a Judgment to come, [and who will  
readily acknowledge the infinite dispro-  
portion between things temporal and  
eternal, between spiritual and earthly  
concerns; yet at the same time, in their  
practice prefer things earthly before spi-  
ritual; and temporal concerns before e-  
ternal; the Reason of This; I say, is  
want of frequent and serious Considera-  
tion: And the reason why they do not  
consider, is, because the capacity of  
their Mind is so wholly taken up, and  
their Attention so constantly employed,  
about sensible Objects; that either they  
turn not their thoughts at all towards  
things moral and spiritual; or, if they

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S E R M. do, yet These take so little hold, that  
V. they are presently diverted; and make  
such slight impressions, that they are immediately swallowed up and lost, among the deeper impressions made by the Objects of Sense. In consideration of this weak and depraved state of man's Soul it is, that God, who is a Spirit infinitely removed from Sense, the King immortal, invisible, whom no man hath seen nor can see, has, in all his Revelations and Discoveries of himself to mankind, represented himself, not by any sublime descriptions of his nature and essence, (which are commonly barren and unfruitful Speculations,) but represents himself affectionately under the character of being Author of some great and memorable Work worthy of God, for the good and benefit of Mankind: That so men might neither on the one hand have any occasion given them to frame to themselves any likeness or similitude of God; which is the greatest Indignity; nor yet on the other side want such a just Idea of him, as they might  
fix

fix their thoughts and Meditations upon. S E R M.  
Thus to the Patriarchs he styled himself, V.  
*God who created the Heavens and the*  
*Earth, and all things that are therein.*  
To the Nation of the Jews, *God who*  
*brought them out of the Land of Egypt,*  
*out of the house of bondage; To us Chri-*  
*stians; God, even the Father of our Lord*  
*Jesus Christ.* And because the great End  
and Essence of Religion is to imitate  
the nature and life of God, in Holiness,  
Justice, Mercy, Truth, and the rest of  
his commendable Attributes; therefore  
he has exemplified that life to us, in his  
Son Christ Jesus; clothing him in flesh,  
and sending him to dwell among us, that  
he might *leave us a visible and sensible*  
*Example, that we should follow his steps.*  
Further; because men are usually as un-  
apt to *Remember*, as they are at first slow  
to *Apprehend*, things of a spiritual na-  
ture; God has therefore generally been  
pleased to use the same means, as in *con-*  
*veying* spiritual Notions first into our  
minds, so in *keeping them up* there like-  
wise after we have once received them,

S E R M. by the help of *continued* outward and sensible Signs. For such is our Frame, that *Any* sensible Memorial makes naturally a deeper and more lasting impression upon us, than a mere historical narration of the Fact to be remembered: And the more proper and significant, the more express and pertinent the Memorial is, the *more* strongly does it still affect us. When God entred into Covenant with *Abraham*, to be a God unto Him and to his Seed after him; he instituted the rite of Circumcision, as a perpetual memorial of it to after-generations; and *it shall be*, says he, *a Token of the Covenant between Me and You*, Gen xvii. 11. In like manner under the *Mosaical* Institution, the Jews had several sensible Signs and positive Rites appointed them; for the keeping up in their minds a continual *Remembrance* of God's commands, or for lasting memorials of some peculiar blessings; *That ye seek not after your own Heart, and after your own Eyes, but may remember and do all my Commandments, and be holy un-*



to the Lord your God, Num. xv. 40. Of S E R M.  
 this, we have several instances in the V.  
 Books of the Law; But the most re-  
 remarkable one of all, and that which  
 bears most Analogy to our Sacramental  
 remembrance of the Death of Christ in  
 the Eucharist, is the Feast of the *Passö-*  
*ver*; appointed (as is set down at large  
 in the xiith of *Exodus*;) for a perpe-  
 tual *commemoration* of the miraculous  
 deliverance of the people of the Jews  
 out of *Egypt*, when *the Lord* passed over  
*the houses of the children of Israel*, but  
*smote all the first-born of the Egyptians*  
 with Death. This bringing up the *Ij-*  
*raelites* out of the land of *Egypt*, was the  
 greatest and most wonderful deliverance  
 that had ever been vouchsafed to any  
 Nation. They had been long kept in  
 servitude, and oppressed by a mighty and  
 potent People, without any possibility of  
 deliverance in all humane appearance;  
 and their work was exacted *with rigor*,  
 so that it was called by way of eminence  
*the house of bondage*, and *the iron furnace*  
 I 4. *wherein*

SER M. *wherein they were made to serve: Yet*  
 V. *did God bring them forth with a strong*  
*band and with an out-stretched arm, with*  
*signs and wonders and with mighty works.*  
 This was such a deliverance, as it might reasonably have been presumed, there could be no danger it should be ever forgot by them: It was such a convincing and astonishing proof of the immediate presence of God amongst them, that 'tis not easy to imagine, how the deep impressions it must of necessity make upon their minds, of the Power and peculiar Providence of God over them, should ever after come to be worn out. For there is nothing apt to affect men in so strong and lasting a manner, as the beholding such works, as they cannot but judge to be above the Power of natural causes, and to be the immediate effect of the finger of God. Yet we find that *That very people, even that very generation, who had seen all these things with their own Eyes, (as Moses often upbraided them;) forgot God's works, and his wonders which he had shewed*

shewed among them; They kept not the S E R M.  
Covenant of God, but refused to walk in V.  
his law; They sinned yet more against  
him, and provoked the most Highest in the  
wilderness, Ps. lxxviii. 17. How much  
more would the Memory of that great  
work have been lost in *After-generati-*  
*ons*, had not God appointed such a me-  
morial of it, as, by its constant return,  
and by its fitness to represent the thing  
signified, might always preserve it fresh  
in their memories, and oblige them to  
*teach their Children the same?* For *This*  
cause therefore was the Feast of the  
*Passover* instituted; an institution most  
proper for That End to which it was  
designed: Men, in such a festival So-  
lemnity, being constantly obliged to re-  
collect and rehearse particularly the Mat-  
ter they gratefully commemorate; and  
by rejoycing together, with humble De-  
votion, to imprint it more and more  
deeply upon their minds for ever. And  
accordingly we find in the Histories of  
All Nations, that something like *This*  
was their usual manner of keeping up  
in

SERM. in their Minds a Sense of great and remarkable blessings; of preserving the Memory of their most eminent Benefactors; and of making effectual the Laws and particular Precepts, such Benefactors have thought fit should be perpetually observed.

AND now, This is the Method which God has been pleased to make use of with *Us Christians* likewise. The Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, (which is the Foundation of God's accepting Repentance, consistently with the Honour of his divine Laws,) was inestimably the greatest blessing that was ever conferred upon the Sons of Men; yea, the fountain and spring, the original and foundation of all other blessings: For so the Apostle justly argues, *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* It was a Blessing, of which the deliverance of the People out of *Egypt*, and their passage through the *Red Sea*, was but a Type and a Figure; And therefore, if that *Shadow*

was

was to be so solemnly commemorated S E R M.  
by the Passover, how much more does V.  
the *Substance itself* of this eternal Blessing, deserve to be perpetually kept in mind with the highest veneration, and commemorated with the greatest thankfulness, that can possibly be expressed. That This might be done the more effectually; our Saviour, in consideration of the weakness of mens apprehensions, and the slowness of their memories in spiritual matters, has thought fit to institute *such* symbols or representations of what he has done and suffered for us, as might *best* conduce to the spiritual ends he designed in the Sacrament; that is, *such* Symbols, as might represent him to our Minds rather than to our bodily senses; and might assist the meditating faculties of the Soul; yet so, as at the same time not to affect the Senses in such manner as to give any occasion to the outward actions to drown or thrust out the spiritual affections of the mind; *such* symbolical Representations as might be naturally useful to excite Devotion; and  
yet

S E R M. yet at the same time not be apt to de-  
 V. generate into occasions of Superstition.

There is no corporeal *Image*, (such as vain and corrupt men are apt to affect, and have found the great mischief of it;) there is no Object to *terminate* the Sense; but the Bread is appointed to be broken, and the Wine to be poured out; to remind us in an *abstract and spiritual* manner, how his Body was broken, and his Blood shed for us. And this he has commanded us to do *always*, in *remembrance of Him*; showing forth the *Lord's Death*, through all Generations, until his *Second Coming*.

WE are to do it *at all times*; to show forth his Death, by a perpetual commemoration, until his second coming: But more *especially*, at the solemn return of those great Festivals, set apart in remembrance of his *Nativity*, *Passion*, and *Resurrection*. His *Birth* in human Flesh, was the humbling himself to a Capacity of suffering *Death* for our sakes; and his *Resurrection* after Death, was the evidence and demonstration, of his

his Sufferings being accepted in the sight S E R M.  
of God. He *died for our Sins*, that he V.  
might expiate them by his Blood; and  
*he rose again for our justification*, that  
he might in his Glory communicate to  
us the full Effect and Fruit of that A-  
tonement. He *offered himself* once a  
*Sacrifice for Sin*; and then *for ever sat*  
*down on the right hand of God*; having  
*by one offering for ever perfected them*  
*that are sanctified*. But now in order to  
make ourselves capable of so inestimable  
a Benefit, it is necessary on *our* part, that  
we so commemorate *his* Death, as to die  
*ourselves* also unto Sin; and so to rejoyce  
in *his* Resurrection, as to rise *ourselves*  
likewise, unto newness of life. *Christ*  
*our Passover is sacrificed for us*; There-  
*fore let us keep the feast, not with old*  
*leaven, neither with the leaven of malice*  
*and wickedness, but with the unleavened*  
*bread of sincerity and truth*, 1 Cor. v. 7.  
To such as are sincerely and heartily de-  
sirous so to do, there can be no better As-  
sistance than the frequent and worthy  
receiving this Holy Communion: The  
*general*

SERMON. *general Nature, End and Design* of  
 V. which, I have *Now* shown to be a solemn commemorating of the Death of Christ, (*Do this in remembrance of Me;*) and the *particulars* contained under this *general* Head, shall *hereafter* more fully be explained.

LET us therefore; with Hearts full of sincere Resolutions to forsake every Sin; partake of this Holy Feast in the Manner our Lord himself has appointed: And that it may have an effectual influence upon us to imitate him in his *Life*, whom otherwise we do but mock when we commemorate his *Death*; *God of his infinite mercy grant, &c.*







# S E R M O N VI.

The Nature, End and Design of  
the Holy Communion.



I COR. xi. 25.

*After the same manner also he took  
the Cup, when he had supped,  
saying, This Cup is the New Te-  
stament in my Blood, This do ye,  
as oft as ye drink it, in remem-  
brance of me.*



HAVE from these words, in S E R M.  
VI.  
a foregoing Discourse, con-  
sidered the general Nature,  
End, and Design, of the  
Institution of the Sacrament of the Lord's  
Supper.

SERMON. Supper. I proceed *at this time*, to reduce to Practice the *several particulars*, included in that *One general direction* given us by our Lord, *do this in Remembrance of Me*.

And 1<sup>st</sup>. *To do This in remembrance of Christ*, signifies *fixing and imprinting* in our minds with a more lasting and *permanent Impression*, the remembrance of his Death and Passion; as an effectual *Motive to universal Obedience*: That is, to the Practice of Virtue, upon the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ. There can be no stronger Argument, to persuade Men to the practice of Virtue and Holiness, than a due consideration of the exemplary *Life* and meritorious *Death* of our Saviour; His Life as a Pattern of all Virtue, and his Death as an Evidence of God's Hatred against Sin. His *Life* was so complete a *pattern* of pure Religion: and his *Death* so affectionate a *persuasive* to imitate That example; that whosoever frequently and seriously meditates upon these things, can neither readily *err* from the right way, for want  
of

of due *instruction* and sufficient *directi-* S E R M.  
*on*; nor *faint* for want of powerful *Mo-* VI.  
*tives* to proceed in it. For, *What* temp-  
 tation can prevail upon That person to  
 sin deliberately against God, to run in-  
 to *any* Acts of Debauchery or Impiety;  
 who by Faith continually beholds our  
 Lord shedding his most precious Blood,  
 to redeem him from the dominion and  
 punishment of that Sin, which he is  
 now tempted to commit? What Heart  
 can be so obdurate, what Breast so un-  
 grateful, as to run knowingly and will-  
 ingly into the commission of Sin; when  
 he has his *dying* Saviour habitually before  
 his eyes, intreating and beseeching him  
 to avoid those Sins, which were the  
 cause of his cruel and ignominious  
 Death? In matters of *temporal* Concern,  
 Men always endeavour to remember the  
 instructions of a *dying* Friend; and think  
 nothing more sacredly obliges them,  
 than his *last* and most affectionate De-  
 sires: How much *more* religiously ought  
 we to observe those Precepts, which we  
 find our *Saviour* injoyning us not only

S E R M. when *dying*, but when *dying for our*  
VI. *sakes*; when *dying even for that very*  
*end*, that he might enable us the more effectually to perform them! Now the *Means* to preserve these Impressions constantly fresh upon our Minds, and in their full force; is to partake frequently of those elements, which our Lord himself has appointed to be received, as the most proper remembrances of himself. Whosoever keeps up in his mind a constant remembrance of Christ, of what he has done and suffered for us, will not easily fall into gross and habitual Sins: and he that frequently and devoutly, with understanding and knowledge of what he does, partakes of the Holy Communion, cannot fail to keep up in his Mind such a constant Remembrance of our Lord. When we see the Bread broken, and the Wine poured out; we cannot but contemplate how his Body was broken, and his blood shed for our sakes; and the oftner we renew these thoughts by frequent communicating, the stronger and more vigorous, the deeper and more lasting

ing impressions must these things necessarily make upon our Minds. One principal reason why Men in these latter Ages of the World, who profess themselves Christians, are yet so loose and sensual, so careless and indifferent in matters of Religion, so cold and lifeless in their devotion, and so little affected with things spiritual and of a heavenly nature, is because they seldom allow themselves Time, from the Cares and Business and pleasures of the World, to recollect their Thoughts; and meditate seriously upon the great Motives and Arguments of Religion: And one reason why they so seldom think on these Arguments, is, because they neglect those means; which God has graciously appointed to awaken and withdraw their Minds from earthly and temporal considerations; those means, to which God has annexed the Assistance of his Holy Spirit, to enable us to raise our Thoughts and fix our Meditations upon things spiritual and removed from Sense. Hence it comes to pass, that tho' they *believe* indeed

S E R M.  
VI.  
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S E R M. the History of Christ's dying for them,  
 VI. as a bare relation of Matter of Fact ; yet  
 they seldom remember or think at all upon  
 it; or if they do, yet 'tis so slightly and superficially, with so little due apprehension of the great concern and importance of it to themselves, or of the true Design of it with regard to their own real Amendment; that it leaves upon their minds none of those impressions, which are necessary in order to have an effectual influence upon their lives and actions. One great and principal End therefore of the institution of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is, by means of outward and visible Signs, apt and decent, proper and significant, to imprint and fix in our minds with a more lasting and permanent impression, the remembrance of Christ's Death and Passion; that, having always before our Eyes those admirable instances of his unparalleled Love, and being constantly reminded of the true End and Design of his Sufferings, we may be the more strongly fortified against all temptations, that would seduce

us to sin against so great a Benefactor; and that we may go on the more effectually in the ways of *his* commandments, who has done and suffered for us things of so great and so inestimable a value.

2. *Doing this in remembrance of Christ*, is making *such* a commemoration of his Death, as is with all Humility a continual *acknowledgment* of its being to *Sinners* the *only Ground of Hope and Assurance of Pardon*. *This Cup*, saith he, *is the New Testament in my Blood, which is shed for You and for many for the remission of Sins*; Therefore *do this in remembrance of me*. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not *itself*, like Baptism, a Rite appointed for the Remission of Sins; but 'tis a *commemoration* only of that All-sufficient Sacrifice, which was *once* offered for an eternal Expiation. To imagine that the Lord's Supper, which is to be repeated *perpetually*, has such a promise annexed to it of taking away all past Sins, as *Baptism* had, which was to be administered but *once*, is a dangerous and fatal Error; Because

S E R M. such an Opinion would be plainly an encouragement for Men to *continue in Sin*, that *the Grace* of Forgiveness might be perpetually repeated and *abound*. But the receiving *This* Sacrament is a continual *acknowledgment*, that *That* Pardon which God vouchsafes us, not as a necessary consequent of the outward Action, but upon the condition of our true and unfeigned Repentance; even that *That* Pardon, is the purchase of the Blood of Christ, and the Effect of that great and eternal Sacrifice, once offered for the Expiation of Sin. The Church of *Rome*, by pretending *That* sacrifice to be perpetually repeated upon the Altar; as they give Men too great encouragement to continue in Sin, so they expressly contradict the Apostle *St Paul*; who assures us *Heb. ix. 25*, that Christ is not to *offer himself often*, as the High Priest entred into the Holy place every year with blood of others; For then must be often have suffered since the foundation of the World; But now Once in the end of the World has he appeared to put a-

way



away Sin, by the Sacrifice of himself. SERM.

The Sacramental remembrance of which

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great Propitiation, the antient Writers of the Church do indeed frequently stile, by a figurative expression, *the unbloody Sacrifice*; But for that very reason, and by that very expression, it is declared *not to be properly itself a Sacrifice*, but only a grateful commemoration of one; because *without Blood*, as there is *no remission*, so there is properly *no Sacrifice*. It is a Sacrifice, only in a *figurative Sense*, and by way of allusion; just in the same manner of speaking, as *Christians* are stiled in the *New Testament the Circumcision made without hands*. Nevertheless, to those who truly and sincerely repent and amend; and who humbly and devoutly beg of God the pardon of their past and forsaken Sins, thro' the intercession of Christ; to such persons, tho' there is indeed no *new Sacrifice*, no *new Foundation of Remission*; there is nevertheless sufficient ground for hope and assurance of Pardon, in the merit of that one All-sufficient Sacrifice Once offered

SERMON. for ever: And sincere Penitents can never with more reasonable and well-grounded Faith, hope to have applied to themselves the benefit of the grace and forgiveness, purchased once for them by that great Expiation; than when they are with true Devotion and with full purpose of Amendment of Life, commemorating their Saviour's sufferings in that solemn manner, which *He himself* has appointed, *who* was the Person that gave himself to be the reconciliation for us, that thro' him we might have access with confidence to the throne of grace; and *whom* God has set forth to be a propitiation for us, thro' Faith in his Blood; to declare his righteousness, (that is, his mercy; for so the righteousness of God signifies in the *New Testament*;) to declare, I say, his righteousness for the remission of Sins that are past, thro' the forbearance of God. They can never with better and more lively Hope, express their full Trust and humble dependance upon God, that he shall freely give them all Other things; than at That Time when

when they are worthily and devoutly commemorating, according to our Lord's institution, how *he spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.* How *ill* therefore does it become Men who call themselves Christians to neglect this ordinance with a careless indifference; and, upon slight pretences, to deprive themselves of the benefit of so reasonable a duty! The Blood of Christ, is, in the Scripture-language, *a fountain opened for Sin and for Uncleaness*, that is, for Sin repented of, and utterly forsaken; and the benefit thereof is never more likely to be effectually applied, than when Men, with determined resolutions of better Obedience, are disposed to become worthy partakers of these Holy Mysteries.

3. *Doing this in remembrance of Christ, is declaring publickly to the World our Faith in him; and endeavouring to continue down the Memory of his Love to all generations.* Thus St Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 26. in the words immediately following the Text; *As oft, says he, as ye eat this*

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SER M. *this bread and drink this Cup, ye do show*  
 VI. *the Lord's death till he come.* We here  
 profess *publickly* our Faith in his Death;  
 and declare solemnly to the World, that  
 we expect remission of our Sins, only  
 thro' the virtue of his blood shed for us.  
 We commemorate his unspeakable Love  
 to Mankind; and extol and magnify in  
 our Praises those great Acts, which were  
 the Effects of that inestimable love. We  
 rehearse and proclaim the benefits he has  
 procured for us; and, as much as in us  
 lies, *make known to all men* the glory of  
 his Love and Power: *that one generation*  
*may praise his works to another, and de-*  
*clare his mighty acts; that men may speak*  
*of the glorious honour of his Majesty, and*  
*of his wondrous works.*

IN the institution of the Passover,  
 when the *children of Israel* were com-  
 manded to eat unleavened bread seven days,  
 in remembrance of their deliverance out  
 of *Egypt*; 'tis expressly added in the  
 command, that they should Declare or  
 tell forth unto their children the mercy  
 of that deliverance: *Thou shalt show thy*

*So12*

Son in that day, saying, *This is done be-* SERM.  
*cause of that which the Lord did unto me* VI.  
*when I came forth out of Egypt: And it*  
*shall be a Sign unto thee upon thine Hand,*  
*and for a memorial between thine eyes,*  
*that the Law of the Lord may be in thy*  
*mouth; for, with a strong hand hath the*  
*Lord brought thee out of Egypt, Exod.*  
xiii. 8. Hence they called the Paschal  
Lesson *the Annunciating or Declaring;*  
Which is a word exactly answering to St  
Paul's expression of *shewing forth,* or  
declaring, the *Lord's Death till he come.*  
To communicate therefore *in remem-*  
*brance* of Christ, is to *declare publickly,*  
and keep up amongst Men the memory  
of his Death, and of the inestimable be-  
nefits purchas'd for us thereby: 'Tis to  
testify our firm belief of the virtue and  
efficacy of that great Sacrifice; and to  
profess ourselves publickly in the number  
of those, who, by partaking of the  
Feast instituted in *Remembrance* of the  
Sacrifice, expect to be made partakers of  
the Sacrifice itself.

SERM.

4. To do this in remembrance of Christ,

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implies, that with the greatest joy, and highest expressions of *gratitude*, we return *Thanks* to God for his unspeakable Mercy, in sending into the World his Son, the Son of his *Love*, out of his Bosom, for the redemption of mankind. It was a precept in the Law of *Moses*, Deut. xvi. 11, *Thou shalt rejoyce in thy feasts before the Lord*. And particularly in the Paschal Supper, besides the usual forms of Blessing and Thanksgiving, they sung a peculiar Hymn, in memory of their deliverance out of the land of *Egypt*. In compliance with which custom we find it recorded by two of the Evangelists, that our Saviour and his Disciples, immediately after the institution of the Lord's Supper, sung an *Hymn* of Praise unto God; probably the *same*, or *part* of That Hymn which the *Jews* used to sing after the Paschal Supper; *Their* deliverance from the *Egyptians*, being a type of *our* deliverance from the power and dominion of Sin; and the Thanksgiving proper upon *That* occasion,


tion, being much *more* emphatically applicable to *This*. Besides; in the institution itself, the Evangelist takes notice, that when our Saviour took the Bread, he *gave Thanks*, or *Blessed and Praised God*; Whence the *whole Action* is usually called the *Eucharist*, that is, the *Solemn Thanksgiving*; and, by *St Paul*, the *Cup of Blessing which we bless*, or, as the word may no less properly be rendered, the *Cup of Praise and Thanksgiving*. The same is also observable in *St Luke's* description of the Practice of the most primitive Christians; *Acts* ii. 46, *And they continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread from house to house, (in the house, the words should be translated; i. e. in the place of their religious assemblies;) did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart; Praising God, and having favour with all the people.* Frequent Forms of Praise and Thanksgiving upon this occasion, we meet with in the most ancient Christian Writers; and none more affectionate than That we still make use of

SERM.  
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SERM. of; *We praise thee, we bless 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. We give thanks to thee for thy great Glory; i. e. for the wonderful manifestation of thy Glory and Power, thy Mercy and Goodness towards Mankind, in sending thine own Son to die for our Sins, and to give himself a ransom and propitiation for Sinners.*

THIS reconciliation of Penitent Sinners to God by the Death of his Son is the Highest Instance of Love and Goodness, that was ever shown to Mankind: For, scarcely for a *righteous* man, saith St *Paul*, will one die: But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet *Sinners*, Christ died for us, *Rom. v. 7*. God could in a moment have destroyed the whole race of Sinners; and, as St *John Baptist* affectionately expresses it, *was able out of the Stones to have raised up Children unto Abraham*. But he turned away his wrath from them, and suffered not his whole displeasure



*pleasure to arise.* Wherefore, if at *all* S E R M.  
times we are bound to return Thanks to VI.  
God for *all* his mercies, for the mercies   
of every *day* and of every *hour*; with  
how much *greater* earnestness and stronger  
affection, ought we to express the  
same thankful disposition of mind, when  
we are commemorating *That* mercy,  
which is not only the greatest of all  
others, but the fountain also and founda-  
tion of them all? and how zealous  
ought we to be of expressing our thank-  
fulness to him by suitable *Obedience*;  
when the consideration of the *first* mer-  
cy, that *he spared not his own Son, but*  
*delivered him up for us all*, gives rea-  
son to hope, that, if we behave ourselves  
in any measure worthy of so great a Sal-  
vation, much more *shall he with Him*  
*also freely give us all things?* and that  
if, *while we were yet Sinners, Christ died*  
*for us; much more, being now justified by*  
*his blood, we shall be saved from wrath*  
*through Him?* For if, *when we were*  
*enemies, we were reconciled to God by the*  
*Death of his Son; much more, being re-*  
*conciled,*

SERMON. *cited, we shall be saved by his Life,*


VI. Rom. v. 2. Wherefore let us say with  
 the Holy Psalmist, *Pf. cxvi 12, 13, What shall I render unto the Lord for all the benefits that he has done unto me? I will receive the cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. And Pf. ciii. 1, Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, praise his holy Name; Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his benefits; Who forgiveth all thy Sin, and healeth all thine infirmities; Who saveth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness.* There is no possibility, but he who duly contemplates the unspeakable love of Christ, in giving himself freely to bear our Sins himself in his own body on the tree, and seriously meditates on the original and essential Goodness of God, which first moved and disposed him to find out this method of recovery for us; must wish he had the tongues of Men and Angels, to show forth the praises of him that has loved us, and sent his Son to wash us from our Sins in his

*own blood, and to make us Kings and* S E R M.  
*Priests unto God even his Father, to whom* VI.  
*be glory and dominion for ever.*

5. *Doing this in remembrance of Christ,* implies on *our* part a *confirming* of our *Covenant* with God, a *thankful acceptance* of those *Conditions* of Pardon he has offered us in the Gospel, and an *acknowledging* and *renewing* our *Obligations* to obey him. *This Cup*, says our Saviour, *is the New Testament*, or (as the word equally signifies) *the new Covenant, in my Blood*: Now every *Covenant*, in the Nature of the thing, supposes *conditions* to be performed on either part. God has commanded *Repentance* and *Remission of Sins* to be preached to all Nations in the Name of Christ; and the condition on *his* part of the *Covenant*, the remission of Sins, is always ready to be verified; if we fail not in *our* part, of having *worthily* repented, and reformed our Lives. But if we continue in our Sins; the *Commemoration of the Death* of Christ can do us no service, where the Effect of his *Death itself* takes

SERM no place: The partaking of this *Feast in remembrance of the Sacrifice*, can be of no benefit to us, when we have no part nor lot in the *Sacrifice itself*. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not properly an *Expiation* of Sin, even to those who *truly repent*; but only a *thankful* remembrance of that great Atonement, by virtue of which our Repentance is made acceptable: Much less, can it be of any efficacy, or power to do away such *Sins*, as are *never forsaken*. Religion is no way capable of a greater corruption, nor can *any* Superstition be of more destructive consequence, than to make *That* Ordinance an easy method of obtaining *perpetual* Pardon of repeated Transgressions, which in reality was intended to remind us continually, that the Pardon of Sin could not *at all* be obtained, but by the shedding the precious blood of the Son of God.

THERE are many pious and religious persons, who, on the *other* hand, are unreasonably *scrupulous*; and notwithstanding their sincere Endeavours to obey  
 God's

God's commandments, still fear, where S E R M.  
*no fear is*: But, as such persons have all VI.  
the reason in the world to rest satisfied,   
that the general course of a virtuous and  
religious life, is an abundant security a-  
gainst the danger of *not discerning the*  
*Lord's body*; so, on the contrary, *vicious*  
persons ought to be well assured, that  
there is *no external* part whatsoever of  
religious worship, by which they can re-  
ceive *any* benefit, without actual amend-  
ment and reformation of life. The Ar-  
guments of Religion are strong and  
powerful, to invite them to Repentance;  
The gracious Motions of the Spirit of  
God are ready to assist and strengthen  
their sincere endeavours; and especially,  
where it finds them with seriousness at-  
tending his holy Ordinances: But their  
Obedience to *this one* commandment of  
Christ must be with an intention of  
obeying *the rest*, and not with a design  
to supply that Neglect. He that *does* this  
worthily in *Remembrance of Christ*, must  
mean to express his gratitude to God  
for the Death of his Son, by *such* a Re-  

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S E R M  
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penitance, as the Death of Christ has enabled and obliged him to make perfect. He must *so* commemorate the Love of his Saviour, as thereby to excite in himself a suitable return of Love to him that died for him; and our *Love* to Christ, the Scripture tells us, *is This*, that we *keep his Commandments*. We must *show forth the Lord's Death till he come*, by *so* dying *ourselves* unto Sin, as to declare evidently to the World, that we have a well-grounded Hope, of being made like him also in his *Resurrection*. We must consider, that when the Blood of Christ is stiled in the prophetic language, a *fountain opened for Sin and for Uncleaness*; the Meaning is, (as St Paul explains it,) *for the forgiveness of Sins that are past*, not for our encouragement to continue in them for the time *to come*. We must remember that we *are bought with a price*; and therefore must *glorify God in our Body and in our Spirit, which are God's*; Knowing that we were redeemed, not with corruptible things, but with the precious blood  
of

*of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. We must with firm and effectual resolutions of future Obedience, offer and present ourselves, our Souls and Bodies, a reasonable, holy, and lively Sacrifice unto God; as often as we commemorate that great Sacrifice, which was once offered for us in the Death of his Son. Otherwise, instead of doing this in remembrance of Christ, we shall be found to do it in Contempt of him; accounting the blood of the Covenant, wherewith we ought to be sanctified, an unholy thing; denying the Lord who bought us with the precious blood of his dear Son; and doing despite unto the Spirit of Grace.*

Lastly, *Doing this in remembrance of Christ*, is a Profession of our Communion one with another, and a strong Obligation to Mutual Love, Charity, and Goodwill. This is a Subject much insisted on by St Paul in this whole Epistle, and particularly in this chapter, and in this very Argument, of which the Text is a part; and therefore deserves to be discoursed upon more largely.







# SERMON VII.

The Nature, End and Design of  
the Holy Communion.



I COR. xi. 25, latter part.

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



THE due Observance of this <sup>SERMON</sup>  
Precept of our Saviour, *Do* <sup>VII.</sup>  
*this in remembrance of Me,*  
I have shown to imply the  
following particulars.

SERM.

I. A *fixing and imprinting* in our

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minds more lastingly, the remembrance



of his Death and Passion; as a *Motive to Obedience*.

2. A *Commemorating* his Death in an humble *Acknowledgment*, of its being the *only Ground of our Hope of Pardon*.

3. A *declaring publickly* to the World, our Faith in him; and endeavouring to *continue down* the Memory of his Love to *all generations*.

4. A *returning Thanks* to God with the greatest *Joy*, and highest expressions of *Gratitude*, for his unspeakable *Mercy* in sending his Son into the World for the *redemption of Mankind*.

5. A *confirming* on our part, our *Covenant* with God; a thankful *acceptance* of those conditions of Pardon he has offered us; and an *acknowledging* and *renewing* our Obligations to obey him.

AND these I have *already* discoursed upon.

*Lastly*, (and to conclude what I have to offer on this Head;) *Doing this in remembrance of Christ*, is a Profession of  
our

our Communion one with another, and a S E R M. strong Obligation to mutual Love, Cha- VII. rity and Good-will.

A PRINCIPAL part of the design of this whole 1st Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, is to show the Necessity of Love and Unity among Christians; and all that he discourses particularly in the 10th and 11th chapters concerning the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is chiefly with intent to draw Arguments from the nature and design of that Holy Institution, to show the unreasonableness and unchristianness of Animosities and Divisions among themselves. With *This* he begins the Epistle, ch. i. ver. 10. *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.* His meaning is not, that Christians are bound to *be*, or to *pretend* to be, in all things of the same opinion. For to *be* so, is *impossible*; and to *pretend* to be so, is *hypocrisy*. But his meaning is, that *notwith-*  
*standing*

SERMON VII. *standing* all such differences of opinion, as are absolutely unavoidable, yet, by mutual forbearance, meekness and charity, they should be as free from strife and contention, as if they were really in all respects of One Mind. *This* exhortation, he carries on thro' the whole Body of his Discourse, ch. iii. ver. 3. *Whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* To *This*, all his discourse concerning the Communion, ch. x. has respect; *For, we being many, are one Bread and one Body; for we are all partakers of that one Bread*, ver. 17. With regard to *This* more especially it is, that in the xith chapter he passes so severe a censure on those who *eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily*. For so he introduces his discourse, ver. 18. a little before the Text; *First of all, when ye come together in the Church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it*. And by the help of this observation, the connexion of the Apostle's discourse in these two chapters will appear very easy, which otherwise may

I . . . seem

seem somewhat difficult to be understood. S E R M.  
In the tenth chapter, the divisions refer- VII.  
red to, are such as arose among the *Co-*  
*rinthians* upon the question concerning  
the lawfulness of eating things offered  
unto Idols. That an *Idol* was nothing  
in the World, and that the good crea-  
tures of *God* could receive no defilement  
from the vanity and superstition of *men*,  
the Apostle knew and plainly enough  
declared: But lest Offence should be gi-  
ven to weaker brethren, who could not  
so clearly distinguish; he exhorts them  
to forbear joining themselves with such  
assemblies of *Gentiles*, as might make  
them seem (at least to the weaker bre-  
thren) to be partakers of the Heathen I-  
dolatry. For, *saieth he in like manner as*  
a man's receiving the communion with  
*Christians*, is a publick declaration of  
his being a Christian himself; and *as a*  
Man's partaking of the Sacrifices at the  
Altars of the *Israelites*, is openly pro-  
fessing himself to be a *Jew* by religion;  
*so*, for a Christian to eat of things sacri-  
ficed to *Idols*, tho' he *has* in himself  
that

SERM.  
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that knowledge that an Idol is nothing in the World, yet may by others be interpreted as if he joined with them in their idolatry. This is plainly the true connexion of the Apostle's discourse; ver, 14, &c. *My dearly beloved, flee from Idolatry: I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say,* i. e. judge and observe, while I explain this to you by an easy comparison: *The Cup of blessing which We Christians 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?* that is; Is it not a publick declaration of our *mutual agreement and fellowship*, in commemorating together the love of our common Saviour? (*For we being many, are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread;*) And in like manner, says he, continuing the same similitude; *Israel after the flesh; are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the Altar?* i. e. Are they not partakers of the *Jewish* religion? do they not thereby profess their Communion with *Them*?

So also, the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God, and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. The Words are not abrupt and incoherent exhortations, as (without carefully attending to the design of the Apostle's argument,) they at first Sight may seem to be; but they are directly connected with what went before, and are clearly a continuation of one and the same similitude; that, as among both *Jews* and *Christians* the partaking in the same solemn religious acts, is a declaration of Unity, communion and agreement; so to eat with *Heathens* of things sacrificed to Idols, would be an affording too great a ground of suspicion, of agreeing with them in their Idolatry. In the following chapter, the divisions referred to, are of another kind; namely, such as arose in the Church, upon occasion of the *rich* despising the *poor*, and not allowing them to partake equally in their religious festival. This was their *eating and drinking unworthily*; This was their *not discerning the*

S E R M.  
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SER M. *the Lord's Body*: They did not sufficiently discern and distinguish, at least they did not act as if they were sensible, that this solemn act of Religion was essentially a strong and indispensable Obligation, to mutual Love, Unity, and Charity. To remedy this disorder therefore, the Apostle thought no Argument could be more proper and powerful, than to repeat to them at large the history of our Saviour's instituting his last Supper. He thought it was not possible, if they worthily remembered their *common Lord*, that they could be so forgetful of their *Duty one towards another*.

IN *Both* these passages therefore, he supposes (what I am *now* insisting upon,) that commemorating of Christ in the manner he himself has appointed, is a Profession of our *Communion* one with another, and a strong Obligation to mutual Love, Charity and Good-will. *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?* For, saith he, *we being many, are one bread and one body; for we*



*we are all partakers of that one bread;* SERM.  
ch. x. ver. 17. And he *therefore* declares, VII.  
ch. xi. ver. 20. that *when* the Corinthi-  
ans came together into one place, this was  
not to eat the Lord's Supper; because,  
saith he, *I hear that there be divisions a-*  
*mong you, and I partly believe it.* One  
great part of the Design of the Gospel  
of Christ, was to establish a Religion,  
which, as it might teach us how to be  
*reconciled to God,* so it might *reconcile*  
us likewise unto *one another:* which, as  
it was to oblige us to *love the Lord our*  
*God with all our Heart,* so to *love our*  
*Neighbours also as ourselves.* By *This*  
*shall all men know,* saith our Saviour,  
*that ye are my disciples, if ye have Love*  
*one to another,* St Joh. xiii. 35. To *This*  
the very Nature and Constitution of the  
universal Church of Christ, the very  
Notion of its being a Body whereof  
Christ is the Head, does itself naturally  
lead and direct us; *For, as* (in the literal  
sense) *we have many members in one body,*  
saith St Paul; *so* (in the *spiritual* sense  
likewise) *We being many are one Body*  
in

SER M. *in Christ every one Members one of another, Rom. xii. 4, 5. To This, the due consideration of every part of the Christian institution will have a powerful influence to oblige us; Let us endeavour, as the same Apostle expressly argues, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace; For, says he, there is One Body and One Spirit, even as ye are called in One hope of your calling; One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all, Eph. iv. 3. And ver. 15. Speak the truth in Love, that ye may grow up into him in all things, who is the Head, even Christ; From whom the whole Body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, making increase of the Body, unto the edifying of itself in Love. Through the Wickedness of Men indeed, and by the Fraud of the Devil; thro' false Notions of the great End and Design of Religion; through unchristian contentiouness, and more eager Zeal for*  
the

the imaginations of Men, than for the commands of God; this Body of Christ, this one universal Church, intended by our Lord to have been spread uniformly over all the Earth; has been for many Ages divided by many Parties, and into numerous Factions. But, as we all believe in the same God and Father of all, as we are all redeemed by the same Lord Jesus Christ, as we are all baptized into the profession of the same Creed, (the Apostles Form of Sound words,) and are all partakers of the same Communion at the Table of our Lord; so by this one unchangeable and fundamental Root of Unity, ought we to use our utmost endeavours to hold fast the Head, from which all the Body by joints and bands having nourishment ministred, and knit together, increases with the increase of God, Col. ii. 19.

AND as this great Duty of mutual Love and Charity, is thus enforced upon us by the general Design and Tendency, by the whole Tenor of the Gospel; so is it still more particularly and most strongly, by the Example of that unparalleled in-

SERMON VII. instance of amazing Love, the Death of Christ for our sakes, which we profess to commemorate as often as we communicate at his Holy Table: Where 'tis not possible for us to approach with Hearts duly sensible of, and worthily affected with, the Greatness of the Love of Christ towards us; but it must at the same time excite in us a disposition to *imitate* him, according to the proportion of our Abilities; and to express our Gratitude to *him*, by following that Example of loving and doing good to *our brethren*, which he has in so eminent a manner set before us. 'Tis particularly taken notice of by St. *Luke*, that the primitive Disciples, as they continued steadfast in the Apostles doctrine and in breaking of bread and in prayer, so they did all things unanimously, *with one accord*, *Acts* ii. 46, with mutual Love, Charity and Good-will. Our Lord himself, in that last and most affectionate Discourse, which he made to his Disciples a little before his Death, at the time of his instituting the Sacrament of the Lord's

Lord's Supper; insists upon This, as the thing of all others the most acceptable to him, and most desired by him: *This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, St. Job. xv. 12; and ch. xiii. 34, A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* And the Apostle St. John, who leaned upon his Master's Breast, and seems in a particular manner to have been partaker of his kind and loving Spirit, the Spirit of meekness, gentleness, and goodness; presses this Duty accordingly, with a like earnestness: *Herein, says he, is Love; not that we loved God, but that he loved Us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our Sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, We ought also to love one another, 1 Joh. iv. 10; And ch. iii. 16, Hereby perceive we the Love of God, because he (because Christ) laid down his life for us; and We ought to lay down our lives for the Brethren: To lay down our lives for them; i. e. to love them, comparatively speaking, even as*

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S E R M. OUR OWN Lives; to love them as our-  
 VII. selves; to do every thing that is in our  
 ~~~~~ Power reasonably, for their benefit and  
 advantage. *This* is the true Spirit of  
 Christianity; *This* is the full and proper  
 Effect of the Gospel of Christ: By *This*  
 we are to judge of ourselves, whether  
 we be truly and indeed his Disciples,  
 and have made any considerable progress  
 and improvement in his religion. And  
 By *This* we are in a more especial man-  
 ner to examine ourselves, whether we  
 be duly qualified, to be made worthy  
 partakers of *his* Body and Blood, who  
 died for this end, that as he might re-  
 concile us to *God*, so he might *also* re-  
 concile us to *each other*. And indeed in  
*other* particulars, men are not so very  
 apt to mistake. There is *no Man* who  
 approaches the Lord's Table with *any*  
 Reverence, with *any* Sense of Religion  
 upon his Mind; but is desirous at that  
 time, to strengthen his *Faith* in *God*, to  
 express his *Gratitude* to his Saviour, to  
 obtain *Pardon* of his past and forsaken  
 Sins through the Merits of *his* Blood  
 who



who loved us and gave himself for us, and to make solemn resolutions of perfecting his *Repentance* and renewing his *Obedience* towards *God*: There is no man, I say, who has *any* Sense *at all* of Religion upon his Mind, but must needs come affected with such Thoughts and Intentions as these: But in the matter of mutual Love and Good-will towards *each other*; in the exercise of Christian Charity and universal Benevolence; in that readiness to forgive offences, to overlook little provocations, to promote speedy reconciliation, which the Gospel requires and insists upon as of so great importance; in *This* we are very apt to be careless and defective; and to imagine that external zeal in devotion towards *God*, may compensate for the want of real Charity and doing good to our *Brother*. For, notwithstanding *all* the unreasonable Heats and Animosities among Christians, *all* the useles and contentious disputes, *all* the peevish and needless provocations, *all* that difficulty of forgiving and being reconciled to each other,

S E R M. which is so obvious to observe in the  
 VII. World; yet how *few* do we find, whose  
 Consciences are apt to be affected with  
*these* things? whose scruples concerning  
 their own unworthiness to communi-  
 cate, are founded upon *these* considera-  
 tions? And yet 'tis very evident, that  
 to be *in love and charity with our* Neigh-  
 bours, (*i. e.* with *all mankind*, as far as  
 is possible in that infinite variety of dif-  
 ferent circumstances,) is no less necessary  
 a Qualification for communicating wor-  
 thily, than 'tis necessary that we *truly*  
*and earnestly repent* us of our Sins com-  
 mitted more immediately against *God*.  
 'Tis as evident that the design of our  
 Saviour's instituting the Sacrament of  
 the Lord's Supper, was to be a declara-  
 tion of our Communion *one with ano-*  
*ther*; a declaring, that, according to the  
 Apostle's expression, *we, being many, are*  
*one Bread and one Body*, signified by our  
 being *all partakers of that one Bread*;  
 as that it was intended to be a Profession  
 of our Communion with *Him*; a pro-  
 fessing, that *the Bread which we break,*  
 is



is the Communion of his Body; and the S E R M.  
 Cup which we bless, the Communion of his VII.  
 Blood. 'Tis no less evident, that the  
 Connexion and Sympathy of the Mem-  
 bers one *with another*, is necessary to the  
 Life and Preservation of the Body; than  
 that the Union of them all with the  
*Head*, and their common dependence  
 upon it, is necessary to the same End.  
 Our Saviour, in all his discourses, lays  
 so great and remarkable a stress upon  
*This* duty; as if therein consisted almost  
 the *whole* of Religion: *Thou shalt love*  
*the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, is  
*the first and great commandment*, the be-  
 ginning and foundation of all Religion;  
*and the second*, saith he, *is like unto it*,  
*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*.

THE particular *Expressions*, or *manners*,  
*of shewing forth* which Love, most ear-  
 nestly and peculiarly insisted upon in  
 Scripture, are these two. 1<sup>st</sup>, A wil-  
 lingness to forgive injuries and offences;  
 and 2<sup>dly</sup>, a readiness to shew mercy to  
 the poor. 1<sup>st</sup>, A willingness to forgive  
 injuries and offences, is particularly re-

S E R M. commended to us by the *Example*, as  
 VII. well as enjoined by the *Commandment* of  
 our Lord: The *whole* Christian dispensation, the *general* grace and mercy of the Gospel, the *great* pardon purchased by the Death of Christ, whereof the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a perpetual solemn commemoration; being entirely founded in God's gracious readiness, for Christ's sake, to forgive *Us*; and being no less *intended* to be set before us as an *Example* to imitate, than as an inestimable *Blessing* to be received with all possible Thankfulness. For which reason, that great and original Grace of God in the Gospel, the Remission of Sins set forth even in Baptism itself, seems by our Lord to be *reversed* upon failure of this *condition* of our *forgiving one another*; in that Parable wherein he compares the Kingdom of Heaven to a certain *King*, who having forgiven one of his Servants a debt of ten thousand talents, yet afterwards, when that servant refused to forgive one of his fellow-servants an hundred pence, the  
 1 King

King was wroth with him again, and delivered him to the Tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him; saying unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldst not Thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? Which our Saviour thus applies to Us in the conclusion of the Parable; So likewise, says he, shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his Brother their trespasses, St Matt. xviii. 35. (He does not mean *Publick Malefactors*: For this would destroy all Government: Neither are such stiled *Brethren*: But, forgive every one his *Brother* their *private* Offences, and be reconciled upon reasonable and easy Terms: This is the Meaning of the *Parable*.) And in that Form of Prayer, which our Saviour was pleased to teach his Disciples for perpetual Use, he so interposes the acknowledgment of our Obligation to this Duty; that every man, even in his *daily Prayer*, is obliged to  
 declare

§ E R M. declare himself unworthy of Pardon,  
 VII. and to have forfeited all title to the forgiveness of *God*, for his *own* Sins; if at the same time he is not willing and ready, upon the most *reasonable* terms, to forgive all his *Brother's* trespasses and offences against *him*. How much *more*, at that most solemn commemoration of the Death of Christ in the Sacrament; when we are acknowledging in the most publick manner, all our hopes of Salvation, all our expectation of Pardon, to be owing to that free and undeserved Goodness of God, which sent his Son to die for us, and to obtain remission of Sin; How much more (I say) at *That* time, must the very Nature of the Duty we are performing, the Solemnity of our confessing our own Unworthiness, the publickness of our acknowledging the freeness of God's Goodness to us in forgiving us through Christ our ten thousand talents; of necessity remind us, how absolutely fit and reasonable and indispensable it is, that we should be very willing to forgive each other our hundred pence!

pence! Even *so* necessary does our Lord make it, that he advises a man, if he has brought his gift to the altar, and there remembers that his Brother has ought against him; he advises him to leave there his gift before the altar, and go his way, first be reconciled to his Brother, and then come and offer his gift, St. Matt. v. 23. He makes it, not indeed of more importance, than offering his gift; as if it might be an excuse for neglecting *That*; but he declares it to be of *so much* importance, that the Gift or Service is not acceptable to *God*, without the foregoing reconciliation with *Man*. The Apostles likewise are perpetually urging this Argument, upon the same ground: Col. iii. 13. *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man has a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.* And again; *Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you,* Eph. iv. 32; and in the following chapter, ver. 2, *Walk in Love, as Christ also has loved us, and given*

SERM. given himself for us, an offering and a  
 VII. sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling sa-  
 ~~~~~

vour. 'Tis impossible that any man who considers these exhortations, and has a just Sense of his own unworthiness, and of the Goodness of God, and of the great Remission purchased for him by the Death of Christ, of which he hopes to partake in attending with a fit disposition of Mind upon the ordinances of Divine appointment; tis impossible that any man, with *These* thoughts about him, can continue peevish and contentious, merciless and uncharitable, easy to be provoked, and difficult to be reconciled. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper therefore, so far as 'tis a memorial of the Death of Christ, of his Love towards us, and of his purchasing forgiveness for us; so far 'tis a most strong and powerful Argument, to oblige us to *mutual* Love, Charity and Good-will; to Forgiveness, Gentleness, and Easiness to be reconciled. And yet even *This* also, ought not to be made a Matter of Scruple and groundless Doubts, as if no man could be a  
 worthy

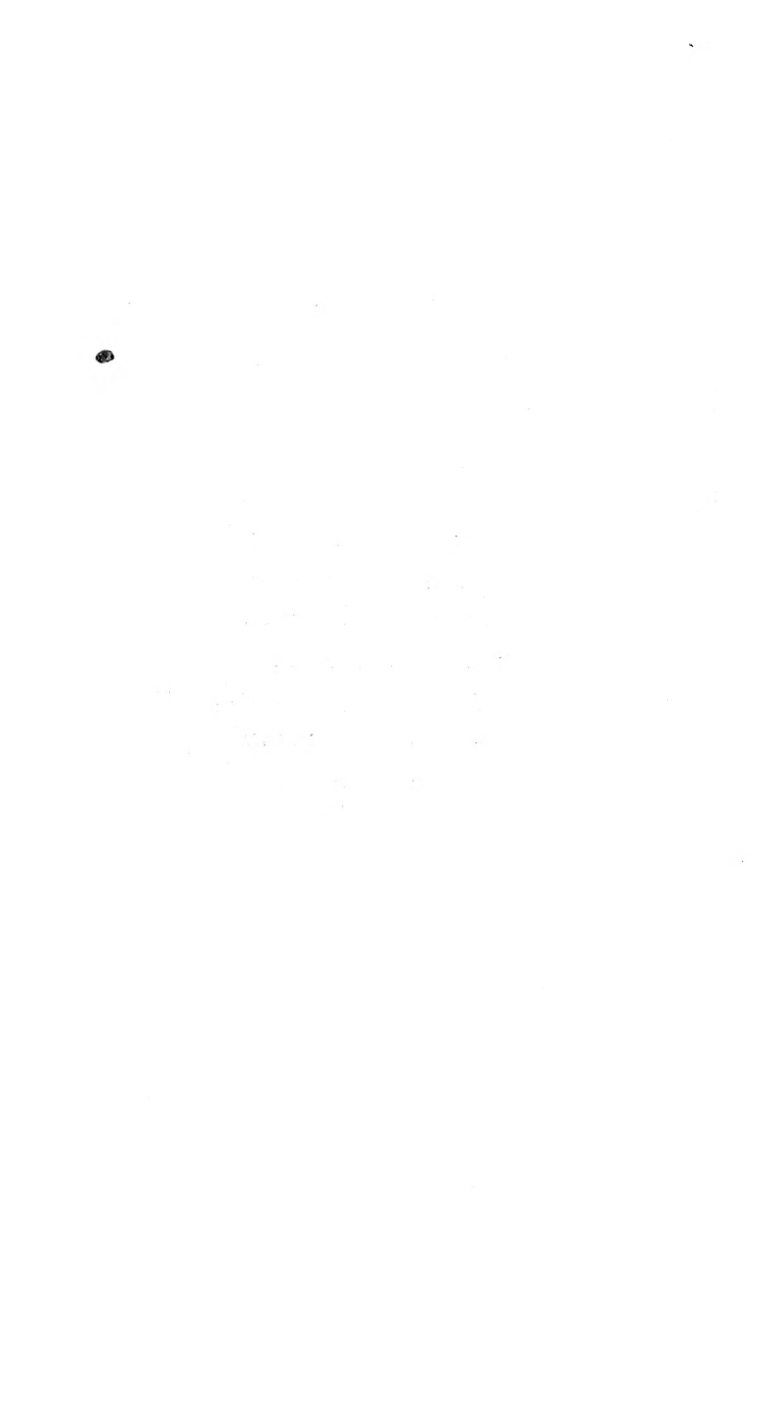
worthy Communicant without being in; actual Agreement with all Mankind  
But 'tis to be understood only as an *Argument* of Duty, within its just bounds and proper limitations: For 'tis by no means impossible but Controversies concerning mens Rights and Properties *may* arise, even among *good* Christians; nay, 'tis not possible, in the present state of human Nature, but they *will* sometimes arise: And our Saviour must not be understood to forbid us making use of *such* means, for the preservation of our just rights, and for preventing the increase of injuries, as the Laws of Wise and Christian Countries, and the Usages of good and pious men direct us to make use of. But the intent of what has been said, is; that the consideration of the Death of Christ, of his great Love and Forgiveness to us, which we solemnly commemorate in the Holy Sacrament, cannot fail to dispose us, if we partake thereof worthily, to be very *willing* and *ready* upon the most *reasonable* terms, to forgive injuries and Offences; to be difficult

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SERM. to be provoked, easy to be reconciled,  
 VII. apt to interpret things in the best man-  
 ner; rather to recede somewhat from  
 our right, than exceed in insisting upon  
 more; and, if at any time we are un-  
 avoidably engaged in controversy about  
 our Just Rights, yet never to carry it  
 further than is absolutely necessary for  
 the Preservation of Peace and Order and  
 good Government in the World, as be-  
 comes the Society or Communion of  
 Christians. *2dly*, The other branch of  
 that Love and Charity, to which (I said)  
 the commemoration of the Death of  
 Christ obliges us, is a ready disposition  
 to shew mercy to the *Poor*. The Primi-  
 tive Christians, as they always celebrated  
 the Praises of God, upon this solemn  
 occasion, with the greatest zeal and ear-  
 nestness of affection, *with gladness and  
 singleness of Heart*, Acts ii. 46; so they  
 as constantly expressed this their joy and  
 thankfulness, by liberal contributions, to  
 relieve the necessities of the poorer Saints.  
 Which custom is, with great reason, con-  
 tinued to this day. And indeed 'tis very  
 natural,



natural, when we seriously meditate on the stupendous love of Christ, in *giving himself freely* a Sacrifice for us, and *his own self bearing our Sins in his own body on the tree*; 'tis very natural, (since we cannot make any return to *him*;) that we should desire to express our gratitude in that way, which he is pleased to accept, as done immediately to himself; that is, in showing mercy and charity to the Poor. That *Their* hearts being rejoiced with *our* Bounty, may zealously join with us in sending up praises and thanksgivings to our common Father; and *that, abounding to every good work, we may be enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. For the administration of this Service* (as St Paul expresses it, 2 Cor. ix. 12) *not only supplyeth the wants of the Saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; While by the experiment of this ministration, they glorify God for your profest Subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto Them and unto all men.*





# SERMON VIII.

The Nature, End and Design of  
the Holy Communion.



I COR. xi. 27.

*Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this  
bread, and drink this Cup of the  
Lord unworthily, shall be guilty  
of the Body and Blood of the  
Lord.*



HAVE lately, from our Sa-  
viour's words of institu-  
tion, (*This do in remem-  
brance of Me,*) discoursed  
concerning the *Nature,*


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*End, and Design,* of the Sacrament of the  
VOL. IV, N Lord's

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Lord's Supper. I shall now from these words of *St. Paul*, proceed to some other considerations, necessary to be understood, in order to our partaking worthily of that Holy Sacrament: *Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.* Which words do plainly suppose in them, 1<sup>st</sup>, *a Duty enjoined; to eat this bread and drink this cup: 2<sup>dly</sup>, A Benefit arising from the due performance of the duty; implied in the contrary danger of doing it unworthily. 3<sup>dly</sup>, A certain Care and Preparation necessary, in order to perform it worthily; least by negligence and want of Devotion, we become guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.* In the following discourse therefore, I shall briefly consider, 1<sup>st</sup>, *The Obligation* we lie under to perform the Duty enjoined. 2<sup>dly</sup>, *What Benefits* we may expect to be made partakers of, by performing it in a due and worthy manner. 3<sup>dly</sup>, *What Qualifications or Preparation* is necessary, in order to such a due and worthy receiving. In which Matter, because Men have sometimes on the one hand, been perplexed

perplexed with many and unreasonable S E R M.  
 scruples, as well as on the other hand VIII.  
 been too negligent and void of Devotion;   
 I shall therefore in the 4<sup>th</sup> place consider  
 the groundlessness and vanity of the  
 greatest part of those Reasons, which  
 Men usually allege for their abstaining  
 from the Communion, under pretence of  
 Want of due Preparation. And *Lastly*,  
 I shall conclude what I think proper to of-  
 fer to your meditations upon this Subject,  
 with taking notice of some of the great  
 and scandalous Corruptions, wherewith  
 the Church of *Rome* have dishonoured this  
 solemn commemoration of our Lord, and  
 of his dying for us.

I. I AM to consider what *Obligation*  
 lies upon us, to perform this Duty at all.  
 And upon *This* Head there needs little  
 enlargement; it being acknowledged by  
 Christians of *all* Communions, (ex-  
 cepting perhaps *One only* Sect,) to be the  
 express and positive commandment of our  
 Lord. So that tho' we *could not* have un-  
 derstood so much of the reasonableness  
 and usefulness of the precept, as we do;  
 tho' we could not have perceived distinct-

S E R M. ly, the Benefits that we receive thereby;  
 VIII. nor have at all apprehended the particular  
 grounds and reasons of the fitness of the  
 command; (which *Now* is by no means  
 the case;) yet the clearness and express-  
 ness of the injunction itself, would never-  
 theless have made the Obligation suffici-  
 ently evident; and it would well have  
 become us, without further inquiry, to  
 have submitted with all Humility to the  
 Will and Authority of our Lord. *Take,*  
*eat;* and, *Drink ye all of this;* and, *This*  
*do in remembrance of me;* are words con-  
 taining as clear and express a command,  
 as are any where to be met with, upon  
 any other occasion in the whole New Te-  
 stament: and they are recorded by three  
 of the four Evangelists. And they are re-  
 peated by St. *Paul*, in the words a little be-  
 fore the Text, as a commandment enfor-  
 ced distinctly, by a new and particular  
 Revelation to himself; *I have received,*  
*saith he, of the Lord, that which I also*  
*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*

*my body, which is broken for you: this do* S E R M.  
*in remembrance of me. After the same* VIII.  
*manner also he took the cup, when he had*  
*supped, saying, This Cup is the New Testa-*  
*ment 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. I have received of the Lord; that*  
*is, he received it, not by tradition from*  
*those who were before him, but by im-*  
*mediate Revelation from Christ himself.*  
*For so he expressly assures us, concerning*  
*the manner of his own instruction in all*  
*the precepts of the Gospel: Gal. i. 16, 17,*  
*18, I conferred not, saith he, with Flesh and*  
*Blood, neither went I up to Jerusalem to*  
*them which were Apostles before me; — nei-*  
*ther received I it of man, neither was I*  
*taught it; but by the Revelation of Jesus*  
*Christ. This added singular Weight and*  
*Authority, to all St. Paul's admonitions*  
*and exhortations; and it made his reproof*  
*to the Corinthians, (in this particular in-*  
*stance of their unworthily receiving the*  
*Holy Communion,) to be doubly power-*  
*ful and effectual: because it was in the*

S E R M.

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case of their neglecting so *express* a Command, not only delivered to them at the first preaching of the Gospel, but *received* also by St. Paul with particular inforcement, in a new Revelation from *the Lord* himself. And suitable to the expressness and importance of the *Command*, is the account the Scripture gives us of the *Practice* of the primitive Disciples: *Acts* ii. 42, 46. *They continued stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer; And continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they eat their meat with gladness and singleness of Heart.* In which account is remarkable, not only their observance of the Duty, but the *constancy* also and *frequency* of their doing it; They continued *stedfastly* in the Apostles doctrine, and were *daily* in the Temple, breaking bread with one accord. Which *frequency* of Communicating, (tho' not as to the precise *Time* indeed, yet in general the doing it *frequently*) is plainly *implied* to be our Duty, and *supposed* in those words of our Saviour; *Do this*, as oft



oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me, SERM.  
 1 Cor. xi. 25. and in those of St Paul, VIII.  
 As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this  
 Cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he  
 come. And indeed, if there could be any  
 difference in the degree of the Obligation  
 of our Lord's commands, (I mean, of  
 such commands as are not moral and e-  
 ternal, but of a positive nature only;) it  
 would be natural almost to lay the  
 greatest stress, upon that which he gave  
 us a little before his death; upon that  
 which he commanded us to do particular-  
 ly in remembrance of him; upon that  
 which he commanded us to do in remem-  
 brance of the greatest instance of Love  
 and Compassion, that ever was in the  
 World. For, Greater Love has no man  
 than this, that a man lay down his life for  
 his Friend; But our Lord refused not to  
 die for Us, while we were yet Enemies.  
 And scarcely for a righteous man, as St  
 Paul expresses it, will one dare to die;  
 But God commendeth his Love towards us  
 in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ  
 died for Us, Rom. v. 8. The Meaning is;  
 God was never, in point of Justice, un-

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der Any *Obligation*, to pardon continually All the Sins of All Penitents; But this *gracious* and *free* Compàssion, his divine Wisdom and Goodness has thought fit to manifest, in the Method of That Redemption purchased by the Death of Christ. In point of *Gratitude* therefore, no less than in *Duty*, are we bound frequently to commemorate this unparalleled Love of our Lord; and our neglecting to attend this sacred Ordinance, is breaking thro' the strongest ties of a double Obligation. I *might* add, further, that not only in *Duty and Gratitude*, but in *Interest* also are we obliged to attend these positive Institutions; God having appointed them as *external* Means, to promote and improve in us (that which is the great End of all outward Performances,) the *real* Virtue and *inward* Religion of the Mind. But This is the

2d, Thing I proposèd to consider, namely, What *Benefits* we may expect to be made partakers of, by the due and worthy performance of this Duty. And here, as I before observèd, tho' we did not distinctly know what those Benefits were;



were; yet in all reason ought we with an implicit Faith to have obeyed the commandment of *Him*, who, as he cannot deceive, so neither can he impose any thing upon us, that is not for our advantage. But, in reality, the *Benefits* we partake hereby are manifest and evident. For, though the *Sacrifice* of the Death of Christ, is not daily repeated; as the Church of *Rome* has fondly and prophanelly imagined: Though the *Substance* of the Body and Blood of Christ, is not in an unintelligible manner produced anew, out of the elements of Bread and Wine: Tho' the *grace of God* is not confined by any necessary connexion to the material action; that the mere formal and external participation, should, without true devotion of mind and without real amendment of life, operate secretly and unintelligibly any spiritual advantage, according to some Men's vain and superstitious expectation: Yet, when with Hearts full of Piety and true Devotion, with *steadfast Faith* in God, and *firm resolutions* of sincere Obedience, Men thankfully and frequently, in that manner which  
God

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God has appointed, commemorate the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ once offered for ever; is it not evidently a great and inestimable Benefit, if, through the assistance of the Spirit of God, annexed *not* to the material elements, or to the outward action, but to the Ordinance partaken of by truly devout and well disposed minds; their *Faith* in God, be increased; their *Hope and Trust* in him be strengthened; their *Charity* towards their brethren be enlarged, in proportion to that Love they are commemorating of their common Lord; their *good resolutions* be confirmed; *themselves inabled*, to *fulfill* those resolutions in more effectual Obedience; and *comforted* with fuller assurance of pardon of their past Sins, upon true Repentance and Amendment, thro' the intercession of Him who *died* for them? These (I say,) are evidently great and inestimable *Benefits*: And very clearly arising, from a due and worthy frequenting of the Holy Communion. For, if, even to *private* Prayer our Saviour has annexed such a promise, that with far greater readiness than Men *give*  
*good*

good gifts unto their Children, will our S E R M.  
heavenly Father give good things, St VIII.  
*Mat. vii. 11.* (*spiritual* good things even  
his *Holy Spirit*, as St *Luke* in the parallel  
place expresses it,) to them that ask him;  
and if all *publick* Devotions, being Ordina-  
nces of God's own appointment, as  
Means and Instruments of Religion, have  
still a greater assurance of God's Blessing  
attending them; how much more in this  
most solemn of all religious actions, in  
this great commemoration of the Sacri-  
fice of the Death of Christ, is it reasona-  
ble to believe, that pious and well-dispo-  
sed Minds, are, by the assistance of the  
Spirit of God, which delights to dwell  
in Heavenly and devout Hearts improv'd  
in all religious Affections, and strength-  
ened unto the acceptable Obedience of a  
Holy Life? But all this depends, as I be-  
fore observed, and as Christians can never  
be too frequently reminded; It depends  
(I say) entirely, not on any secret Virtue  
annexed to the external Action, (which is  
one of the most pernicious of all Errors in  
matters of Religion;) but it depends whol-  
ly on the right Disposition and worthy  
Qualification of a pious and devout Mind.

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WHICH was the 3<sup>d</sup> thing I proposed to consider; namely, What *Qualifications* or *Preparation* is necessary, in order to the making us worthy partakers of the Holy Communion. *That*, in *general*, there is a distinction to be made between things sacred and profane; is allowed by all men. *That* men are not to approach to the Table of the Lord, with the same careless and indifferency of Mind, with the same inattentiveness and unconcernedness of Spirit, with the same worldly Thoughts and Dispositions about them, as they do to a common Feast: *That*, seeing (as St Paul argues) we *have Houses to eat and to drink in*, therefore we ought not to *despise the Church of God*, by behaving ourselves carelessly in *Both places alike*: *That*, if we come unworthily and without any due Preparation of Mind, this is *not to eat the Lord's Supper*; But, instead thereof, we become *guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord*, i. e. guilty of profaneness, in not *discerning the Lord's Body*, in not distinguishing sufficiently a solemn Act of Religion, by the difference of our  
behaviour

behaviour from that in Common Life: SER M.  
*That* hereby we eat and drink our own VIII.  
*condemnation*, that is, as St. Paul expressly  
interprets himself, we provoke God to  
inflict *several* kinds of *judgments* upon us:  
All this is acknowledged by every one. But  
*wherein* particularly consists *that due Pre-*  
*paration*, by which we may be sure to  
avoid those evils and dangers, and to ob-  
tain the Benefits of worthy receiving ;  
this is what the Consciences of well-dis-  
posed Persons, are always desirous to be  
especially instructed in. Now the only  
rule the Scripture gives us in this case, is  
that advice of the Apostle, in the Words  
immediately following the Text; ver. 28,  
*Let a man examine himself, and so let him*  
*eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup.*  
And *This Examination* can only be of two  
sorts: Either an Examination into the  
*whole* state and general course of a man's  
Life, whether he be at all a sincere Chri-  
stian, or not; or else an Examination in-  
to the *present* disposition of his mind,  
whether he be at *this particular Time* in  
a devout frame and temper, or not. The  
*former* of these is indeed of exceeding  
great

SERM. great *importance*, but of no *difficulty* at  
 VIII. all; the latter is of great *difficulty* and  
 full of scruple, but by no means of so  
 great *importance*. 1st, A man is to ex-  
 amine into the *whole* state and *general*  
 course of his life, whether he be at all  
 a sincere Christian, or not. In this sense  
 St Paul uses the word; 2 Cor. xiii. 5, Ex-  
 amine yourselves, whether ye be in the  
 Faith; prove your own selves: Know ye  
 not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ  
 is in you, except ye be reprobates? And  
 this Examination, is not a matter of great  
 difficulty: For, as St John tells us, the  
 children of God are manifest, and the chil-  
 dren of the Devil; Whosoever doth not  
 righteousness, is not of God, neither he that  
 loveth not his Brother. If any man be a  
 Blasphemer of God, or a profane Mock-  
 er and Despiser of Religion; if he has  
 no Sense of the Majesty of God upon his  
 Mind, but habitually profanes that sa-  
 cred and adorable Name by Oaths and  
 vain Imprecations; if any man lives in  
 the practice of *secret* Fraud and Deceit,  
 of cheating and over-reaching his Neigh-  
 bours; or by acts of *open* Violence  
 and



and Cruelty, of Passion and blood-thirsty Revenge, shows that he *hates* his Brother whom God commands him to *love*; if any man indulges himself in Sins of brutish Uncleanness, or gives himself over to Drunkenness and base Debauchery; there is no great Difficulty in such a person's Examination of himself; for his Conscience at the first Thought condemns him without controversy, and his *Sins* apparently *go before unto judgement*. He is unfit, not only to approach the Table of the Lord; but unfit to join himself in the assemblies of the Saints; unfit to bear the Name and Profession of a Christian; unworthy to lift up his Eyes towards Heaven, towards the throne of *him* who *cannot behold iniquity*. Such a person has no other course to take, but immediately with shame and confusion of face to acknowledge his unworthiness, and *repent in dust and ashes*; to turn himself unto the Lord by a total Change of his Course of Life, and an effectual Reformation of manners; and to *cry mightily unto him that is able to save*, if perhaps the Wickedness of his past life may  
be

S E R M.  
VIII.



SERMON. be forgiven him. But *without* such a  
 VIII. thorough Change of the whole course of  
 his life, to imagine that by the formal  
 Preparation of a few days devotion, he  
 can become worthy to partake of the  
 Holy Communion, and then return to his  
 former vicious Practices; this openly  
*mocking* the Authority of God, who hateth  
 the Hypocrite; 'tis as it were *challenging*  
 the Almighty to make good his threat-  
 nings. But now on the other hand, if a  
 man in the general course of his life has  
 made it his sincere endeavour to obey the  
 commandments of God, to live in the  
 habitual Practice of Sobriety, Righte-  
 ousness, Piety and Charity; If he has  
 either been so happy as to have avoided  
 all great crimes, or at least has truly re-  
 pented of them by utterly forsaking them,  
 and his conscience accuses him of no other  
 unrepented and unforfaken Sins, but the  
 daily incurfions of humane frailty; the  
 frailties that virtuous and good men al-  
 ways complain of, but can never wholly  
 escape; the little deviations of inadver-  
 tency and want of attention; the small  
 surprizes of Passion and sudden tempta-  
 tion

tion in things not of the highest importance, the carelessness of an unguarded word, the Vanity of an indecent thought, the want of constant warmth and affection in devotion, or the like: When *this*, I say, is the case; then the Preparation of such a Person for the Holy Communion, is only that *second* sort of Examination I mentioned; an Examination into the *present* disposition of his mind, whether he be at this particular time in a devout frame and Temper or not. And This, as I said, is indeed, to pious persons of melancholy dispositions, a matter very often of great difficulty and full of Scruple; but, in reality, by no means of so great importance as the other. For, though we *are* indeed always to *keep* our feet, Eccles. v. *when we enter into the House of God; that* <sup>1.</sup> *we offer not the Sacrifice of fools: yet the slowness and indisposition, the want of warmth and affection, the troublesome and uneasy or even irreligious Thoughts coming suddenly into their minds, which such melancholy pious persons are apt to complain of; are by no means things that unqualify them for religious duties. Such*

S E R M. persons, seeing they constantly endeavour  
 VIII. to obey the commandments of God, and  
 to live in the habitual Practice of true  
 Virtue, are always *sincerely religious*,  
 though they be not always *equally sensible*  
*of it* to their own Satisfaction. Their  
 Lamps, though *not* always alike *trimmed*,  
 yet are always *burning*. They have al-  
 ways upon them what our Saviour stiles  
 the *wedding-garment*, although *not* al-  
 ways in *equal order*. Wherefore, though  
 it becomes us highly, upon every solemn  
 occasion, to trim our lamps, to set our  
 garments in order, to excite our most af-  
 fectionate devotion, to lay aside for the  
 present all secular and worldly Thoughts,  
 and to examine more strictly and parti-  
 cularly into the state and disposition of  
 our Souls, as Time and Opportunity of-  
 fers, without anxious and superstitious so-  
 licitude; yet, where this is by any acci-  
 dent prevented, good men are, by the  
 habitual course of a virtuous life, in a  
 continual general Preparation; and may  
 at *all times* as safely communicate with-  
 out Scruple, as 'tis certain that a vicious  
 and debauched person can at *no time* be  
 fit

fit to do it, by any formal preparative of a few days Devotion. For after all that *can* be said upon this Subject, there is *no other* certain and infallible mark, to judge whether we have prepared ourselves duly, and communicated worthily, or not; but only by the consequent effect. If we improve more in Virtue, and more diligently avoid every kind of Sin; if we serve God more devoutly, and love our Brother with a more universal Charity, and endeavour more sincerely and steddily to obey the commandments of God in the following course of our lives; 'tis very certain our Preparation was good, and our Communion acceptable: But if we continue to live viciously, in *Any* instance of unrighteous Practice; our Preparation, at best, was but a formal hypocrisy; and our Offering, was without Incense. This is the only Rule that may certainly be depended upon; This is judging of the Tree by its Fruit; Which, both in *Nature* and in *Religion*, is the only unerring way of Trial. And all *other* marks whatsoever, are but perplexing difficulties, full of doubts and scruples and endless Super-

S E R M.  
VIII.



S E R M. stition. And now from hence 'tis very ea-  
 VIII. sy to show, in the

4<sup>th</sup> place, The Groundlesness and Vanity of most of those reasons, which men usually allege for their abstaining from the Communion, under pretence of want of due Preparation. For, *if* their unpreparedness arises from a vicious and debauched life, which they are unwilling to reform; they *are* unworthy indeed, and they ought to abstain; but not from the Communion only, but from *Prayers* also, and from *all Profession* of Religion; they being such persons, whom Christian Discipline ought to separate from the Communion of Saints, as their own conscience separates them from the hopes of Heaven. All religious Actions to *such* persons, being like watering a plant, whose very roots are dead. In which state so long as they continue, they have no great reason to be uneasy at their unworthiness to receive the Holy Communion *here*; seeing they have no regard for their own Souls, and no Care of being worthy to partake of the Happiness of the Righteous *hereafter*. But *if* the unworthiness

worthiness they allege, be only a *present* S E R M. VIII.  
 Want of Warmth of Devotion, or a *ge-*  
*neral* Sense of their being frail and sinful  
 creatures, notwithstanding their best and  
 most sincere endeavours to avoid all  
 known Sin; this I have already shown,  
 not to be a real Unworthiness, but mere-  
 ly an ungrounded and melancholy ima-  
 gination, which ought to be slighted and  
 resisted. *If* they be terrified at the se-  
 verity of the Penalty, that *they who eat*  
*and drink unworthily, eat and drink con-*  
*demnation to themselves*; 'tis to be obser-  
 ved, that when this is understood of the  
 unworthiness *only of a single Action*, the  
 condemnation denounced is not eternal  
 damnation, but temporal judgment, as  
 St. Paul expressly explains his own Words  
 in That very Text. But when the un-  
 worthiness is *habitual*, and so liable to a  
 severer condemnation; 'tis evident the  
 penalty annexed, is not to the single *Ac-*  
*tion of eating and drinking*, but to the  
*habitual state of Unworthiness*; in which  
 evil state *That man* equally continues,  
 who, being habitually Unworthy, *eats*  
*not*; as he who *eats*, being likewise un-

S E R M. worthy: And consequently he cannot, by  
 VIII. abstaining, escape that condemnation,  
 which is *however* due to his Unworthiness,  
 whether he communicates or no. For 'tis  
 not possible, that he who *now* continues  
 unworthy to partake of the *Lord's Sup-*  
*per*, should *hereafter* be found worthy to  
 participate of the *eternal Supper of the*  
*Lamb*. Wherefore, *whilst* any man really  
 continues unworthy; as it is no benefit to  
 him to *communicate*, so to *abstain* is no  
 advantage, and there is no other way for  
 him to escape the judgment he fears, but  
 by immediately preparing himself in the  
 way of righteousness, to become worthy  
 to *serve* God here, and *injoy* him here-  
 after. Lastly, if men abstain out of an  
 apprehension that Sins committed after-  
 wards will become unpardonable; I an-  
 swer, there is not the least ground or hint  
 in Scripture for any such apprehension.  
 That the Sins of Christians against the  
 clear light of the Gospel shall *more dif-*  
*ficultly* be pardoned, than the Sins of  
 those who want that light; the Scripture  
*does indeed* frequently assure us: And 'twere  
 well if men would think of it more than  
 they



they do: But *this* Aggravation of Sin is SERM.  
 equally the same, in those who receive VIII.  
 the Communion, and in those who receive  
 it not. For not, if we Sin wilfully after  
 we have received the *Sacrament*, but if  
 we Sin wilfully after we have received the  
*knowledge of the Truth*, (saith the Apostle)  
 there remains *no new* Sacrifice for Sin.  
 And *this* consideration indeed is a good  
 reason, not to deter men from the Com-  
 munion, but to deter them from pretend-  
 ing to be Christians at all, so long as they  
 resolve to live viciously and irreligiously.

5. AND now nothing remains of what  
 I propos'd upon this Subject, but in the  
*last place* just to mention some of the  
 gross corruptions, wherewith the Church  
 of *Rome* have highly dishonour'd this so-  
 lemn commemoration of the Death of  
 our Lord. And

*Ist*, WHEREAS *our Saviour* has thought  
 fit to institute no other memorial of his  
 Death and Passion, but only the Eucha-  
 ristical Feast of the Sacrament; 'tis a  
 great and unpardonable presumption, for  
 men to imagine that they *themselves* can  
 invent *better* representations and *more*  
*sensible* helps to Devotion, than that which

S E R M. God has appointed: Such as are the use  
 VIII. of *Images*, and the like, in religious  
 Worship. Wherein, as they have departed  
 from the Simplicity and spiritual Purity of the Christian worship; so they have found by experience, that the addition of any such human inventions in the Worship of God, has tended only to corrupt mens manners, and bring in great and endless Superstitions.

2. W H E R E A S our Saviour instituted this Holy Sacrament expressly for a perpetual *Remembrance* or *Commemoration* of his Death and Passion; 'tis a very great corruption, to teach that the elements are *changed* into the *Substance of the Body and Blood of Christ*, and that the Sacrament is properly a continual *repetition* (not commemoration) of that expiatory Sacrifice once offered upon the cross. Our Lord's command, is, *Do this in remembrance of Me*. Now in the *Nature of Things*, the *remembrance* of any thing, is not the *repetition* of the thing itself. And such a *repeated* offering up continually the *real* substantial Body and Blood of Christ, (if any such thing could be,)  
 would

would not be a *commemorating* the Sacrifice *once* offered upon the cross, but *obliterating* the memory of it by offering perpetually *new* ones. And *then* must Christ oft have suffered since the foundation of the World; whereas now Once only in the end of the World (as the Scripture expressly affirms) *has he appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself.* The Arguments drawn by those of the Church of Rome, from the figurative expressions, by which the *elements* are called *Christ's Body and Blood*; and the *Sacrament* itself a *Sacrifice*; (in like manner as Christ figuratively calls himself, a *Door*, a *Way*, a *Vine*, and the like; and the Apostles call *Praise* and *Alms* a *Sacrifice*; and St Paul stiles the *Christian Church* the *True Circumcision*;) The Arguments, I say, drawn from these figurative expressions for the Popish doctrine, are as absurd and contrary to common sense, as their Practise of worshipping a piece of Bread for God, is idolatrous and abominable.

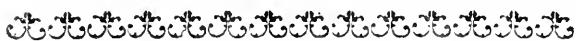
3. Whereas our Saviour commands his Disciples expressly, to *eat* of this *Bread* and *drink* of this *Cup*; 'tis a most unjusti-

SERMON. unjustifiable innovation in the Church of  
 VIII. *Rome*, to with-hold the *Cup* from the  
 people. St *Paul*, in the plainest words  
 that can be, declares it to be the peoples  
 Duty, to partake in *both* kinds; *As oft as  
 ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do  
 shew the Lord's Death till he come*: And  
 our Saviour's command to his Disciples,  
 was, *Drink ye all of this*, as well as, *Take,  
 eat, this is my Body*. To which if it be  
 replied (as they sometimes absurdly do)  
 that all those Disciples whom our Sa-  
 viour commanded to *drink* this, were  
 Priests, and none of them Lay-men; 'tis  
 evident they were the same persons only,  
 to whom he administred the *Bread* also:  
 and then it will follow, by the same rea-  
 son, that the people are denied the *Cup*,  
 that they may be denied partaking of the  
 Sacrament at all: Which is the highest  
 Impiety. But then *We also* of the re-  
 formed Church ought always to be put  
 in mind, that though we are allowed to  
 communicate in *Both* kinds, yet we may  
 still lose the Advantage of *Both*, if the  
 Holiness of our Lives be not 'answerable  
 to the Obligations which This Communion  
 lays upon us.



# SERMON IX.

Of the Catholick Church of  
Christ.



HEB. xii. 22, 23.

*But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, To the general Assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of All, and to the Spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant.*



THESE words contain the SERM. IX. liveliest and most noble Description of the Church of God, and of the Communion of all its Members both with each other and with their Head; that is any

S E R M. any where to be found in the whole Scrip-  
 IX. ture. The Name of *God's Church*; and  
 the *Fellowship* of the *Saints*, or the *Com-  
 munion* of the *Faithful*; are words perpetu-  
 ally in the Mouths of *All*, who call  
 themselves *Christians*: But the true *Intent*  
 and *application* of them, according to the  
*Scripture-sense* of the words, is attended  
 to and understood by *Few*. The Love of  
*Power*, *Authority*, and *worldly Dominion*,  
 has made *Some* abuse the sacred Name of  
 the *Church of God*, to serve Purposes  
 of Tyranny, Ambition, and Cruelty:  
 And This is what the Scripture calls, *The  
 Man of Sin sitting in the Temple* (or  
 Church) *of God*. *Others*, through a  
*mean*, *peevish*, and *uncharitable Spirit*;  
 fond of *imposing* upon their Brethren  
*particular Modes and Notions*; and *blend-  
 ing* Doctrines and Ceremonies of mere  
*human Authority*, as of the same impor-  
 tance with the *essential Laws* of our Sa-  
 viour's kingdom; have profanely and fa-  
 crilegiously made use of the same *vener-  
 able Name of the Church of God*, to co-  
 ver the *Worldly Designs and Interests* of  
 particular *Parties, Façtions, or Bodies* of  
 Men:

Men: And This, in the proper and highest Sense of the word, is an Instance of the Sin of *Schism*; the Sin of *rending the Body of Christ*; the Sin of *causing Divisions* in the *universal Church*, through the Ambition of Men inclosing to themselves by *temporal power* those *spiritual Privileges*, which our Saviour intended to confer upon his *Church universal*. The Church of *Rome* has been the great Author and Example of this *fundamental Corruption*: Which has been of such pernicious consequence to the Christian Religion, that sometimes even for several Ages together, the very *Notion* of the *Church of Christ* has been in a manner wholly worn out and obliterated among those who called themselves Christians; and there has succeeded in its place a mere *Temporal Polity* and *worldly Dominion*, in the room of *That Kingdom* which our Lord himself so expressly declared *was not to be of This World*. Infomuch that Christians have too generally behaved themselves in such a manner, as if they thought that at That Great and Tremendous day, when we must All appear before

SERM. fore the Tribunal of Christ, men were  
 IX. to be judged in *Nations* and *Bodies Poli-*  
 tick, in *Parties* and *Societies of human*  
*establishment*, according to certain *Forms*  
*of Government* and particular *Systems of*  
*Notions, and Rights and Ceremonies*; and  
 not that every single Man shall then perso-  
 nally be acquitted or condemned, accord-  
 ing to the great and Universal Rules of  
 the Gospel; according to what he him-  
 self in his own person has actually done  
 in the Flesh, whether it be good, or  
 whether it be evil; that is, according to  
 his *Obedience* or *Disobedience* to the Com-  
 mands of God, the *Morality* or *Immorali-*  
*ty* of the Actions of his Life. The  
 Want of *This* consideration, has incredi-  
 bly perplext Men's Notions concerning  
 the *Church of God*: And though *no Two*  
*Things* are in Scripture constantly repre-  
 sented so directly opposite to each other,  
 as the *Love of God* and the *Love of the*  
*World*; yet in all *Popish* times *principally*,  
 and in all *Other corrupt Ages* (*proportiona-*  
*bly*.) *Dominion and Pomp and Power*, in-  
 stead of *Truth and Righteousness and Cha-*  
*rity*, have been esteemed as Marks and  
 Characters



Characters of Christ's *Holy Catholick Church*. But undoubtedly the *true Church of God* here upon *Earth*, consists of the *same Persons*, is made up of the very *same Members*, of which *hereafter* it shall be constituted in *Heaven*. And therefore as, at the *day of judgment*, our Saviour has nowhere given us any the least Intimation, that in order to determine any Man's final Sentence, inquiry will be made concerning *Nations and Parties*, concerning a man's relation to *one body politick or another*, concerning *Rites and Ceremonies or Forms of Government* and the like; which are Now the Great Objects of Men's Zeal, and the Main causes of their reviling, hating and persecuting each other: but every Man's future and eternal State will Then be appointed him by the Impartial and unerring Judge, according to his behaviour in every station and circumstance wherein Providence has placed him, *i. e.* according to the virtuousness or viciousness of his past life: So *Now* also, if we would make a right Judgment concerning ourselves or Others, whether we be real and Living Members of the Body of Christ,

S E R M.  
IX.



S E R M. Christ, children of God, and Heirs of  
 IX. His Kingdom; we must take our Estimate from the same divine Rules and Measures, by which we shall at last be judged; and not from our present human Passions, and worldly Marks of Distinction. They who *worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth*, as our Saviour describes the *True Worshippers*, Joh. iv. 23; that is, who live with an habitual Sense of Religion upon their Minds; in a constant Exercise of *Piety* towards God, through *Jesus Christ*; in a *sober and temperate* enjoyment of the things of this present World, with an abhorrence of all Vice and Debauchery; and in a regular Practice of *Justice, Righteousness, Equity, Meekness, Charity, and universal Goodwill* towards Mankind; *looking for, and waiting unto, the blessed Hope, and the glorious Appearance of the Great God and of our Saviour Jesus Christ*; who, according to his Promise, shall give them an inheritance in *That New Heavens and New Earth*, wherein *Truth and Righteousness* are to *dwell* for ever: These, and These only, are the true and living Members of the  
 Body

*Body of Christ; of his Flesh, and of his* SERMON  
*Bones, (as St Paul by a bold and lively* IX.  
 Figure most elegantly expresses it, *Eph.*  
*v. 30;)* of *One Body*, and of *One Spirit*  
 with him: These are *indeed* the *Holy*  
*Church, and City, and Temple*, of God:  
 These are they, of whom the Apostle in  
 the Text by one of the noblest and most  
 expressive Metaphors that ever was used  
 by Any Writer, affirms that they are *al-*  
*ready come unto Mount Sion*; Even while  
 they still continue here upon Earth, in  
 this mortal and transitory state; yet be-  
 cause their conversation is in Heaven, and  
 they live according to the righteous Laws  
 of That spiritual Country, wherein they  
 expect their portion of Inheritance, and  
 into which *there shall in no case enter any*  
*thing that defileth, neither whatsoever*  
*worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lie*;  
 therefore they are *already*, saith he, *come*  
*unto mount Sion, and unto the City of the*  
*Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and*  
*to an innumerable Company of Angels, To*  
*the general Assembly and Church of the*  
*first-born which are written in Heaven,*  
*and to God the Judge of All, and to the*

SERMON. *Spirits of just men made perfect, and to*  
 IX. *Jesus the Mediator of the New Cove-*  
 ~~~~~  
*nant.*

IN the further treating upon which words, I shall *first* consider distinctly the several *Persons*, whom the Apostle here supposes to have a *relation* to, and *communion* with, each other: And from thence, *secondly*, there will naturally appear the true Scripture-notion of the *Catholick Church of Christ*, and of That *Unity*, or *Communion*, which is between the Members of it, as Members of the *One Body of Christ*. .

*Ist*, As to the several *Persons*, whom the Apostle here supposes to have a *relation* to, and *communion* with, each other; 'tis to be observed that the Kingdom of God, is in Scripture described under the Notion or Similitude of a *royal City*: Heb. xi. 10. *Abraham looked for a City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God*: In the words of the Text, 'tis *Mount Sion, the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem*. Now as in every City or Kingdom, *All* who in Any station belong unto it, have a mutual *re-*  
*lation*

lation to, and some sort of communication S E R M.  
 with each other, by which they are *All* IX.  
 esteemed as *One political Body*; The *Prince*, who governs *All*; The *Persons*  
 by whom he governs; The *Subjects*, who live under That Government: and *Those*  
 who, though travelling in *foreign* parts, yet still continue under the same Domi-  
 nion: So with regard to this heavenly City, the Apostle St Paul tells all Chri-  
 stians, that they are *no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the*  
*Saints, and of the household of God; being built upon the foundation of the Apostles*  
*and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom the whole*  
*building is fitly framed together.* And in describing the constitution of this *City* or  
*Kingdom of God*, and the *persons* with whom every one that becomes a Subject  
 of That Kingdom, enters consequently into some *relation*; the same Apostle, in  
 the Text, distinctly enumerates the following particulars. There is, says he,  
*God, the Judge of All*: There is *Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant*: There  
 is *an innumerable Company of Angels*:

SERM. There are *the Spirits of just men made perfect*; And there is *the general Assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven*, though they be not yet actually arrived there. In the

IX. *1st* place, says the Apostle, *ye are come to God, the Judge of All*. Ye are come to a *right Knowledge of the One True God, the Author and Maker of all things, the Father of all rational Beings, and the Supreme Judge of every one's behaviour*. By *Nature*, we are his *Subjects* and his *Creatures*; by *Sin*, we are become *Enemies* to him, and *Objects of his Displeasure*; by *Repentance and true Religion*, we have again *Access* to him, and are admitted to bear *relation* to him as our *God*, and our *Father*. He is the *Father*; of whom, by *Nature the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named*; and through whose *Grace and Goodness*, even *Sinners*, upon their *Amendment and Reformation*, are again favourably received into their *Father's house*, into the *Family or City of God*. Behold saith St John, *what manner of Love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called The Sons*

Sons of God, I Joh. iii. 1. In the de-  
 S E R M. IX.  
 scription of the *heavenly Jerusalem*, the  
*City of the Living God*; (in allusion to  
 which, the *Earthly Jerusalem*, or Con-  
 gregation of true Worshipers, is by our  
 Saviour stiled *The City of the Great  
 King*;) In the description, I say, of the  
*heavenly Jerusalem*, the relation of God  
 to his faithful servants is thus set forth,  
 Rev. xxi. 3. and xxii. 4. *Behold, the  
 Tabernacle of God is with men, and he  
 will dwell with them, and they shall be his  
 people, and God himself shall be with them,  
 and be their God; And they shall see his  
 Face, and his Name (the Father's Name,  
 ch. xiv. 1.) shall be in their foreheads:*  
*And of him that overcometh, saith God,  
 ch. xxi. 7. I will be his God, and He shall  
 be my Son. Upon account of which Pro-  
 mise, though to the Patriarchs, and to all  
 other good Men, it was made at a great  
 Distance; yet the Apostle justly draws his  
 inference even with regard to the present  
 time, Heb. xi. 16. Wherefore God is not  
 ashamed, is not Now ashamed, to be call-  
 ed Their God; for he hath prepared for  
 them a City. To this relation between*

S E R M. God and righteous Men, St *John* has respect; when he tells us, 1 *Job.* i. 3. *Our Fellowship is with the Father.* The word, *Fellowship*, signifies in the original, *Communion* or *mutual Relation*; The Saints, are the *Saints of the most High*; and Good Men, the *Children of the Living God*.

THE Use, or practical Application of *This Head*, is the Inference St *John* has drawn for us, 1 *Job.* iii. 3. *Every man that has This hope in him*, (every Man that is truly sensible of this *Love which the Father has bestowed upon us*;) *purifies himself even as He is pure*: Always remembering the Admonition of our Saviour, *Blessed are the pure in Heart, for they shall see God*: And That solemn declaration made to St *John*, at the Conclusion of his prophetick Vision of the new Jerusalem, the City of God; *Rev.* xxii. 14. *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have Right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in thro' the Gates into the City.*

2dly, *Ye are come*, saith the Apostle, to *Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant*; to the *Blood of sprinkling, that speaketh*




*speaketh better things than that of Abel.* SERM.  
 'Tis by *Christ*, that repenting Sinners, IX.  
 having *received the Atonement* and recon-  
 ciliation; are brought back unto God;  
 have *Access unto the Father*; are *presented*  
 as *faultless before the presence of His Glo-*  
*ry, who has gathered together in One All*  
*things in Christ, both which are in Hea-*  
*ven and which are on Earth,* Eph. i. 10.  
 From henceforth therefore, *our fellow-*  
*ship, as St John tells us, is with the Fa-*  
*ther, and with his Son Jesus Christ:* And  
*God is faithful,* saith St Paul, 1 Cor. i. 9,  
 (that is, if we continue obedient, God for  
*His part will certainly perform His Pro-*  
*mise faithfully,)* by whom ye were called  
 unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ  
 our Lord. Christ has an everlasting  
 Kingdom given unto him; wherein he  
 rules, as a Son in his own house, under his  
 Father the Supreme Householder; *Angels,*  
*and Principalities, and Powers, being*  
*made subject unto him:* And He is the  
 Head of the Body, the Church, Col. i. 18.  
 He is the Head; from whom the whole Bo-  
 dy fitly joined together, and compacted by  
 That which every joint supplieth, accord-

SERM  
IX.

*ing to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body unto the edifying of itself in Love, Eph. iv. 16. He is the chief corner-stone, in whom all the Building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom Ye also are builded together for an habitation of God thro' the Spirit, ch. ii. 21. He is the Vine, and his Disciples are the Branches, Joh. xv. 1. God looks upon us, not as what we were originally in ourselves, but as being Now, by regeneration and Adoption, planted together in Christ; as redeemed and purchased, by His Blood: as made accepted in the Beloved; as Members, of His Body; as Subjects, of the Kingdom given unto Him. Infomuch that St Paul tells us, upon account of This our relation to Christ, that God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together, (has already made us sit together) in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Eph. ii. 6. speaking, in an elegant and figurative manner, as of a thing already accomplished, what our Lord expresses by way of Promise, with regard to a Future State, Rev. iii. 21.*

To

To Him that overcometh, will I grant to S E R M.  
 sit with Me in my Throne, even as I over- IX.  
 came, and am sat down with my Father in   
 His Throne. This is in the highest and  
 most exalted Sense, what the Text calls,  
 being come unto Jesus the Mediator of the  
 New Covenant, and unto God the Judge  
 of All. This is the Accomplishment of  
 our Saviour's Prayer, Job. xvii. 21. That  
 they all may be One, as Thou, Father, art  
 in Me, and I in Thee; that They also may  
 be One in Us: — And the glory which  
 thou gavest me, I have given Them; that  
 They may be One, even as We are One: I  
 in Them, and Thou in Me: that they may  
 be made perfect in One. Lastly, This is  
 what the Apostle tells us, Heb. ii. 11. Both  
 he that sanctifieth, and they who are sancti-  
 fied, are all of One; for which cause he is  
 not ashamed to call them Brethren.


THE proper Application of what has  
 been said upon This Head, is to Those  
 who understanding *literally* some of the  
 fore-cited expressions of Scripture, look  
 upon themselves to be in *such* a manner  
 Members of the Body of Christ, as that  
 His Righteousness and Acceptableness to  
 God

SERM. God is *imputed* to *Them*, and This merely by Virtue of their confident Reliance upon *His* Merits, without being much solicitous whether they *themselves* be personally indued with the Fruits of Righteousness or no. Which is one of the *greatest Corruptions*, that was ever introduced into the Christian Religion. For indeed, all those expressions, of being *Members of Christ*, of being *One with him*, of being *in him*, and the like; are merely *figurative* and *moral*; denoting the *Subjection* of *Members* to their *Head*, and the *Unity* or *Likeness* which arises from *Imitation* and *Obedience*. If we have been planted together, saith St. Paul, into the Likeness of Christ's death, we shall be also in the likeness of his Resurrection, Rom. vi. 5. And what *That* means, he explains, ver. 4 and 6; like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the glory of the Father, even so We also should walk in Newness of Life; — that the Body of Sin might be destroyed, that henceforth ye should not serve Sin. Let no Man therefore deceive himself with vain words: Being *Members of Christ*, and *Sons of God*; means nothing else but *Obedience*

dience to the Gospel, and thereby consequently obtaining reconciliation with God. 2 Cor. v. 17. *If any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature*; that is, his Life must be actually amended and reformed. So likewise Rom. xiii. 14. *Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*, is joined in the same verse as an equivalent exhortation with, *make not provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof*. Having the Spirit of Christ, that is, a moral likeness to him; is the only thing, that can make us truly belong to him: *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is None of His*, Rom. viii. 9. And ver. 14. *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, that is, who bring forth the Fruits of the Spirit, or live in the Practice of all moral virtues, they, and they only, are the Sons of God*. Jesus, the Text tells us, *is the Mediator of the New Covenant*; of That Covenant, within which are declared the gracious Terms of Pardon and Forgiveness to all those who repent and amend; and which, upon That account, is opposed in the foregoing verse, to the Terrors of the Law, to the Mount that burned with Fire, joined

S E R M.  
IX.

SERMON. ed with *blackness, darkness and Tempest.*

IX.  To Come therefore to *Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant*, signifies, by true Repentance and effectual Amendment of Life, (not by *groundless Confidence* and *vain Reliance on Christ*, but by sincere *Obedience* to his *Commands*, by *true Repentance and Amendment of Life*) made available to the *Forgiveness of past Sin* through the *Intercession of Christ*; To *come to Christ*, I say, signifies, by That Repentance which the Gospel teaches, to be reconciled, and have Access again, as a returning Prodigal Son, through *Christ* to *God the Judge of All, the Supreme Lord and Father of the Universe*. Thus this whole point is at large set forth by *St Paul, Col. i. 19. It pleased the Father, that in Him should all Fulness dwell; And by Him to reconcile all things unto himself;—And you that were sometimes alienated, and Enemies in your Mind by wicked Works, yet now hath he reconciled, In the body of his Flesh thro' Death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproueable in his Sight; If ye continue in the Faith, grounded and settled, and be*

not moved away from the Hope of the S E R M.  
Gospel. IX.

HAVING thus briefly explained the Two First Particulars in the Text, (the first in order of Nature, though not in the placing of the words;) Ye are come, to God the Judge of All, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant: It might here seem natural to have been expected in the next place, that in like manner as in some Other passages of Scripture, with the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, is joined likewise the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost; so here also, I say, it might seem naturally to have been expected, that the Apostle should have added, the Communion or Fellowship of the Holy Ghost; Which with the Two before-mentioned are the True-Scripture-Trinity. Ye are come, unto God the Judge of All, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and (it might naturally have been expected he should here have subjoined, and) unto the Holy Ghost the Comforter. But This last particular, the Apostle does not add: And the Reason

SERM. *son of his omitting it, seems to be This.*

IX. *The Holy Spirit, is in Scripture represented as being to the Church in the place of Christ; and, for That very reason, is stiled the Comforter, because his proper office is, in the absence of Christ, to comfort the Faithful with his Gifts and Graces, with his Holy Influence and Assistance. Job. xvi. 7. I tell you the Truth, saith our Lord, it is expedient for you, that I go away; For if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you; ——— and He will guide you into All Truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, That shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come. The proper Office therefore of the Holy Spirit, being in Christ's stead to support and comfort, to guide and direct the Church, untill our Lord's second Coming; for this reason, the Apostle in a Text, speaking of good Christians in a very sublime and figurative manner, as being already come unto the True Mount Sion, the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and being, by spiritual relation, communion, and unity, as*  
it



it were *already* actually present with God S E R M.  
*the Judge of All*, and with *Jesus the Me-* IX.  
*diator of the New Covenant*; for *This*  
*reason* (I say) it seems to be, that the A-  
 postle omits in this place the *Fellowship*  
*of the Holy Ghost*, as a thing *fulfilled* and  
*accomplished*, as having *already* obtained  
 its full Effect; as being now *superseded* by  
 the immediate presence of *God the Judge*  
*of all*, and of our *Mediator Jesus Christ*.  
 During our *Absence* from whose Beatific  
 presence, while we continue in this mor-  
 tal Life, good Men are under the direc-  
 tion and influence of the *Holy Spirit*.  
 And the Proof, by which only it can  
 appear that they really are so, is not a  
 pretending to *Enthusiastic influences*, but  
 their bringing forth *the Fruits of the*  
*Spirit*. Which *Fruits of the Spirit*,  
 (if we will follow *St Paul's* Authority,  
 rather than the imaginations of Enthu-  
 siasts) are *Love, joy, peace, long-suffer-*  
*ing, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness,*  
*temperance*, Gal. v. 22: That is, the  
 Practice of all moral and eternal Vir-  
 tues.

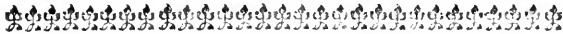
SERM. THE remaining particulars of the  
IX. Text, are: *Ye are come to an innumerable  
Company of Angels, to the Spirits of just  
men made perfect, and to the general Af-  
sembly or Church of the first-born which are  
written in Heaven.*





# SERMON X.

Of the Catholick Church of  
Christ.



HEB. xii. 22, 23.

*But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, To the general Assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of All, and to the Spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant.*



IN discoursing upon these SERMON  
words, I have propos'd X. *First*  
to consider distinctly the several *Persons*, whom the Apostle here supposes to have

a relation to, and communion with, each  
VOL. IV. Q other:

S E R M. other: And from thence, *Secondly*, to deduce the true Scripture-notion of the *Catholick Church of Christ*, and of That *Unity or Communion* which is between the Members of it, as Members of the *One Body of Christ*.

X.

I. *First*, As to the several *Persons*, whom the Apostle here supposes to have a *relation to*, and *Communion* with, each other; I observed that the *Kingdom of God*, is in Scripture described under the Notion or Similitude of a *royal City*; wherein *All*, who in Any Station belong unto it, have a mutual *relation to*, and some sort of *communication with* each other; by which they are *All* esteemed as *One political Body*. In the prosecution of which Similitude, the Apostle in the Text *distinctly enumerates* the following *Particulars*; of which is constituted the *True Mount Sion, the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem*. There is, first, says he; (first, in order of *Nature*; though not in the order, wherein the words are placed;) There is, in the *first* place, *God the Judge of All*: There is, *secondly*, *Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant*:

Covenant: *Thirdly*, There is, *says he*, S E R M. *an innumerable Company of Angels: Fourthly*, X. There are *the Spirits of just men made perfect*: And *Lastly*, There is the *general Assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven*, though they be not yet actually arrived there.

THE *two first* of these particulars I have already gone through: *Ye are come unto God the Judge of All*, and to *Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant*. It remains that I proceed now to the

*3d* particular; *Ye are come*, saith the Apostle, *unto an innumerable Company of Angels*. *Angels*, are in Scripture declared to be *ministring Spirits*, which go in and out continually before the *Throne of God*. And *our relation* to them, as members of the same heavenly *Jerusalem*, the *City of the Living God*, is *manifold* in the *present*, as well as in the *future* state. They are *Worshippers* together with *Us*, of the *same God* and universal Father, of whom the *Whole Family in Heaven and Earth* is named. *Rev. xxii. 9*, *I am thy fellow-servant*, said the Angel to *St John*; *I am Thy fellow-servant*, and the fellow-servant

S E R M. of thy brethren the Prophets, and of them  
 X. which keep the Sayings of this Book: Wor-  
 ship God. Nor are they only, in common  
 with Us, *Subjeets* of the *natural Kingdom* of God; but they are also moreover  
*Subjeets and Ministers* of the *mediatorial Kingdom* of Christ. Heb. i. 6, *When he*  
*bringeth in the first-begotten into the World,*  
*he saith, And let all the Angels of God*  
*worship him.* By Christ, God has gather-  
 ed together in One, Eph. i. 10, (into One  
 Family, into One Kingdom, under One  
 Head,) all things both which are in Hea-  
 ven and which are on Earth: Angels, and  
 Authorities, and Powers, being made sub-  
 ject unto him, 1 Pet. iii. 22. They are  
 ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister to  
 those who shall be Heirs of Salvation, Heb.  
 i. 14. Our Saviour, speaking of little  
 children, literally; and, figuratively, of  
 good men, who are of the same harmless  
 disposition; tells us, Mat. xviii. 10, that  
 the Angels, are Their *Angels* or Ministers;  
 that is, have the *Care* of them committed  
 to them by God; even those \* *principal*  
 Angels, who always behold the Face of his  
 Father which is in Heaven. In other pla-  
 ces,

\* Certain  
 Mat. xviii.  
 10. col. 6  
 Eph. i. 10.  
 and Tobit  
 xii. 15.

ces, the Scripture assures us, that they S E R M.  
 as Subjects of the same heavenly King- X.  
 dom, are continually observing the Pro-  
 vidences of God towards his Church;  
*These things, the Angels desire to look into,*  
 1 Pet. i. 12. and *Eph. iii. 10. To the in-*  
*tent, that now unto the principalities and*  
*Powers in heavenly places, might be made*  
*known by the Church, (by the Church, that*  
*is, by the various dispensations of Divine*  
*Providence towards good men,) the mani-*  
*fold Wisdom of God.* It assures us; that  
*there is joy in the presence of the Angels*  
*of God, over every Sinner that repenteth,*  
 Luk. xv. 10; that the *Souls* of righteous  
 men, as of *Lazarus*, Luk. xvi. 22, are,  
 at their departure out of this World,  
*carried by the Angels into Abraham's bosom;*  
 that, at the general Resurrection at the  
 last day, *the Angels shall come forth,* Matt.  
 xiii. 49, *and shall sever the Wicked from*  
*among the Just;* and lastly, that *they*  
*which shall be accounted worthy to obtain*  
*That World, and the resurrection unto*  
 Life, Luk xx. 35, 36, *shall themselves be*  
*equal unto the Angels, and be the chil-*  
*dren of God.* Which final union, of An-

SERMONS *gels* and righteous *men*, into one heavenly Society, St *John* excellently sets forth, in the *ivth* and *vth* chapters of the *Revelation*: Where, beginning the *Worship originally* paid to *God* by all his creatures in general, (who, in their *giving glory and honour and thanks to him that sitteth on the Throne, who liveth for ever and ever; rest not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and Is, and is to come;—Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory and Honour and Power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they Are, and were created: And thence proceeding to describe the particular Worship, which began to be paid to Christ upon his exaltation to the right hand of God; (when the Saints who were redeemed from the Earth, began a New Song, saying, Thou art worthy;— for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood,— and hast made us unto our God Kings and Priests;)* he at length concludes with uniting in one universal Chorus the Voices of *Angels* and of *Men*, giving praise at the same time to *God* who sat on the *Throne*, and to the

ch. iv. 8,  
9, 11.

ch. v. 9.




the *Lamb* who had been slain for men: S E R M.  
*And I heard the Voice of many Angels* X.  
*round about the Throne, and the Living* ver. 11.  
*Creatures and the Elders, and the Num-* and ch. vii.  
*ber of them was ten thousand times ten* 11.  
*thousand, and thousands of thousands, Say-*  
*ing with a loud Voice, Worthy is the Lamb*  
*that was slain, to receive Power and Riches*  
*and Wisdom and Strength and Honour and*  
*Glory and Blessings; And every Creature*  
*which is in Heaven and on the Earth, —*  
*— heard I saying, Blessing and Honour*  
*and Glory and Power, be unto him that*  
*sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb*  
*for ever and ever.*

THE Use which the Church of Rome has made of This Doctrine, of good men's being in Scripture joined together with the innumerable Company of Angels, as Members of the same heavenly Jerusalem, the City of the Living God; The Use, I say, which the Church of Rome has made of this Doctrine, has been very *perverse*, as well as *impious*. For, instead of directing their Prayers uniformly to God the Judge of All, through Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, whom

S E R M the Scripture declares to be Alone our *Ad-*  
 X. *vocate with the Father*; They, by a *false*  
 inference from a *True* doctrine, of *Angels* being *ministring Spirits*, have, of their *own* Authority, presumed to establish a *Worship of Angels*, in contradiction to the *express Command of God*. For, whereas the Scripture solemnly declares, that as there is but *One God*, so there is also but *One Mediator between God and Men*; they, on the contrary, have, by Angel-worship, set up *Many Mediators*; which is direct *Idolatry* against *Him* who is the *Only True One*. To charge them with giving to *Angels* the proper *Worship of God Almighty*, is charging them with a *Fact* which they *deny*; and therefore is not the best and most proper way to convince them of their *Error*: But the setting up of *Many Mediators*, is a *Fact* they do not, and cannot, deny: And yet the *Worship of False Mediators*, is as *true and formal Idolatry* against the *One Mediator* appointed by God; as the *Worship of False Gods*, is *Idolatry* against the *One God and Father of the Universe*. S: *Paul* therefore seems prophetically to describe

describe their practice, and to condemn it S E R M.  
 directly upon such a Principle, as cuts off X.  
 from them all possibility of Evasion or  
 Excuse; when, speaking of *things which*  
*have a Shew of Wisdom in Will-worship*  
*and Humility*, Col. ii. 23; he Thus ar-  
 gues, ver. 18, *Let no man beguile you of*  
*your Reward, in a voluntary Humility and*  
*Worshipping of Angels, intruding into those*  
*things which he hath not seen, vainly puff*  
*up by his Fleshly mind, And not holding the*  
*Head*; that is, not keeping stedfast to  
 Christ the One Mediator, upon whom a-  
 lone the whole Church depends, as the  
 Members of a Body on their Union with  
 the Head.

4thly, *Ye are come*, saith the Apostle in  
 the Text, *to the Spirits of just men made*  
*perfect*. The True Members of Christ's  
 invisible Church here upon *Earth*, known  
 unto God only, who searches the Heart,  
 and judges of every man's sincerity; are  
 in Scripture always represented, as being  
 One and the same Body, or Society, with  
 the Saints in *Heaven*: Just as persons tra-  
 velling in *foreign* parts, are still always  
 esteemed to continue Members of the

SER M. same Community, with those who remain  
 X. at home in their native country. *Jeru-*  
 *salem which is above, saith St Paul, Gal.*  
*iv. 26. is the Mother of us All. Those*  
 who are not actually arrived there, yet,  
 if they be *meet to be partakers of the in-*  
*heritance with the Saints in Light, their*  
*Treasure, their Portion is laid up for*  
 them in Heaven, and their *Names* are  
 already *written* There. Their Faith,  
 their Hope, their Conversation, their Ci-  
 tizenship is in Heaven: They live *Now*  
 according to the Laws of that Spiritual  
 Country; and therefore expect *hereafter*  
 to be admitted there as obedient, at least  
 as penitent and returning Children, into  
 their Father's house. Though their *na-*  
*tural* habitation is upon *Earth*; yet, in  
 the *moral* sense, having relinquished things  
*Earthly*, that is, all the *Wickedness* where-  
 in the World generally lies; they are (as  
 St Paul expresses it, *Eph. ii. 19*) *no more*  
*Strangers and Foreigners, but fellow-citi-*  
*zens with the Saints, and of the Household*  
*of God.* St John expresses the same thing  
 in a still *more sublime* and elegant figure  
 of speaking, according to the manner of  
 the

the Prophetic style, *Rev. xiii. 6*; where S E R M. he Thus describes Antichristian tyranny, X. persecuting the True Worshippers of God; *He opened his mouth, saith he, in Blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his Name and his Tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven; and it was given unto him to make war with the Saints, and to overcome them;* The same persons who, in the *Latter* part of the Sentence, are called *Saints* under *Persecution*, are in the *former* part of the same sentence, *they that dwell in Heaven*; that is, who, by the practice of Virtue and true Holiness are qualified for, (and are therefore with great elegance said *actually to have*, what by the Promise of God they have a *certain Title to*;) an inheritance in *that new Heaven and new Earth, wherein righteousness is to dwell for ever.*

THE Use, which the Church of Rome has made of the Doctrine contained under *This* Head likewise, as well as the foregoing; has been extremely *corrupt*, and *irreligious*. For instead of *imitating the Virtues and Examples* of the *Saints*, who have gone before them in the *Worship*

S E R M. *ship of the True God, and in the Practice*  
 X. *of Righteousness and all Holiness; they*  
 ~~~~~  
 have on the contrary turned *This very*  
*thing* into an Occasion of *Apostatizing*  
*from Christ; and made Idols of the*  
*Saints, by causing Them after their Death,*  
*to become Objects of That Worship,*  
*which, while they lived, they both by*  
*their Doctrine and by their Practice*  
*taught, should be paid only to their com-*  
*mon Lord. Nor is there any Colour of*  
*Reason, in That Excuse alleged by the*  
*Church of Rome; that they worship the*  
*Saints no otherwise, than by desiring the*  
*Assistance of Their Prayers to God. For*  
*undoubtedly the Heathen of old, when*  
*they worshipped Demons and Heroes or*  
*the Souls of their departed Kings, did not*  
*take those Dead men to be God Almighty:*  
*And yet the Worship they paid them,*  
*whatsoever it was, because it was paid to*  
*a mere Fiction, to an Object which either*  
*had no Being at all, or (however) which*  
*had no Right to the Honour they paid it,*  
*was always justly charged as the Crime*  
*of Idolatry. An Idol, saith St Paul, is*  
*Nothing in the world: A mere Fiction of*  
 the

the Imagination of Vain Men; Either S E R M.  
*totally* such if the object has *no real* X.  
*existence at all*; or *so far* such, as there  
 is paid to it any *religious Honour* which  
*does not* belong to it. That the *Saints*  
*departed* have *Any Knowledge at all* of our  
 Affairs here upon Earth, is what no Ar-  
 gument can be brought to prove, either  
 from Reason or Scripture: But if they  
 could *know* and *hear the Prayers of Men*,  
 yet that *They* who have not as yet been  
 judged *themselves*, (and of whom the *most*  
*righteous*, as St Peter tells us, *shall scarce-*  
*ly be saved*, that is, shall owe their *own*  
 Salvation merely to God's free *Pardon* of  
 their Sins through Christ,) should be al-  
 lowed to mediate and be intercessors for  
*Others*; is what *can* be no otherwise look-  
 ed upon by serious persons, than as an  
 impious Fiction. *Angels*, who are *mini-*  
*string Spirits sent forth to minister to them*  
*who shall be Heirs of Salvation*, we are  
 sure, *have* knowledge of our Affairs, and  
 Always *behold the Face of our Heavenly*  
*Father* in That State of Glory, which  
 the *Saints* shall *not* be instated in till the  
 Great day of Retribution: And yet even  
 of

SER M. of *Angel-worship* St *Paul* declares, that  
 X. it is an intruding into things which men  
 have not seen, vainly puffed up by their  
 fleshly mind, falling away from *Christ*  
 the only *Head* of reconciliation, and be-  
 guiling themselves of their *Reward*: All  
 which therefore, must still much more be  
 chargeable upon the Practice of *Saint-*  
*worship*. God has appointed *One only*  
*Mediator* between God and Men, who  
 has perfect knowledge of our *Infirmities*,  
 and is abundantly able to succour them  
 who come unto God by him: And for  
 men to idolize either *Saints* or *Angels*,  
 by setting them up, merely in their own  
 imaginations, as *Intercessors* for them with  
 God, whom God never appointed to That  
 Office; is a manifest derogation from the  
 Honour of our *Lord*. This is evidently  
 the State of the case, even though it were  
 true, what some of the *Romanists* allege,  
 that they went no further than barely re-  
 questing the Prayers of the *Saints* depart-  
 ed, to be offered unto God for them.  
 But indeed they go much further; taking  
 it for granted, that the Prayers of the  
*Saints* are undoubtedly very much avail-  
 able



able for their devout Votaries: And whereas our Saviour expressly tells his Disciples, that the *Greatest Saints* are at the best *but unprofitable Servants*; these men teach on the contrary, that besides working out their own Salvation, they have moreover a Stock of superabundant Merit deposited in the Church, to be applied for the Benefit of those who want it. Which Notion has been carried to such a Heighth of Extravagancy, in some Ages and Nations which call themselves *Christian*; that the deluded people, instead of loving the Lord their God with all their Heart and with all their Soul have been taught to rely with a more constant and more entire confidence, upon the powerful Prayers and Merits of the *Holy Virgin* and the *Saints*; than upon the intercession of *Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant*, or the acceptableness of Virtue and True Holiness in the presence of *God the Judge of All*.

THE *only Text* that I am sensible of in the whole New Testament, that can possibly be perverted to give so much as the least appearance, even to the meanest

S E R M. Understanding, of countenancing the Doctrine of the *Merit of the Saints*; is That  
 X. of St Paul, Col. i. 24, *I rejoyce in my Sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the Afflictions of Christ in my Flesh, for his Body's sake, which is the Church.* From which words it has been collected, that the afflictions and pious Works of particularly eminent Saints, are meritorious towards obtaining remission of Sin, not only for *themselves*, but for *Others* also; in *some* proportion as the Sufferings of Christ, were for the redemption of the *whole Church*. But the true meaning of St Paul's words, is plainly *This* only; that in like manner as it was foretold and appointed that *Christ*, the *Head* of the Church, should *first* suffer; so it was appointed that his *Body* also, the *Members* of his Church, should in many degrees suffer *after* him; being conformed to the *Image of the Son of God*, and *through much tribulation entering into the Kingdom of God*. This is *filling up that which was Behind of the Sufferings of Christ*; accomplishing that which remained to be *fulfilled*, of the fore-appointed

pointed *Sufferings*, first of *Christ*, and then of his *Church*. SERM.  
X.

THE *real* Ground and Foundation of this *whole* Invention, of the *Saints in Heaven* being *helpful* to *Sinners upon Earth*; was nothing else, but the *Worldly profit* arising from this *Doctrine* to Those, who claimed to themselves the *Power* of dispensing out the *Merits* of the *Saints for Money*, and of enjoying the *rich Gifts and Presents* offered to the *Saints* (in a grateful *Return* for their *Prayers*) by *Superstitious* *Votaries*.

'Tis likewise upon the very same foundation, with these *imaginary* *Prayers* of the *Dead* for the *Living*; that on the reverse, great *Endeavours* have been used, to make the *Prayers* also of the *Living* thought available for the *Dead*: Men having been taught to believe, that *Prayers* purchased with *Money* to be said for them after their *Death*, might avail instead of their having perfected *True Repentance* and *Reformation* in their *Lives*. Which being therefore indeed more *effectual* than the *intercession* of *Christ himself*, who obtains *forgiveness*

S E R M. for *those only* who *actually* repent and amend; hence it has come to pass, that among men of wicked and corrupt minds, the imaginary Prayers of *Dead Saints* interceding for the *Living*, and *Masses said by the Living* in behalf of the *Dead*; Fictions of vain and deceitful *Men*, have been more relied on, than the *everlasting Gospel of Christ*.

T H I S is the perverse and *corrupt Use*, which the Church of *Rome* has made of this plain Doctrine of the Apostle, that *good men on Earth* are Members of the *same City of God*, with the *Spirits of just men already made perfect in Heaven*. The *True and Christian Use* of this doctrine, is That which the Apostle himself teaches us to make of it; that, if we look upon ourselves as *Fellow-citizens with the Saints*, and of the *Household of God*; if we esteem ourselves as Members of the same Society with them, and belonging to the same heavenly country, the *Jerusalem* which is above; then ought we to *set our affections on things above, not on things in the Earth*, Col. iii. 2; that our *Hearts* may be, where we believe is

is our *Treasure*; considering, in every S E R M.  
*important* action we go about, what in- X.  
 fluence it will have upon our *future and*  
*eternal*, rather than on our *present and*  
*temporal estate*; having our conversation  
 in *Heaven*, as being *partakers of the same*  
 Hope with those who have gone before  
 us, and who have already attained to *the*  
*inheritance of the Saints in Light*; Prai-  
 sing God, for *Their deliverance* from the  
 Miseries of this sinful World; setting be-  
 fore us *Their Good Examples*, imitating  
 their *Virtues*, and respecting their *Me-*  
*mories*; *Looking for*, and waiting unto,  
*the Blessed Hope*, and *the Glorious Ap-*  
*pearance of the Great God*, and our Sa-  
 viour *Jesus Christ*; when *We* together  
 with *Them*, who have gone before us in  
 Christ, shall have our *perfect* Consumma-  
 tion and Bliss *both in Body and Soul*, in  
 the eternal Kingdom of God: *We*, I say,  
*together with Them*, shall then receive  
 our *perfect* Consummation and Bliss. For  
 though, in the Text, *They* are stiled *al-*  
*ready*, the *Spirits of just men made per-*  
 fect; yet This is spoken only with regard  
 to their having *perfected* or *finished their*  
 VOL. IV. R 2 course,

S E R M. *course*, and having escaped all the Dan-  
 X. gers and Temptations of this present  
 World. For, as to the actual possession  
 of the *complete* Happiness laid up for  
 them in the Kingdom of God, in *This*  
 they are *not* to be instated till the Resur-  
 rection from the Dead: As the Apostle  
 in the *xith* chapter of *This* Epistle to the  
*Hebrews*, speaking of the Patriarchs and  
 Martyrs of old, expressly tells us; ver. 39.  
*These all* (says he) *having obtained a good*  
*Report through Faith, received not the*  
*Promise; God having provided some better*  
*thing for us; that they without us should*  
*not be made perfect.*

5thly and *Lastly*; *Ye are come*, saith the  
 Apostle in the Text, *to the general As-*  
*sembly and Church of the first-born which*  
*are written in Heaven.* The word, *first-*  
*born*, carries along with it, in common  
 Speech, the Notion of a *Right of Inbe-*  
*ritance*; and to be *written in Heaven*, or,  
*in the book of Life*, signifies being *quali-*  
*fied*, by a Life of *Virtue and true Righ-*  
*teousness*, to be made *Partakers* of *That*  
*Inheritance.* Thus, *Rev. xxii. 14*, *Bles-*  
*sed are they that do his Commandments,*  
*that*

that they may have Right to the Tree of S E R M.  
*Life, and may enter in through the Gates,* X.  
*into the City.)* I say, To be written in  
*Heaven*, signifies; not, being unalterably  
*predestinated* unto Life; (for, *Him that*  
*sinneth against me, will I blot, saith God,*  
*out of my Book;* and even Judas himself,  
 before his Apostacy, was one of those, to  
 whom our Lord said, *Luk. x. 20,* that  
*their Names were written in Heaven;*)  
 but it denotes, men being *at present* true  
*children of God*, and if they *continue* such  
 unto the End, *actual Heirs of his King-*  
*dom.* When therefore the Apostle says,  
*Ye are come unto the general Assembly and*  
*Church of the first-born which are writ-*  
*ten in Heaven;* the Meaning is, as if he  
 had said; Ye are become Members of  
 That Blessed, but at present Invisible So-  
 ciety, which consists of all the righteous  
 and good men, who fear God and keep  
 his Commandments, or who *have done*  
 and *shall do so* through All Ages, and in  
 all Nations over the Face of the Whole  
 Earth. This is the True *Catholick Church*  
*of God*, the Spouse and Body of Christ.  
 The Scripture-notion of which universal  
 R 3 Church,

S E R M. Church, having been much mistaken by  
X. the ignorance of Some, and much per-  
verted by the wickedness of Others; I  
shall therefore still further and more di-  
stinctly endeavour to set That matter in  
a clear Light in a following Discourse.







# SERMON XI.

Of the Catholick Church of  
Christ.



HEB. xii. 22, 23.

*But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels, To the general Assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of All, and to the Spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant.*




IN discoursing upon these SERM.  
words; I have already, XI.

I. In the *First* place, considered distinctly the several *Persons*, whom the Apostle, in this his Description of the City of the

SERMON. Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, XI. supposes to have a *relation* to, and *Communion* with each other. There is, 1<sup>st</sup>, says he, *God the Judge of All*: 2<sup>dly</sup>, *Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant*: 3<sup>dly</sup>, *An innumerable Company of Angels*: 4<sup>tly</sup>, *The Spirits of just men made perfect*: 5<sup>tly</sup>, *The general Assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven: Written in Heaven*; that is, not, *predestinated unalterably unto Life*; (for, *Him that sinneth against me, will I blot, saith God, out of my Book*; and even *Judas himself, before his Apostacy, was One of Those to whom our Lord said, Luke x. 20. That their Names were written in Heaven*;) But *written in Heaven*, are they, who *at present are true children of God*, and, if they *continue such unto the End*, shall be *actual Heirs of his Kingdom*.

Now this *last Particular, the general Assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven*, being an *express Definition of the True Catholick Church of God, the Spouse and Body of Christ*; the right Notion of which uni-  
 versal

versal Church, has been much mistaken S E R M.  
 by the ignorance of Some, and much XI.  
 perverted by the Wickedness of Others:   
 My

II. *Second* general Head therefore, (to which I am to proceed at This time,) was, from these words of the Apostle, to deduce the true Scripture-Notion of the *Holy Catholick Church of Christ*, and of That *Unity*, or *Communion*, which is between the Members of it, as Members of the *One Body of Christ*.

Now though the word *Catholick* is well known to signify, in general, the *Whole* or *Universal* Church; yet are there *several different* Senses, wherein even this *general* Expression, is taken in *greater* or in *less* Latitude of signification. The

*1st* and *largest* Sense of the term *Catholick Church*, is that which appears to be the most obvious and *literal* Meaning of the words of the Text, *The general Assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven*; that is, the *whole Number* of those who shall finally attain unto Salvation. According to that lively description *St John* gives of them,  
 Rev.

SERM. Rev. vii. 9. *I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all Nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the Throne,—— and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation unto our God which sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb.* Men being corrupted and depraved by Sin, could not of themselves, consistently with the infinite Holiness of the Divine Nature, and the Honour of God's Righteous Laws, be admitted to have Access unto Him, who dwelleth in Light inaccessible, and is of purer Eyes than to behold iniquity. But, through the intercession of the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World; whom God from the Beginning promised by All his Holy Prophets, and in the fulness of Time actually raised from the Dead, and exalted into Heaven to the right hand of the Throne on the Majesty on High, and gave him a Name which is above every Name, and a Kingdom which should never be destroyed: Through His intercession, I say, All who forsake their Sins and amend their Lives, shall, consistently with the Honour of the Divine Laws, be admitted


mitted to the Grace and Favour, of having their Repentance accepted unto Pardon. To *Him* God has given, (to become Subjects of that Kingdom which the Father has appointed him, and to be Partakers with him of his eternal Glory and Happiness,) *All Those* who by sincere Repentance and true renewed Obedience, shall be found capable of applying to themselves the Redemption purchased by the Blood of Christ. *Behold*, saith he, *I and the Children which God has given me*, Heb. ii. 13. And *Luke xxii. 29. I appoint You a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.* These are, in the largest and most extensive Sense of the word, the *Catholick Church of God; the General Assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven: All Holy and Virtuous Men, who in All Ages and in All Nations, have feared God and kept his Commandments, from the Beginning of the World. In This Blessed Assembly of the Sons of God, are comprehended all Those, who, under the original and general Law of Nature only, thro' the Love of Truth and Right, of*  
*God*

SER M. *God and Goodness, have after the example of Enoch and Noah, of Melchisedec and Job, of the Patriarchs and other Antient Heroes, of whom the World was not worthy, separated themselves from the corrupt Practices of the idolatrous and unrighteous Nations of the Earth; and they shall therefore, as our Saviour declares, come from the East and from the West and from the North and from the South, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the Kingdom of God, Mat. viii. 11; when the Son of man shall send forth his Angels, and shall gather together his Elect from the four Winds, from one end of Heaven to the other, Mat xxiv. 13. For God is no respecter of persons, Acts x. 34. but in every Nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him. These therefore, together with All such, as under the Jewish Dispensation in particular obeyed the Law of Moses, waiting for the Hope and Redemption of Israel; and all Those in the last place, who, under the Gospel-state, sincerely believe in the Name of Christ, and, by patient continuance in well-doing, according*

to the Commands of God delivered to them in the Gospel, *seek for glory and honour and immortality*: These *All*, considered *together*, as One united Body or Assembly of God's faithful Servants, are, in the most *true* and *primary* notion, in the *highest* and *largest* sense of the word, the *Catholick* or *Universal Church of Christ*; his *Spouse*, and his *Body*; his *Brethren*, and his *Members*; his *Sheep*, his *Inheritance*, and the *Subjects of his Kingdom*. This is that *Church*, which *Christ* loved and gave himself for it; that he might *sanctify and cleanse it, by the Word of God*; that he might *wash it from its Sins, in his own Blood*; that he might *present it to his Father a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing*; but that it should be *Holy and without Blemish, even undefiled and faultless before the Throne of God*. These are They, who shall *finally*, at their arrival in the *True Mount Sion, the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem*; make one complete and Blessed Society, with an *innumerable Company of Angels*, and with *Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant*,

S E R M.  
XI.



S E R M. *Covenant, and with GOD the Judge of*  
 XI. *All: And in the mean time, the Unity or*  
 *Communion which is between the Mem-*  
*bers of This Universal Church or Family*  
*of God, consists in This; that they are*  
*All, Servants of the same Supreme King,*  
*the One God and Father of the Universe;*  
*all, redeemed by the Blood of the same*  
*Saviour, whither they explicitly knew of*  
*him, or no; all, guided and sanctified*  
*by the same Spirit; all, Heirs of the*  
*same Promises, and have laid up for them*  
*a share of the same Glory, not in the*  
*same Degree, but in different degrees of*  
*the same Glory, in the eternal Kingdom of*  
*God.*

IF then we sincerely *believe This*, as we all *pretend and profess* to believe it; *what manner of persons ought we* consequently to be, *in all Holiness and Godly Conversation*; (not regarding, in matters of Religion, the doctrines and commandments of *Men*, but the *Laws of God* only;) that we may be worthy to be found *written in the writing of God's people*, Ezek. xiii. 9. (that is, as *St John* expresses it, *in the Book of Life*;) and to  
 have



have our portion of inheritance among S E R M.  
 those Saints of the most High; being XI.  
 numbred together, in that general Assembly and Church of the first-born, with the Patriarchs and Prophets, with the Apostles, Martyrs and Confessors, and all righteous and just Men, who have lived and died in the Fear of God from the Foundation of the World.

2dly, *THE Catholick or universal Church*, signifies in the *next* place, and indeed more *frequently*, the *Christian Church* only: *The Christian Church*, as distinguished from that of the *Jews* and *Patriarchs* of old: the *Church of Christ*, spread *universally* from our Saviour's Days over *all the World*; in contradiction to the *Jewish Church*, which was *particularly* confined to *One Nation* or *People*. And in *This* sense, the *Holy Catholick Church* signifies *That institution of Christianity*, or *Society of men professing the Doctrine of the Gospel*; which being built upon the *Foundation* of Christ and his Apostles, (in which sense our Saviour emphatically stiles *St Peter* a *Rock*, or principal *Foundation-stone*;) is by .a  
 continued

SERM. continued Succession of their Disciples  
 XI. and Followers propagated in the *Preach-*  
*ing of Truth* and in the *Practice of Righte-*  
*ousness* through all Ages, without any to-  
 tal Interruption, unto the End of the World.  
*This* is that Church, which Christ has  
 promised to be Always with, and to pre-  
 serve it, that the *Gates of Hell*, that is,  
*Persecution* and *Tyranny* and even *Death*  
*itself* shall never be able to prevail a-  
 gainst it. *This* is That Church, which  
 though continually *opposed* by *Unbelievers*  
 on the *one* hand, and on the *other* hand  
*persecuted* by the several *Religions* and  
*Powers* of the *World* that calls itself  
*Christian*; though corrupted by *false*  
*Doctrines* and *Determinations* of *Men*,  
 distracted by *mutual Impositions* and  
*Schisms*, and most of all deformed by *tem-*  
*poral Prosperity*, by the mixture of *Am-*  
*bitio*n and *worldly Power*, and by the *vi-*  
*tious Lives* of those who pretend to be  
 its Members; yet shall finally so prevail,  
 that at length the *Kingdoms of the World*,  
 shall become the *Kingdoms of our Lord* and  
 of his *Christ*; and the *Knowledge of God*  
 shall fill the *Earth*, as the *Waters cover*  
 the

*the Sea*; and the *everlasting Gospel* shall S F R M. be preached to all Nations, *saying*, Rev. XI. xiv. 6, 7. *Worship him that made Heaven and Earth and the Sea*, and all that is therein.

THE *Unity* or *Communion* which is between the Members of *this Church of Christ*, spread over the World from the days of our Saviour to the Consummation of all things, and considered as *distinct* from the *Jewish Church*, and *That of the Patriarchs of old*; I say, the *Unity* of its Members consists further in This; that they are, not only Servants of the *same God*, and Heirs of the *same Promises*, (for so were the *Jews* and *Patriarchs*, and All the *Worthies* of Antient Ages;) but These have *Communion* moreover, in *professing* particularly the *same explicit Faith in Christ*, of whom the Antients had but an *obscure* expectation as of Him that was to come; they have a *Communion* or *Unity*, as being *Members* of Christ's *peculiar mystical Body*, of his *Flesh* and of his *Bones*, Eph. v. 30. as being united, under the *same Head*; as being governed, by the *same Laws*; as

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SER M. communicating, (though they live in very different Ages and Countries of the World,) in the same Ordinances of the Gospel, in the offering up of Prayers to God thro' Christ, in the Ministration of the same Word, and the Participation of the same Sacraments: According to that elegant description given by St. Paul, Eph. ii. 20. *Ye are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, In whom all the Building fitly framed together, groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord.*

3dly, THE Catholick Church signifies very frequently, in a still more particular and restrained sense, that Part of the universal Church of Christ, which in the present Age is Now living upon Earth; as distinguished from those which have been before, and shall come after. And in This sense, the word signifies the Present True Members of Christ, wheresoever they be dispersed, or howsoever distinguished, over the Face of the whole Earth. This is the Present Church Militant, the Invisible Church known only to God


God the searcher of Hearts; who among S E R M. Christians of all Nations, and of different XI. Rites and Ceremonies and Forms of Government, and of great Diversity of Opinions in matters not fundamental, that is, not covenanted for at Baptism; knows *who* they are that worship him in Spirit and in Truth, and obey the Gospel with Simplicity and Sincerity of Heart. This is the *invisible* Catholick Church, the only *true Church upon Earth* in the Sight of God; but not distinguishable by *Us*, who know not each others Hearts, and therefore very often cannot possibly distinguish between the hypocrite and the sincere.

FOR which reason, between the Members of this *True Invisible Church*, there cannot possibly be, in this present Life, any *distinct* and *separate Communion*; till, at the great day of Retribution, the All-seeing and Unerring Judge, shall finally and for ever separate the Sheep from the Goats.

*4thly and lastly*; THE Term, *Catholick Church*, signifies in the *last* place, and *most frequently of all*, That Part of the

S E R M. Universal Church of Christ, which in the  
 XI. present Generation is *Visible* upon Earth,  
 in an *Outward* Profession of the Belief  
 of the Gospel, and in a *visible external*  
 Communion of the Word and Sacra-  
 ments. *This* is That Church, which, in  
 our present imperfect State, we are forced  
 very improperly and promiscuously to  
 judge and speak of, as if the *Visible* and  
*Invisible*, the *Apparent* and the *Real*  
 Church of Christ, were one and the same  
 Body of Men, actually united in the  
 Communion of Saints. This is That  
 Great *Field*, so styled by our Saviour  
 in his Parable, wherein grows toge-  
 ther the *Corn* and the *Tares*: This is  
 that *Net*, described by him in another  
 parable; wherein are inclosed both *Good*  
*Fish* and *Bad*. This is the *mixt* Society  
 of *sincere Christians* and *Hypocrites*, who  
 shall not be separated till the End of the  
 World.

THE Church of *Rome*, pretends her-  
 self to be *This Whole Catholick Church*,  
 exclusive of All other Societies of Christ-  
 ians. Which is the very *same* contradict-  
 ion, as for a *single Member*, nay, for a  
 Member

Member after it has *cut itself off* from the S E R M. Body, confidently to call itself the *Whole* XI.  Body.

*Marks* also, or *Notes*, they pretend to give; whereby, as by a certain Test, Men may easily distinguish the *True* Catholic Church, from all that are *erroneous*.

One of these *Marks* of *Theirs*, is *Vi-*  
*sibility*; that is, *Temporal Grandeur* and  
*Prosperity*, founded upon *Worldly Power*  
and *Dominion*: Which the *Scripture*, on  
the contrary makes one of the *Great*  
*Marks* of *Antichrist*, compelling by Force  
of *Persecution* all the *World* to worship  
him, that is, to make profession of *His*  
*Religion*: *Rev. xviii. 7, 3. She hath glo-*  
*rified herself, and lived deliciously; —*  
*she saith in her Heart, I sit a Queen, —*  
*and shall see no sorrow: — All Nations*  
*have drunk of the Wine of — her fornication,*  
*and the Kings of the Earth have com-*  
*mited fornication with her* (that is, have  
supported her idolatrous religion;) and  
the *Merchants* of the *Earth* are waxed  
*rich* through the abundance of her *Delicacies*.

SERM.

XI.

*Another Mark they give us of the True Church, is Universality; By which they mean, a large Extent of Countrey: Not considering, that Mabometanism and Paganism are much superior to them in This respect: And if they were not, yet our Saviour seems to have had no great Opinion of This way of judging of Truth by Numbers; when he tells us that Wide is the Gate, and Broad is the Way that leadeth to Destruction, and Many there be go in thereat.*

*Another Mark of the True Church, they tell us, is Antiquity: By which they mean, not Antiquity indeed, not the Primitive Antiquity of Christ and his Apostles; but only several fast corrupt Ages; which, with respect to Us Now indeed, are Antient; but, with respect to the Gospel itself, were very late Innovations.*

*Lastly; Another Mark they give us of the True Church, is Miracles: Which were indeed Authentick Evidences of our Saviour's divine Commission, and of his Apostles after him: But miraculous Powers, extended not any further than to Their persons; and to those immediately im-*  
powered



powered by them in the first Age: And as S E R M.  
to the *pretended Miracles*, which began in XI.  
the *Fourth Century* about the Time of  
St. *Anthony* the Monk, and have conti-  
nued ever since in the Church of *Rome*;  
the Character the Scripture gives of *Them*,  
is This; 2 *Th.* ii. 8. *Then shall that wick-*  
*ed one be revealed, — whose coming is af-*  
*ter the working of Satan, with all Power*  
*and Signs and lying Wonders, and with all*  
*deceivableness of unrighteousness in them*  
*that perish; because they received not the*  
*Love of the Truth; — for this cause God*  
*shall send them strong delusion, that they*  
*should believe a Lye: And Rev. xiii. 13.*  
*He doth great Wonders, — and deceiveth*  
*them that dwell on the Earth, by the means*  
*of those Miracles which he had Power to*  
*do: According to that original Prophecy*  
of our Saviour, *Mat. xxiv. 24. There*  
*shall arise false Christs and false Pro-*  
*phets, and shall shew great Signs and*  
*Wonders.*

ALL things therefore of This kind,  
are mere cheats and delusions. And in-  
deed *Marks*, or *Notes*, of the *true Church*,  
there are *None* other, but *This One only*;

SERMON the adhering stedfastly to the plain and  
 XI. uncorrupted Doctrine of *Christ* and his  
 ~~~~~ *Apostles*, as delivered in their *own* Discourses and Writings. *Where-ever* This is the Case, *There* is the *True Church*; even though but *Two* or *Three* be gathered together, to worship God in *Christ's Name*, and according to *his* Command. And *where-ever* This is *not* the Case, *There* is *no True Church*; even tho' it were as *Catholick* or *Universal* as the *whole World*.

THE Church of *Rome* therefore, and, in proportion, all its Followers, whether in whole or in part, by mixing the Authority of *Popes*, and *Councils*, and *Vain Men*, with the pure Doctrine of *Christ*; have, like the *Jews* of old, by the *Traditions of Men*, made void the *Commandments of God*; and are thereby become 'That *Man of Sin*, (of whom the *Apostles* have foretold us,) *sitting* blasphemously in the *Seat* and *Temple of God*, and *changing Laws and Times*, and *commanding all Men to worship* his *Temporal Authority*.

THE *True and Real* Authority of the Church of Christ, is to be a *Witness and Keeper of Holy Writ*; to transmit it down uncorrupted from generation to generation, as the *only Rule of Faith and Manners*; and in matters of indifference, in Rites and Ceremonies and Forms of external Government, to take care that *all things be done decently and in Order*. In which matters, the *universal Church* being too large to have any possibility of consulting together, *the Church in every Nation* Therefore has the same Right and Authority to determine for *itself*, as the *Catholick Church*, if it were possible for it to come together in One, would have to determine for the *Whole*. Which *Power or Authority*, in Matters of *Doctrine* indeed, that is, in appointing the *Terms or Conditions of Salvation*, is *none at all*; Not only in any *particular Church*, but even in the *Whole Catholick Church collectively*; nay, even in the *Apostles themselves*; nay, if we will believe *St Paul*, even in an *Angel from Heaven*, it is *absolutely None at all*; For *if any man shall add to These things, God shall add unto Him the Plagues*

SERMON. *Plagues that are written in His Book; and*  
 XI. *if any man shall take away therefrom, God shall take away his part out of the book of Life, and out of the Holy City. But in Rites and Ceremonies, in the Manner and Circumstance of Governments, and all matters of external Form, which God hath left indifferent; in These things, the Authority of Men takes properly place: And herein every good man ought to comply willingly, with the Laws and Customs of the Government he lives under: Always remembering this One Rule, that, with regard to these outward and indifferent things, they who make Divisions in the Church of Christ, either by needlessly separating Themselves, or, thro' needless and imperious impositions, giving to Others any Ground or Occasion of Separating; are on Both sides equally guilty of a Schismatical Spirit. For so St Paul admonishes, Rom. xvi. 17. Mark them which cause Divisions and Offences. He does not say, Mark Them only, who divide; Which is the Fault on One side: But also, Mark them who give occasion to Divisions; Which*

Which is equally the Fault on the *Other* S E R M.  
 side. XI.

FOR the *Unity* or *Communion*, which ought to be between the Members of the *Visible Church Catholick*, consists in This; that, with universal Love and Charity, with mutual Forbearance and Good-Will, they assist, instruct, comfort, reprove, forgive one another; and, in a word, (notwithstanding any Differences of Opinion in smaller matters,) perform all the Offices of Kindness and Goodness, that becomes Members of One and the Same Body to do for each other. That the *Members should all have the same Care one for another; and if one member suffer, all the members should by Compassion suffer with it*, 1 Cor. xii. 25. That the *Eye cannot say to the Hand, I have no need of Thee; nor again, the Head to the Feet, I have no need of you*, ver. 21. That Great Care should always be taken, not to lay a *Foundation for Schisms and Divisions*, by assuming Authority to *impose* upon each other as *Necessary*, such Matters either of *Opinion* or *Practice*, as Christ has *not made necessary*. The *attempting* of which,

S E R M. which, has in all Ages been the fulfilling  
 XI. of That Prophecy of our Saviour, *I come  
 not to send Peace, but a Sword.* For the  
*True Unity* of Christians does not depend,  
 (as some have vainly imagined) upon  
 procuring by Force an *Uniformity of Opi-*  
*nions*; (which to be *real*, is absolutely im-  
 possible in *Nature*; and the *Appearance*  
 of it, can never be any thing else than  
*Ignorance* or *Hypocrisy*;) But the *True*  
*Unity* of Christians depends upon their A-  
 greement in the sincere *Love of Truth*,  
 and *Practice of Charity*; bearing each o-  
 thers *Infirmities* in all things that are of  
 an *indifferent* nature, and being *stedfast*  
 and unmoveable in things *fundamental*,  
 that is, in the *Faith and Obedience* for  
 which they *covenanted at Baptism*; bold-  
 ing the *Head*, Col. ii. 19, *from which all*  
*the Body by Joints and Bands having Nou-*  
*rishment ministred, and knit together, in-*  
*creaseth with the Increase of God.* If we  
 walk in the *Light* of the Gospel, we must  
 have This *Fellowship* one with another.  
 For he that saith, he *loves God*, and *loveth*  
*not his Brother*, St *John* tells us, *is a Ly-*  
*ar.* Nay, St *Paul* goes farther, and de-  
 clares,

clares, that if a man could *Speak with the* S E R M.  
*Tongues of men and Angels,* and had all XI.  
*Faith so that he could remove mountains,*  
 and gave his Body to be burned, and be-  
 stowed all his goods to feed the Poor, and  
 had not Charity, (that is, had not that  
 good and Christian Spirit, which would  
 hinder him from putting *impositions* upon  
 his Brethren, which are the *Occasions* of  
 dividing the Body of Christ;) all the rest  
 would *profit him Nothing*. With *one thing*  
 indeed, with *Vice and Immorality* only  
 we are to have *No Charity*: Have *No*  
*Fellowship with the unfruitful Works of*  
*Darkness*; neither be *Partakers of other*  
*men's Sins*; For *what Communion has*  
*Light with Darkness,* or *what fellowship*  
*has Christ with Belial?* But beyond This,  
 our Saviour has given us no Authority to  
 go; lest by a mistaken zeal, we *needlessly*  
*pluck up the Wheat with the Tares*. For  
 good men are not hurt, by living in *Com-*  
*munities,* with the *Wicked,* but only by  
 joining with them in any *Sin*. In all *o-*  
*ther* respects, we are to show tenderness to  
 all men; to instruct, rebuke, or bear  
 with them as *Brethren*: Considering,  
 that

SERM. that as there is *One Body and One Spirit,—and one Hope of our Calling, One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of All, who is above All;* so we ought to *indeavour with all forbearance towards one another in Love, to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace: That we may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ; From whom the whole Body fitly joined together, and compacted by That which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body unto the edifying of itself in Love. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. By This Rule, if we walk here upon Earth; we may hope finally to be numbred in That general Assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven: with Angels, and with Jesus the Mediator of the New covenant, and to come to God in whose presence is fullness of Joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.*

SERMON





# SERMON XII.

Of the Number of those that shall be saved.



RE V. iii. 4.

*Thou hast a few Names even in Sardis, that have not defiled their Garments; and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.*



WHETHER these Epistles of SERMON our Saviour to the Seven XII. Churches of *Asia*, are to be understood *literally* only, as Exhortations to those Seven particular Churches; or whether, according  
ing

S E R M. ing to the Analogy of the rest of This  
 XII. Book, they are to be applied in the prophetic style to Seven different States, Successions, or Periods, of the Whole Church of Christ; is not material to our present Purpose to inquire. The Matter contained in these Admonitions, may by a Moral Application, become equally useful to us, upon *either* Supposition. For, what St *Paul* affirms concerning the State of the ancient *Jewish* Church; that the things which befel *them*, were *our* Examples, and were writ for *our* Admonition, upon whom the Ends of the World are come; is undoubtedly much *more* true, of the things relating to the Ancient *Christian* Church, whether particular or universal. These Exhortations therefore of our Saviour, whether given to the *single* Churches of *Asia*, or intended to be applied to the several Successive Periods of the *Catholick* Church; are either way worthy of our most serious meditations. The Subject-matter of each of the seven Epistles is very nearly the same; consisting of three parts; A Commendation of the Faith and Patience  
 of

of the Saints, a Reproof of their Defects, S E R M<sup>o</sup>  
and an Exhortation either to Amendment, XII.  
or Perseverance. The State of the Church  
of *Sardis* is represented as one of the  
*most* reproveable of the seven; and there-  
fore the Epistle to *This* Church does not  
begin, as most of the others do, with a  
Commendation of their Faith and Pa-  
tience, but on the contrary with a very  
severe Reproof; ver. 1, *I know thy Works,*  
*that thou hast a Name, that thou livest,*  
*and art dead.* Then follows the Exhor-  
tation to repent, ver. 2, *Be watchful and*  
*strengthen the things which remain, that*  
*are ready to die; for I have not found thy*  
*Works perfect before God: Remember*  
*therefore how thou hast received and heard,*  
*and hold fast, and repent.* After which  
he adds in the last place that small Com-  
mendation which could be allowed to so  
imperfect a Church, in the Words of the  
Text: *Nevertheless thou hast a Few Names*  
*even in Sardis, that have not defiled their*  
*Garments, and They shall walk with me*  
*in white, for they are worthy.* It might  
reasonably be hoped, that, in a careless  
and corrupt Age, it should be an awaken-

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ing Consideration to All who have any true Concern for the Glory of God, and for the Honour and Purity of Religion; to think within themselves, if in the best and purest Times of the Gospel, if in those Primitive Ages, and among those most eminent Churches of *Asia*, there was One to which no better Commendation could be afforded, than that there were in it a *Few* Names which had not defiled their Garments; what Apprehensions will it become *Us* to have of ourselves, in these last and degenerate Ages, when our Works are *not only Ready to die*, but actually *dead*; nay, when we scarce have so much as a *Name that we live*? when on the One hand by open Atheism, Irreligion and Profaneness, and on the Other hand by ignorant and superstitious Contentions about vain, needless and unintelligible Opinions, the Life and Soul of Religion, true Devotion and Piety towards God, and Universal Righteousness, Love and Good-will towards Men, is in a manner wholly eaten out and consumed? If in the Primitive Church itself, *Judgment thus began at the House*

of God, what must the End be of them S E R M.  
 that obey not the Gospel at all; And if the XII.  
 Righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the  
 Ungodly and the Sinner appear? But This  
 I intimate only, as a general Observation  
 upon the Whole. In the Words themselves  
 we may more distinctly observe the fol-  
 lowing Particulars. 1st, The Number  
 or Proportion of those, who shall inherit  
 Salvation; *Thou hast a Few names even  
 in Sardis:* 2dly, The Qualification by  
 which they are entitled to that inheri-  
 tance; *Which have not defiled their Gar-  
 ments:* 3dly, The Nature or Description  
 of the Reward promised them; *They shall  
 walk with me in White:* And 4thly, The  
 Character or Encomium given to the per-  
 sons who shall obtain this inheritance;  
*For they are Worthly.*


1st, HERE is expressed the Number or  
 Proportion of those who shall inherit  
 Salvation; *Thou hast a Few names even  
 in Sardis:* The strict and proper inten-  
 tion of which Words in this place, seems  
 to be to declare, that even in *Sardis*, tho'  
 one of the most corrupt of all the Seven  
 Churches, yet even in *That* Church there

S E R M. were *some* who should be Heirs of Sal-  
 XII. vation: Implying, that in the other  
 Churches there were *more*, and in a much  
*greater Proportion*, when there were a  
*Few* found even in that, which was one  
 of the worst of all. But yet, since the  
 evil things which are spoken of the Church  
 of *Sardis*, are but comparative with re-  
 gard to the Purity of the other more un-  
 corrupt Churches; and That primitive  
 Church, with all its Faults, was still one  
 of the golden Candlesticks, and of the se-  
 ven Stars in our Saviour's right Hand;  
 with which the Things that are most  
 highly commended in these later and more  
 degenerate Ages of the Christian World,  
 must hardly presume to be compared:  
 Therefore our Saviour's declaring that in  
*One*, even of *These* Churches, there were  
*but Few* who should walk with him in  
 White, may justly give us occasion to  
 consider the several Texts of Scripture,  
 wherein seems to be contained that me-  
 lancholy Doctrine, that there are *Few*  
*only* which shall attain unto Salvation.  
 In the second Apocryphal Book of *Ef-*  
*dras*, there is a very strange expression to  
 this

this Purpose, ch. viii. 1, *The most High*, SERM. XII.  
*says he, has made this World for many,*  
*but the World to come for Few:* For as  
*the Earth giveth much mold whereof Earth-*  
*en Vessels are made, but little dust that gold*  
*cometh of; even so is the Course of this*  
*present World; there be many created, but*  
*Few shall be saved:* And ch. ix. 15, *There*  
*be many more of them which perish, than*  
*of them which shall be saved, Like as a*  
*Wave is greater than a Drop.* Our Sa-  
viour himself, when one asked him, *Lord,* Luk. xiii.  
*are there few that be saved;* took that <sup>23.</sup>  
occasion to exhort his Disciples, say-  
ing, *Enter ye in at the strait gate;* For, Mat. vii.  
*strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way* <sup>14.</sup>  
*that leadeth unto Life, and Few there be*  
*that find it:* And at the Conclusion of  
two of his Parables, he sums up his Doc- Mat. xx.  
trine twice in the very same Words; *For* <sup>16.</sup> xxii. 14.  
*many are called, but Few chosen.* The  
Apostle St. Peter compares our being sa-  
ved by the Gospel, to the preservation of  
Noah and his Family from the Flood;  
and makes *Baptism* a like Figure to the  
*Ark, wherein Few, that is, eight Persons,*  
*were saved by Water,* 1 Pet. iii. 20. And  
Rev. xiii. 8, *All that dwell upon the Earth*

S E R M shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world: That is; the Generality of Christians who are not sincerely such, will always run after the Religions of this World, instead of studying the Doctrines which Christ himself taught them. St. Paul, Rom. ix. 27, applies to the Salvation of the Gospel, that passage of *Isaiah*, *Though the Number of the children of Israel be as the Sand of the Sea, a remnant shall be saved.* And as in *Elijah's* time there were in all *Israel* seven thousand men, who had not bowed the knee to the image of *Baal*; Even so, saith he, at this present time also there is a remnant, according to the election of Grace, ch. xi. at the 4th verse. These may justly seem to be hard sayings, and *Who can bear them?* For if these things be so, *Who then shall be saved?* And how shall this be reconciled with those Divine Attributes, the Goodness, the Mercy, and Compassion of God; of whom the Scripture declares, that he would have all men to be saved, that he would not that Any should perish, and that his tender mercies are over all his Works? Now to This  
Diffi-



Difficulty it might be sufficient to answer S E R M.  
in general, that at the great day of Re- XII.  
tribution, God will abundantly vindicate   
himself before Men and Angels, and *all*  
*Mouths shall be stopped before him*: Stop-  
ped, not by Power and supreme Autho-  
rity, but by conviction of the Justice, the  
Reason, the Equity, the Necessity of the  
Case: By all which things, God will *be*  
*justified in his saying*; and clear, both  
*when he judges* and *when he is judged*.  
This, I say, is in the whole a sufficient  
ground of Satisfaction, (even though no-  
thing further could be alleged,) to a ra-  
tional, pious, and modest Mind, who can  
*trust* God till the final event of Things,  
to make it appear at last, that *the Judge*  
*of all the Earth will do what is right*.  
And indeed it may universally be looked  
upon as a never-failing Rule, which may  
in all cases safely be depended upon; that  
where-ever any Notion we entertain, is  
in any degree inconsistent with any of  
the natural and unchangeable Attributes  
of the Divine Nature, there is always ei-  
ther some latent Error in the Notion it-  
self, which at present perhaps we cannot  
distinctly discover; or at least, there is

S E R M. some great Defect in our Knowledge of  
 XII. several very material *Circumstances*, which  
 in reality alter the nature of the whole  
 Question. Upon the Whole therefore,  
 we ought in all reason to rest satisfied,  
 with being able to affirm, that God will  
 finally justify his own proceeding to every  
 man's Conscience, and *with righteousness*  
*will be judge the World.* Yet in the  
 matter at present before us, there is some-  
 thing *further* both *in general*, of consi-  
 derable moment, that we are capable of  
 observing; and also *in particular* some-  
 thing remarkable, with regard to *each* of  
 the fore-mentioned Texts of Scripture.

*In general:* We know it was reason-  
 able God should create Beings, endued  
 with *Freedom of Will*, that they might be  
 capable of rendring him a *Free-will-offe-  
 ring* of voluntary *Obedience*; which is  
 the only thing that can possibly be ac-  
 ceptable to a Supreme Governour. Now  
 by the very same *Liberty*, which rendred  
 them capable of paying a voluntary *Obe-  
 dience*, they must needs be capable like-  
 wise of *refusing to obey*: And thence  
 came Sin and Misery into the Crea-  
 tion of God. Further; It was fit, that  
 infinite

infinite Power and Wisdom should display itself in making great *Variety* of such Creatures. In which *Variety*, it could not be, but of those which were the lowest and frailest and most fallible of all rational Beings, *greater Numbers* should prove incapable of the Heavenly state; and consequently must perish. *Must perish*: Not by the Appointment of God; (For God made not Death; neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the Living; but invites all men to come and take of the Water of Life freely;) but they perish, by their own Carelessness and Sensuality, by their own Disobedience, Wilfulness and Impenitency; being unfit for, and incapable of the Happiness of Heaven. And yet even of those who so perish, not *All* are condemned to the severe Punishment of *Those*, concerning whom it is said that it shall be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* in the day of Judgment than for *Them*; But every one shall be punished according to the exact *Degree only* of his own demerit; some with *few* stripes, (as our Saviour declares to us,) and others with *many*; according as the Justice and *Wisdom* of  
God

S E R M.  
XII.  
~~~~~

S E R M. God in his Supreme Government of the  
 XII. World necessarily requires, for the support of his Authority, and the honour of his righteous and eternal Laws.

THIS, *in general*. There is in particular something proper to be remarked, with regard to *each* of the forementioned passages in Scripture.

IN the *first* place, the Smallness of the Numbers there mentioned, is not *absolute*, but *comparative*. The Righteous are *Few*, not absolutely speaking; but *in Comparison only* with those who are Wicked. For otherwise, where the Expressions are not comparative, the Scripture speaks after a very different manner: *I beheld*, says St *John* in his Vision, Rev. vii. 9, *and lo a great multitude which no man could number, of all Nations and Kindreds and People and Tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms were in their hands*. And yet This great Multitude were of Those only, who were saved out of the Antichristian State, out of that great and universal Corruption, which was to overspread the Church in its lowest and most oppressed Condition; ver. 14, *These are they which*  
*came*

*came out of great Tribulation, (out of SERM.  
The great Tribulation, it should be ren- XII.  
dred,) and have washed their robes, and Rev.xiii.8.  
made them white in the Blood of the  
Lamb.*

IN the next place ; 'tis to be observed, that several of the Texts before-cited, are parts of Parabolical Discourses ; in which Parables, there must not be a strict Application made of every single Expression, but of That only, or principally, wherein the Similitude consists, and which is the main Intent of this Parable. Thus the intent of these Two Parables, which our Saviour concludes with these Words, *Many are called, but few chosen* ; is not to express the Proportion of the *Numbers*, of those that shall be saved, and of those that perish ; but to declare, that *as* the Person who came without a Wedding-garment, was cast out from the Marriage-Feast, *so* no man who comes not clothed with the Works of Righteousness, shall be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven, to the Marriage-Supper of the Lamb : And that, *as* the Labourers who came into the Vineyard in the Morning, were

SERMON. not preferred to those who came in later,  
 XII. but on the contrary reprov'd for their  
 envying and complaining at the Favour  
 shown to others; *so* the Jews who were  
 first and originally the people of God,  
 should not be preferred before the Gen-  
 tiles who were converted later; but on  
 the contrary many of *them* should be re-  
 jected for their ill behaviour, while o-  
 thers from the East and from the West,  
 from the North and from the South, of all  
 Nations, Kingdoms and Tongues, should  
 come and sit down in *Their* places, with  
*Abraham, Isaac and Jacob* in the King-  
 dom of God. From whence our Saviour  
 draws, by way of Inference, this warn-  
 ing to his Disciples, that they should not  
 depend upon the bare outward Profession  
 of the true Religion; for that *Many of those*  
*who were called, were not chosen.* And  
 from his manner of expressing this Warn-  
 ing at the Conclusion of these Parables,  
*(Many are called, but Few chosen;)* it  
 ought no more in strictness to be infer-  
 red, that, absolutely speaking, *Few* only  
 shall attain unto Salvation; than from  
 what he elsewhere supposes, that of *Ten*  
 Virgins

Virgins *Five* were wise, and *Five* foolish, S E R M.  
it can be concluded that the Numbers of XII.  
Both are *equal*: Or from the Parable of  
the Talents, wherein to one Servant were  
committed *Five* talents, to another *Two*,  
to a third *One*; and of these This *Last*  
*only* misbehaved himself; that therefore  
the Righteous are *more* in number, than  
the Wicked: Or from the Parable of the  
Marriage-Feast, wherein of Those who  
were invited, and called out of the high-  
ways and streets of the City, and even  
compelled to come in, *One only* among  
them all is represented as not having on  
a Wedding-garment; that therefore it can  
be concluded the Number of those who  
shall finally be rejected, is extremely small.  
All these Arguments, I say, from Para-  
bolical Discourses, are without just Foun-  
dation: The Design of our Saviour being  
evidently, not to express the *Proportions*  
of *Numbers*, but the *Qualification* of the  
*Persons* that shall attain unto Salvation;  
and to warn his Disciples, against depend-  
ing, like the Pharisees, upon the bare  
*Profession* of the true Religion, without  
the *Practice* of it: For that many of the  
Children

S E R M.

XII.

Children of the Kingdom, should *themselves* be cast out; and *many* of them that *are called*, are not *chosen*. And 'tis worthy of Remark, that it is at the End of that *very* Parable, wherein *One Person only* is represented as not having on a Wedding-garment, that our Saviour expresses his Caution in those particular Words, *Many are called, but Few are chosen*. Which therefore must by no means be understood to be a Discouragement, as if any Sincere person were, by any Act of *God*, excluded or rejected from Salvation; but it must be interpreted as a Complaint, of the Wickedness and Perverseness of *Men*; that of those who are *called* to the greatest Advantages and Means of Salvation, so *Many* prove unworthy of being finally *chosen*.

As to the passages in the Apocryphal Book of *Esdra*s, which is the Book that has the *least* Authority even of all the Apocryphal Books themselves; they seem to be the Expressions of a Jewish Writer, who thought that as the Jews were in *This* World the peculiar People of God, so no others but *They* were to have any share



share likewise in the World *to come.* S E R M.

Which was a Notion the Jews so far retained even till our Saviour's time, that XII.

there was nothing in the Gospel more difficult for them to be perswaded of, than that even *unto the Gentiles also God had Granted Repentance unto Life.* And yet even This very Same Author elsewhere expressly acknowledges, that not by the Appointment of God, but by the Wickedness only and Incapacity of Men, is their own Destruction brought upon them. Ch. viii. 41, *As the husbandman soweth much Seed upon the ground, and planteth many Trees, and yet the thing that is sown good in his Season cometh not up, neither doth all that is planted take root; even so is it of them that are sown in the World, they shall not all be Saved.* And ch. ix. 20, *So I considered the World, and behold there was peril, because of the Devices that were come into it; And I saw and spared it greatly; and have kept me a Grape of the Cluster, and a Plant of a great People.*

THE Passage in St Peter, wherein he makes *Baptism* a like Figure to the *Ark,*

SERMON. *Ark, wherein Few, that is, Eight Persons, were saved by Water,* may reasonably be understood of that *particular Time* of Persecution and Difficulty, wherein the Apostle lived. For in like manner as at the Time of the Flood, *God saw that the Wickedness of Man was great in the Earth, and that every Imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually,* Gen. vi. 5: Which character 'tis very unreasonable to apply (as some have done) to the whole Race of Mankind, when it was plainly spoken of that particular corrupt generation only: So 'tis reasonable to suppose *St Peter's Application* of the similitude, to be made not to the whole Bulk of Mankind, but to that particular generation, wherein *Few* entertained the first preaching of the *Gospel*, even like the *Few* that hearkned to *Noah's* preaching of Righteousness. And the same is to be understood concerning that Text in the *Revelation*, ch. xiii. 8.

IN like manner *St Paul's* applying to the Salvation of the *Gospel*, that passage of *Isaiab*, *Though the Number of the children of Israel be as the Sand of the Sea,*


a remnant shall be saved; and his affirm-  
ing, that as in *Elijah's* time there were  
in all *Israel* seven thousand men, who had  
not bowed the knee to the Image of *Baal*,  
even so at this present Time also there is  
a remnant according to the election of  
Grace; This, I say, is by the Apostle's  
own express Words limited to that par-  
ticular Time then present, wherein Few in  
comparison embraced the Gospel: Even  
so at this present Time, says he, also there  
is a remnant according to the election of  
Grace; i. e. of those who embrace the  
gracious Terms of the Gospel. And as  
in the *Old Testament* there were express  
Prophecies, that things should not always  
be in such a melancholy state, but on the  
contrary the Time should come when  
God's People should be *All righteous*, *Is.*  
*lx.* 21; that he would make even their  
*Officers Peace*, and their *Exactors Right-*  
*eousness*, ver. 17; that the *Earth* should  
be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as  
the *Waters cover the Seas*, *ch. xi.* 9; that  
God would put his Law in their inward  
parts, and write it in their Hearts; and  
that they should all Know him, from the

S E R M.  
XII.

SER M. *least of them to the greatest*, Jer. xxxi. 33 ;

XII. So in the *New Testament* also 'tis expressly declared, that the Time will come, when all *Israel shall be saved*, Rom. xi. 26 ; *i. e.* the Whole, or main Body, of the People shall be converted unto God ; and Rev. xi. 15, *The Kingdoms of this World shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.* And therefore 'tis probable, that even those Words likewise of our Lord himself, (*strait is the Gate and narrow is the Way that leadeth unto Life, and Few there be that find it,*) are spoken principally of those Times of Difficulty and Persecution, wherein no man could embrace the Gospel of Christ, without immediately parting with all he had in the World. For so the Word which we render, *Narrow is the way*, in the Original signifies *Afflicted*, or *Persecuted* is the way, that leadeth unto Life. And then it will be of the same import with that Assertion of the Apostle, that *we must through much Tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God.*

Lastly

Lastly, THERE is one thing further to S E R M.  
be observed upon these Expressions of XII.  
our Saviour: And That is, that what in   
St. Matthew's Gospel is set down in these  
Words, (*Enter ye in at the strait gate;*  
— *Because strait is the Gate* — *that*  
*leadeth unto Life, and Few there be that*  
*find it,*) is in St. Luke's Gospel otherwise  
expressed thus; *Strive to enter in at the*  
*strait gate; For many, I say unto you, will*  
*seek to enter in, and shall not be able,*  
St. Luk. xiii. 24. And why shall they not  
be able? The reason follows in the next  
Words, *When once the Master of the house*  
*is risen up and has shut to the door, and*  
*ye begin to stand without and knock,* — *he*  
*shall answer and say unto you, I know you*  
*not whence you are,* — *depart from me All*  
*ye workers of Iniquity.* From whence it  
appears, that the Difficulty of Entering,  
is not so much the Appointment of God,  
as the Negligence and Delay of Men:  
They seek to enter, and they are not able;  
because they seek negligently, they seek  
too late, they seek when the Door is shut.  
And so This Passage becomes parallel to  
those other Texts of Scripture, St. Matt.

SER. M. XXV. 10; After the Bridegroom was come and the door shut, *came the foolish Virgins, saying, Lord open to us; But he answered and said to them, I know you not.* Again: St. John vii. 34, *Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me.* The reason is expressed, ch. viii. 21, *Ye shall seek me, and shall die in your Sins; therefore, whither I go, ye cannot come.* Prov. i. 28, *Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me——, but they shall not find me; For that they hated Knowledge, and did not chuse the Fear of the Lord.* Ps. xviii. 41, *They cried, but there was none to save them; even unto the Lord, but he answered them not.* II. i. 15. *When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many Prayers, I will not bear; For your hands are full of Blood.* Jer. xiv. 12, 10, *When they fast, I will not bear their cry; and when they offer burnt-offering and an Oblation, I will not accept them; For they have loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the Lord doth not accept them.* Hos. v. 6, *They shall go—— to seek the Lord, but they shall*

shall not find him, he hath withdrawn himself from them; For they have dealt treacherously against the Lord. Mic. iii. 4. Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them; he will even hide his Face from them at that Time, as They have behaved themselves ill in their doings. St. Jam. iv. 3, Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss. And, to mention but one passage more; Rom. ix. 31, *Israel which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness: Wherefore? Because they Sought it not by Faith; that is, by That way which God had thought fit to appoint.* From these and numberless other passages in Scripture it appears, that the Rejection of men, is not from God, but of themselves; and that the Difficulties in the way of their Salvation, are not so much the Appointment of God, as the Effects of their own Negligence and Delay: Excepting only in the Case of great Persecution; And *there* God has promised a proportionably great Assistance, which will, together with the Temptation, also make a way to escape, that we may be

S E R M.  
XII.  
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S E R M. able to bear it. Whether therefore the  
 XII. Number of those who shall be saved, be  
 in proportion Many or Few, makes no  
 Alteration in the Concern of *any One*  
 particular person; And therefore *Every*  
*One* ought to endeavour, by following  
 the plain Rules that are set before him,  
 to make his *own* Calling and Election  
 sure, and to work out his *own* Salvation  
 with Fear and Trembling, without in-  
 quiring too curiously into the Affairs of  
*Others*, wherein God the great Judge of  
 All will at the general Day of Account  
 take care abundantly to justify his own  
 Proceedings, much better than we are now  
 able to conceive or apprehend. For so  
 our Saviour, when One put that Question  
 to him, *Lord, are there Few that be sa-*  
*ved*; instead of making him a direct reply  
 to the Question proposed, answered him  
 with This more pertinent Exhortation,  
 St. Luk. xiii. 24, *Strive Ye to enter in at the*  
*strait Gate.*

UPON the whole; The Passages in  
 Scripture, which seem to represent to us  
 as if *Few* only should be saved, are on  
 the one hand such, as ought by no means  
 to



to be any occasion of Despair or Diffidence to melancholy pious Persons; because the reason why so great Numbers perish, is always in those very Texts expressly ascribed to the Wickedness and Carelessness of *Men*, not to any Appointment of *God*: And yet on the other hand *the same* Texts are, by the Wisdom of the Spirit of God, expressed in such a manner, as to excite the careless, and those who are apt to be too negligent and remiss; by giving them to understand, that except their Righteousness exceeds the Righteousness of the careless and worldly Multitude, they shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

AND this may suffice concerning the 1st Particular; *viz.* the *Number* or *Proportion* of those who shall inherit Salvation: *Thou hast a Few names even in Sardis.* I should now have proceeded to the 2d Head, namely, the *Qualification* by which they are intitled to that Inheritance: *Which have not defiled their Garments.* But This must be deferred to another Opportunity.





## S E R M O N XIII.

The Qualification of those that shall be saved.



REV. iii. 4.

*Thou hast a few Names even in Sardis, that have not defiled their Garments; and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.*




IN these later and corrupter S E R M.  
 Ages of Christianity, wherein XIII.  
 Prophaness and Impiety have ~  
 not only *from without* assaulted and indeavoured to de-  
 stroy Religion, but also *crept in* and even  
*openly*

SER. M. *openly appeared* within all Parts of the  
 XIII. Church of God; and when among those  
 who are not without some Degrees even  
 of *sincere* Desire to become truly Religi-  
 ous, yet Speculations entring in the Room  
 of Practice, and vain Contentions prevail-  
 ing about Human Opinions, instead of  
 Diligence to obey the plain Command-  
 ments of God, have almost eaten out the  
 very Heart and Life of Religion, which  
 consists in Piety and Righteousness, in  
 Justice and universal Charity, in Sobriety  
 and Temperance, and the Practice of all  
 Virtue and Holiness: During this Dege-  
 nerate State, I say, of the Christian  
 World, in these later and corrupter Ages  
 of the Church; there is nothing more  
 likely to be of Effect in reviving the true  
 Spirit of Christianity, and restoring in the  
 Minds of well-disposed Persons right and  
 worthy Notions of Religion; than put-  
 ting them upon considering, what Christi-  
 an Religion was in the Primitive and pu-  
 rest Times, when Christians were of One  
 Heart and One Mind, serving God with  
 Simplicity and Sincerity of Devotion, lo-  
 ving one another with Perfect Charity  
 and

and an undivided Affection, and keeping themselves Pure and unspotted from the World. This latter Character of the Church of Christ, its Purity and Holiness; and the Necessity of all its true Members answering that Character; is no where more affectionately described, then in the Epistles to the seven Churches of *Asia*, set down in This and the foregoing Chapter. Wherein the excellent Character that is given to most of them by our Saviour himself, and yet the Reproof added at the Conclusion of that Character; will give us just Occasion to consider, what severer Admonitions and Exhortations to Repentance we stand in need of, who have not *Their* Excellent Qualifications to extenuate our Defects. To *One* of these Churches, our Saviour gives this Character, *ch. ii. 2. I know thy Works, and thy labour and thy Patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; — And hast born and hast patience, and for my Name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. And yet even of This Church he adds, Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast*  
lest

SERMON. *left thy first love.* To a *Second* he declares, XIII. ver. 9. *I know thy works and Tribulation and Poverty, but thou art rich: — Fear none of the things which thou shalt suffer.* To a *Third*, ver. 13. *I know thy Works, — and that thou holdest fast my Name, and hast not denied my Faith.* And yet even of *This* he adds, *But I have a Few things against Thee.* To a *Fourth*, ver. 19. *I know thy Works, and Charity, and Service, and Faith, and thy Patience and thy Works, and the last to be more than the first.* And yet of *This* also he adds; *Notwithstanding, I have a few things against Thee.* Of a *Fifth*, he gives the following character, *ch. iii. 8. I know thy Works; Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: — Because thou hast kept the Word of my Patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of Temptation, which shall come upon all the World, to try them that dwell upon the Earth.* No Man, that has a true Sense of Religion upon his Mind, can read these Characters, without considering immediately within himself, *How* are they *Now* applicable to the Christian World? And

in what Proportion do we *Now* imitate S E R M. the Piety and Holiness of those Primitive XIII. Churches? And if some even of *these* 

were charged with falling in some measure from their first Love; and commanded to consider and remember from whence they were fallen, and repent; what Reflexions ought this to excite in *our* Minds, when we compare the Failings of such bright Examples of Piety, with the open Prophaness and Debauchery, with the irreligion and wickedness of later Ages? The *Two* remaining Churches of the *Seven* are represented as falling extremely short of the Character of the other *Five*. Concerning *One* of them our Saviour declares, ver. 1st, of this *iiid* chapter, *I know thy Works, that thou hast a Name that thou livest and art Dead; Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die.* To the *other* he says, ver. 15, *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot, i. e. art grown careless and indifferent in the great Works of Piety and Righteousness; Thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that*  
*thou*

SERM. *thou art wretched and miserable, and poor,*  
 XIII. *and blind, and naked; i. e. very defective*  
 in the weightier matters of Religion, in Works of Goodness, Charity, and true Holiness. And yet even of *Those* our Saviour in the very same place so expresses himself, as of Churches not wholly cast off, or under his entire and final Displeasure: *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; Be zealous therefore, and repent,* ver. 19. If some of those *Primitive* Churches; for whom our Saviour declares so great a Concern and Love, were worthy of such severe Reproofs for the decay of their Piety even in those Purer Times; what concern must it needs raise in the Breast of every sincere Christian, to consider how much greater Corruption of Manners, how much more open Prophaneness and Impiety, how much more uncharitableness and unreasonable Animosities, how much more general Unrighteousness and Iniquity of all Kinds, has in these later Ages overspread the Face of the Christian World? What severer Reproofs *We* have too just reason to fear from the Hands of God; and how much *more* remarkable a Repentance

tance



tance and more *universal* a Reformation S E R M.  
of Manners, 'tis incumbent upon *Us* to XIII.  
set about; least *when the Son of Man cometh*, there remain not so much as Room for that Question, *shall we find Faith upon the Earth?* The Things which were threatned to some of the Primitive Churches, that our Lord would remove their Candlestick out of its place, and that he would *spue* them out of his Mouth; and which, upon their further Decay in Virtue actually came upon them; befell *them*, not only upon *their own* Account, but for *Examples* also to Others; and they are written for *Our* Admonition, upon whom the Ends of the World are come.

THE Words of the Text, are taken out of our Saviour's Admonition to the former of those two Churches, which fell under his more particularly severe Re-  
proof; and they may serve for a perpetual direction in *all* Ages, to such Persons as, in the midst of a degenerate and contentious World, are desirous to understand and practise that Religion, which at its first institution was so deservedly eminent,

SER M. eminent for Amending Men's Manners  
 XIII. and Reforming their Lives. *Thou hast a  
 few Names even in Sardis, that have not  
 defiled their Garments; and they shall walk  
 with me in white, for they are worthy.*

WHICH Words, I in a former Discourse observed to contain in them the four following particulars. 1st, An intimation of the *Number* or Proportion of those, who shall inherit Salvation; *Thou hast a Few Names even in Sardis.* 2dly, The *Qualification* by which they are intitled to that inheritance: *Which have not defiled their Garments.* 3dly, The *Nature* or Description of the Reward promised them; *They shall walk with me in White.* And 4thly, The *Character* or Encemium given the persons, who shall obtain this Inheritance, *For they are Worthby.* The 1st of These, we have already considered, namely The *Number* or Proportion of those, who shall inherit Salvation; *Thou hast a Few names even in Sardis.* Without repeating therefore what has been before said upon That Head, proceed we now in the 2d, place to consider the *Qualification* mentioned

mentioned in the Text, by which those who shall be saved, are represented as being prepared or intitled to a Share in that glorious Inheritance. And This is, their having *not defiled their Garments.* Could a man for the present lay aside the Scripture, and, forbearing to look into the Characters There given of true Christians, view the present Face of the Christian World, and judge from thence what the Design and Nature of our Religion was, he could not but be tempted to imagine, that Christianity was rather a Contentious and uncharitable Art of disputing about needless Ceremonies, and unintelligible Opinions, than a Rule of Life and Practice, an Obligation to Virtue, Holiness, and universal Charity. But in the Scripture itself, the great Stress of Religion, is always laid upon the Influence it has upon Men's Manners; And the highest Character of a true Disciple of Christ, is That given in the Text, that he *has not defiled his Garments.* The Expression is figurative, but yet of a very Obvious Signification; And by considering on the contrary what the Scripture

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S E R M. calls *Defilement*, we may most easily and  
 XIII. fully understand what it is *not to be defiled*.

St. Mat. xv. 18. Not that which entreth  
*into* the Mouth, says our Saviour, but  
 those things which proceed *out* of the  
 Mouth, and come forth from the Heart,  
*these defile* the man; *For out of the Heart*  
*proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries,*  
*fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies;*  
*These are the things which defile a*  
*man; But to eat with unwashen hands,*  
*defileth not a man.* The same may be said  
 of all *other* external Denominations what-  
 soever: No difference of Meats; No va-  
 riety of outward Rites, Forms or Cere-  
 monies; No simple Errors of the Under-  
 standing, in such matters of Opinion as  
 affect not Moral Practice: But whatsoever  
*worketh Abomination or maketh a Lie;*  
 Whatsoever corrupteth the *Heart* of Man,  
 and is inconsistent with sincere and virtu-  
 ous Intention; Whatever is contrary to  
 the Practical Law of God, and destruct-  
 ive of Charity and Good-will among  
 Men; *That* is it, which in the religious  
 Sense of the Word, *defileth the Man.*  
 And to abstain from all Appearance of  
 such

such Evils, in the midst of a degenerate S E R M.  
and corrupt World ; *This is pure Religion* XIII.  
*and undefiled before God ; This is keeping*  
a man's *self unspotted from the World ;*  
*This is, having not defiled his Garments.*  
Originally, and in the strict and most proper  
signification of the Phrase, it denotes  
an entire Freedom from Sin: But in That  
Sense, the Character would belong, not  
to a *Few Names*, as is affirmed in the  
Text; but absolutely to *None* at all. For  
*how should man be just before God? Job*  
*ix. 2. What is man, that he should be*  
*clean? and he that is born of a woman,*  
*that he should be righteous? Behold, he*  
*putteth no trust in his Saints; yea the hea-*  
*vens are not clean in his Sight: or as the*  
*same thing is expressed in another passage*  
*of the same Book; Behold he put no*  
*Trust in his Servants, and his Angels he*  
*charged with Folly. Again: ch. xxv. 4.*  
*How then can man be justified with God?*  
*or how can he be clean, that is born of a*  
*Woman? Behold, even to the moon, and it*  
*shineth not, yea, the stars are not pure in*  
*his Sight; how much less Man that is a*  
*Worm, and the Son of Man that is a*

SERM. *Worm?* The Scripture is full of declarations of This Kind. *Prov. xx. 9. Who can say, I have made my Heart clean? I am pure from my Sin? Pf. cxxx. 3. If thou, Lord, shouldst be extreme to mark iniquity; O Lord, who shall stand? And still more directly, Pf. cxliii. 2. Enter not into judgment with thy Servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.* The Wise man, even yet more expressly, *Ecclef. vii. 20. There is not a just man upon Earth, that doeth good and sinneth not.* Accordingly *Job*, that most righteous person, whose Character God himself joyns with that of *Noah* and *Daniel*, as the most irreproveable of all mortal men; yet even he confesses of himself, *Job ix. 20. If I justify myself, my own Mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.* And the manner of speaking of the Apostles in the New Testament, is the very same: *In many things we offend all, St. Jam. iii. 2. And if we say, we have no Sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us, 1 Joh. i. 8.* 'Tis evident therefore, that by this phrase in the Text, having

having *not defiled their Garments*, is not, S E R M. XIII. cannot be meant, strictly and absolutely, being *without Sin*. No, This is the peculiar Character of our Saviour alone, and cannot be truly affirmed of any other Person, that ever dwelt upon the Face of the Earth. Another signification therefore of this Phrase may naturally be suggested to us by the use of a like expression in the same Book; *Rev. vii. 14. These are they who — have washed their robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.* Here, *having washed their robes in the Blood of the Lamb*, is used as an equivalent expression to that of *having never defiled them*; signifying, that under the gracious Covenant of the Gospel, Those who by Baptism have washed away their Sins, and return not to them any more, are thro' Christ reputed in the Sight of God, as having never committed them. And because, by Baptism, in Scripture is always meant, *not the washing away the filth of the Flesh, (not the bare Form or external Ceremony,) but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God*; therefore those who have broken off their Sins by *Repentance*, and their Iniquities by *shew-*

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*ing Mercy to the Poor, (which bears the best Analogy to, and is signified by the Baptism of riper years;) such persons (I say) are in Scripture spoken of, as being (in the Gospel-Sense) perfectly just and righteous. Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation, and Noah walked with God, Gen. vi. 9. Zacharias and Elizabeth were righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless, St. Luk. i. 6. All Christians in general are exhorted to be, diligent, that they may be found of our Lord in peace, without spot and blameless, 2 Pet. iii. 14: that they may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. i. 8. that their hearts may be stablished unblameable in Holiness, before God even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his Saints, 1 Th. iii. 13: that their whole Spirit and Soul and Body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Th. v. 23. that they may be presented faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy, Jude 24. And accordingly in the description of them in their heavenly*



venly State, 'tis said that *in their Mouth* S E R M.  
*was found no guile, for they are without* XIII.  
*Fault before the Throne of God, Rev. xiv.*


5. The Consistency of these high Encomiums with the declarations in the passages before-cited, concerning the Impossibility of any man's being justified before God; The manner (I say) how these two different kinds of Expression are to be reconciled, is most clearly and distinctly set forth by St Paul, Col. i. 21; *You that were sometime alienated, and Enemies in your Mind by wicked Works, yet Now hath he reconciled, In the Body of his Flesh thro' Death, to present you holy, and unblameable, and unproveable in his Sight;* and Eph. i. 4, 6, *That we should be holy and without blame before him in love; — to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved; In whom we have Redemption thro' his blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins.* These and the like Expressions of the Apostle do with sufficient clearness explain to us, both how it is *possible* on the one hand, in the gracious and merciful Sense of the Gospel, for frail and sinful Men to

SERMON. attain unto this Character, that they *have*  
 XIII. *not defiled their garments*; and at the same  
 time how absolutely *necessary* it is like-  
 wise on the other hand, notwithstanding  
 all the Favour and Indulgence of the Go-  
 spel, that they should preserve themselves  
*so undefiled*.

3dly, THE *Third* particular, observ-  
 able in the Text, is the *Nature* or *De-*  
*Description* of the *Reward* promised to them  
 that *defile not their Garments*; *They shall*  
*walk with me in White*. And here 'tis ob-  
 vious to observe, how in the nature of the  
*Thing itself*, as well as by the *Decree and*  
*Appointment of God*, the *Reward* promi-  
 sed to good men in Scripture is agreeable  
 to the nature of the *Qualification*, to  
 which that *Reward* is annexed. To them  
 that keep their *Garments undefiled*, 'tis  
 promised that they shall *walk with Christ*  
*in White*: To them that *hunger and thirst*  
*after Righteousness*, that they shall be *fill-*  
*ed* and clothed with *Righteousness*. To  
 them that take delight in serving God  
*here*; that *hereafter* also they shall be *be-*  
*fore his Throne*, and shall *serve him day*  
*and night in his Temple*. Whether a  
 wicked

wicked Person, if admitted into Heaven, could not possibly be made happy there, (as some have presumed to affirm,) is but a vain and needless Question. That which is certain, and all that concerns us to know, is; that whatsoever *defileth*, whatsoever *worketh* any abomination or unrighteousness, shall in no wise be permitted to enter therein. And 'tis a powerful recommendation of the necessity of a religious Life, and worthy the most serious consideration of careless Sinners; that Virtue is, not only, by the Appointment of God, the Way to Happiness; but itself also, in the nature of Things, an essential part of it. And that, as God is Himself of essential Holiness, and cannot behold iniquity; so he has made the Happiness of Heaven to consist, not indeed in *That only*, (for, the *Whole* of those things, which God has prepared for them that love him, neither has eye seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive;) but in great measure he has made it to consist in the Perfection of *Virtue*, or at least to be in necessary Conjunction with it. There  
is

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XIII.  
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SERM. is nothing more earnestly and more constantly inculcated in Scripture than this  
 XIII.  Notion, that Righteousness *here*, is therefore necessary to Happiness *hereafter*; because a great Part even of that *Happiness* itself, is to be made up of the Perfection of *Righteousness*. One principal Particular of the great Promises made in the *Old Testament* to the Jews after their final Restoration; which, if it does not directly signify, yet is at least a Type of the Heavenly state; is, that their *people* should be *All righteous*, *Is. lx. 21*; that they should delight to *come to worship before the Lord* perpetually, *ch. lxvi. 23*; and should *not do iniquity, nor speak lies, neither should a deceitful Tongue be found in their mouth*, *Zeph. iii. 13*. And in the *New Testament* the future Happiness of the Church of Christ, is described after the same manner; that it shall be *a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish*, *Eph. v. 27*; and that *we, according to his Promise, look for new heavens and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness*, *2 Pet. iii. 13*. Now This  
 Right-

Righteousness, is figuratively represented in the Text, and in other places of Scripture, by *White Garments*. The Purity and Holiness of God himself, is expressed *Pf. civ. 2.* by his being *covered with Light as with a garment*; and by his garment being *white as the Snow*, *Dan. vii. 9.* And *That* of our Saviour; by his appearing at his *Transfiguration*, in a raiment as *white as the Light*; even *shining, exceeding white as Snow, so as no Fuller on Earth could white them*, *St Mar. ix. 3*; and, after his *Resurrection*, in the same Habit, *Matt. xxviii. 3*; and again, after his *Ascension*, *Rev. i. 14.* In pursuance therefore of the same Figure, the *Saints in Heaven* are in the Text described as *walking in white*: The Church in the Prophecy, *Pf. xlv. 13*; is represented as *all glorious within*, and that *her clothing is of wrought Gold*. *He that overcometh*, saith our Saviour, *the same shall be clothed in white raiment*, *Rev. iii. 5.* The *four and twenty Elders*, sitting about the Throne, were clothed in *white raiment*, *ch. iv. 4*: To them that were *slain for the Word of God*, were given *white robes*, *ch. vi. 11.*

S E R M.  
XIII.



Mat. xvii.  
2.

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SERM. XIII. The great multitude that no man could number, that were redeemed from the Earth out of all Nations, were *clothed with white robes*, and palms in their hands, *ch. vii. 9. The Armies in heaven were clothed in fine linnen, white and clean, ch. xix. 14; And the literal meaning of all these expressions is unfolded, ver. 8; that, at the marriage of the Lamb, To Her (viz. to the Church,) was granted, that she should be arrayed in fine linnen, clean and white; for the fine linnen is the righteousness of the Saints. And This explains to us the Parable of the Man who was cast out into utter Darknes, because he had not on a Wedding-garment, St. Matt. xxii. 11. i. e. was not clothed with Works of Righteousness; and illustrates those Admonitions of our Saviour, Rev. iii. 18, I counsel thee to buy of me — white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the Shame of thy nakedness do not appear: and ch. xvi. 15. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his Shame. The Sum of all is, that into Heaven shall be admitted no Impurity, no Wickedness,*

*nothing*

nothing that defileth. Wherefore Blessed S E R M.  
are they that do his commandments, that XIII.  
they may have right to enter in; — For Rev. xxii.  
without are dogs and sorcerers and whore-14 15.  
mongers, and murderers and idolaters  
and whosoever loveth and maketh a Lie.

4thly, and Lastly; The Text concludes with a *Character* or *Encomium* given of those persons, who were to walk in white with our Saviour: *For they are Worthy.* The Church of *Rome* has, upon those Words, founded the Doctrine of *Merit*; and Others, through Fear of falling into that Error, have run into the contrary extreme, and decried All necessity of *Virtue* and *Good Works*. The Truth in This, as in most other cases, lies plainly between the two extremes. Our best *Virtues* or *Works* are so imperfect, as to need *Pardon* rather than deserve a *Reward*; and if they were never so perfect, we should still be *but unprofitable* Servants, having done only what was our Duty to do. Yet thro' the *Intercession* of Christ, God is pleased to accept them, as if they were really meritorious; and by the gracious *Promise* of God, we have as just a claim

S E R M. to the Reward, as if it had been originally due to us of proper *Right*. Our improvement in Virtue, is the *Ground of Proportion*, tho' not the *Meritorious cause* of the Reward. So that tho' the Happiness of Heaven, be given us, not indeed *for* our Works; yet it will be in *proportion to* them; and tho' not *upon account* of our Virtue, yet exactly *according to* our improvement therein. The best of Men are so far from being able (properly and strictly speaking) to *merit* any thing for themselves and others, (which is the *Romish* Doctrine of Merit;) that on the contrary even the Patriarch *Jacob* declared himself *not Worthy of the least of God's mercies*, Gen. xxxii. 10. And *St Paul*, concerning Himself, that tho' he was not *conscious* of any thing against himself, yet was he *not thereby justified*, 1 Cor. iv. 4. And, of all Christians in general, that *not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by his Mercy he saved us*. Tit. iii. 5. that *he has saved us, not according to our Works, but according to—his grace—given us in Jesus Christ*, 2 Tim. i. 9. that our Salvation is the

*Gift*



Gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast, Eph. ii. 9. That by the deeds of the Law there shall no Flesh be justified in his Sight, Rom. iii. 20. that Abraham himself had whereof to glory, but not before God, Rom. iv. 2. that even in those things we actually do, we have no sufficiency of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, 2 Cor. iii. 5. that it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, Phil. ii. 13. and that 'tis he that makes us perfect in every good work to do his Will ——— thro' Jesus Christ, Heb. xiii. 21. The meaning of all these Passages is, that the Offer of the Happiness of Heaven to us at all, is the free and undeserved Gift of God in Christ; and that the Ability of performing the conditions necessary to the obtaining even that Free Gift, is continually the Effect of the Divine Assistance; and that therefore (properly speaking,) the very best of our Works have no Merit in them. Even in the *Old Testament* where the Scripture affirms it shall be our Righteousness, if we observe to do all the Commandments, Deut. vi. 25; 'tis observable that the Word which we render *Righteousness*, is by the

S E R M.  
XIII.

Seventy

S E R M. *Seventy* translated ἐλεημοσύνη *our Way of*  
 XIII. *obtaining Mercy only.* And they who  
 would make More of it, are severely re-  
 proved, *Prov. xxx. 12. There is a gene-*  
*ration that are pure in their own Eyes,*  
*and yet is not washed from their Filthiness.*  
 Which Censure is strongly confirmed by  
 our Saviour's declaration, that the *Publi-*  
*can* in the Parable *went down to his House*  
*justified, rather than the Pharisee* who was  
*righteous in his own eyes.* These are suf-  
 ficient Evidences, that our Works (in  
 Strictness of Speech) have *no Merit.* Yet  
 on the other side, taking the Expression  
 in its right Sense, (which will best be  
 done by comparing it with those already  
 mentioned;) and understanding it accord-  
 ing to the gracious Tenor of the Gospel,  
 it *may* be Truly said of virtuous and good  
 men, because the Scripture frequently  
 says it, that *they are Worthy.* Not pro-  
 perly and strictly, but according to God's  
 gracious acceptation and Promise in the  
 Gospel. They to whom God has promised,  
 upon an easy condition, a very great and  
 disproportionate Reward, may Truly be  
 said, though not by the Merit of the  
 Work itself, yet by virtue of the Promise  
 when

when they *have performed* That condition, S E R M. to have *deserved* the Reward. Our Saviour XIII. himself expresses himself in This manner, not only in the Text, but also in other places of Scripture; St *Luk.* xx. 35. *They*; faith he, *that shall be accounted Worthy, to obtain That World.* And St *Mat.* x. 37. *He that loveth Father or Mother more than Me, is not Worthy of me*; implying, that he who did the contrary, might be said to be *worthy* of him. And accordingly the Apostle exhorts, *Col.* i. 10. to *walk Worthy of the Lord*; and *1 Th.* ii. 12. to *walk worthy of God who has called us, unto his Kingdom and Glory.* St *Peter* declares, that if a man, for conscience towards God, endure grief, *suffering wrongfully, this is Thank-worthy,* *1 Pet.* ii. 19. and St *Paul* affirms of the Saints who suffered of old, that they were such persons, *of whom the World was not worthy,* *Heb.* xi. 38. And he calls God's *Performance* of his own *free Promises* given in the Law and in the Prophets, the *Righteousness of God which is by Faith of Jesus Christ, unto All, and upon All them that believe,* *Rom.* iii. 22; and again *ver.* 25. — *his righteousness for the*

SERMON. *remission of Sins that are past, and argues,*  
 XIII. *Heb. vi. 10. that God is not unrighteous,*  
 ~~~~~ *to forget our Work and labour of love:*  
 And concerning *himself* in particular, he professes his firm assurance, that *henceforth there was laid up for him a crown of Righteousness, which God the Righteous Judge should give him at that Day,*  
 2 Tim. iv. 8. and Rev. xxii. 14. *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.* Such as allow themselves to pick single Texts of Scripture without comparing them with the whole and with each other; may from these places collect the *Romish* Doctrine of *Merit*; or from those before-cited may draw just the *contrary* Doctrine, of the *Usefulness of good Works*: But they who compare the several passages, and consider them Together; will easily see the meaning, and the consistency of them all; and particularly what it is that our Saviour intends in the Text, when he declares concerning those who keep their *garments undefiled*, that they *shall walk with him in white, for they are Worthy.*

SERMON



# SERMON XIV.

That the Terms of Salvation are offered to all Men.



REV. ii. 29.

*He that hath an Ear, let him hear, what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.*



THESE words are so frequent- SERM.  
ly and so emphatically re- XIV.  
peated by our Saviour, at  
the End of several of his  
Discourses in the Gospel,  
and again as the general Conclusion of each  
of these *Epistles* to the Seven Churches

SERM. of *Asia*; that no one can doubt but they contain something in them, of very weighty and significant importance. In the *xith* chapter of *St. Matthew*, ver. 15. after his explication of the Nature of *John Baptist's* Office, he adds, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.* And in the *xiiiith* chapter of the same Gospel, at the end of his Parable of the Sower, ver. 9; and at the end of his explication of the Parable of the Tares of the Field, ver. 43; (Both which Parables, are most full and emphatical Descriptions of the whole State and Nature of the Christian Dispensation,) he again concludes with repeating the same Words, *Who hath Ears to hear, let him hear.* In the *iid* and *iiid* chapters of the *Revelation*, are contained seven Epistles to the seven Churches of *Asia*; full of very earnest and pressing Exhortations to Repentance and Amendment of life, and most lively and affectionate Descriptions of the True Nature of Christ's religion: And at the conclusion of every One of these Epistles, are distinctly and at length repeated, no less than seven several times, the words of the

Text; *He that hath an Ear, let him hear,* S E R M. XIV.

And in chapter the xiii<sup>th</sup>, of the same Book; after having given a large Prophetick description of Antichristian Power sitting in the Seat and Temple of God, and making War with, (that is, persecuting) the True Worshipers of God, and having all Nations given into his hands, so that all the World should worship him, whose Names are not written in the Book of *Life*; To show that This is a Matter wherein All Sincere Christians are more or less concerned, to take heed to themselves that they be not imposed upon by Delusions of worldly Power and Ambition, and by empty Shows in matters of Religion; he *still again* repeats the same exclamation, ver. 9, *If any man have an Ear, let him hear.*

THE words are a strong and general Appeal, to the Reason and Understanding of all unprejudiced and impartial men. And they are highly expressive, of the *Authority and Goodness* of God who *speaks*; of the *Reasonableness, Truth and Excellency* of the *Things that are spoken*; and

SERM. of the *Capacity* men have, and the Ob-  
 XIV. *ligation* they are under, to hearken to,  
 and obey, what God thus delivers to  
 them.

THE Phrase, Let *him* hear, is an *Authoritative* expression, becoming the Majesty of God, and the Weight and Dignity of what is spoken by his Command. It denotes, that All the Commands of God, are given men, not for his *own* sake or Benefit, but for *Theirs*: Being founded in the nature and reason of Things, and essentially conducive both to mens present and future Happiness, And if they *refuse*, or *neglect*, to *Hear*; if they be *careless and negligent* to *understand* the word of God, and will be at No Pains to *examine* into the *True Nature and End of Religion*; 'tis *No Hurt* to *Him*, but to *Themselves* only. When therefore *He* has done all that was reasonable for him to do, and has given them plain and frequent Warnings, and admonished them of the Usefulness and Necessity of Virtue, and yet *They* continue *deaf* to his instructions; he proceeds *no* further, he uses *no* Compulsion, he draws them *only*  
*with*





with the Cords of a Man, and will apply to them no otherwise than as to moral Agents. Thus the Prophets in the Old Testament: Ezek. iii. 27, *Thus saith the Lord God, He that beareth, let him bear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear; for they are a rebellious house.* And Thus the Great Prophet of the New Testament, Rev. xxii. 11, *He that is unjust, (after the repeated Admonitions and Invitations to Repentance given him in the Gospel,) let him be unjust still; and he that is Filthy, let him be Filthy still.* Upon the same Ground, and after the same manner of speaking, St Paul, in 1 Cor. xiv. 38, *The things, says he, that I write unto you, are the Commandments of the Lord; But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.* And the same Apostle, after having long preached in vain to the obstinate and prejudiced Jews, Acts xiii. 46, *It was necessary, says he, that the word of God should first have been spoken to You; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting Life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.* Of the same nature and kind, though in the way

SERMON. of a *gentler* and more *tender* Reproof,  
 XIV. are those words of our Saviour to his  
 Disciples; when, after *Two* admonitions,  
 in a time of extreme danger, he found  
 them the *Third* time sleeping; *Sleep on*  
*Now*, says he, *and take your Rest*, Matt.  
 xxvi. 45. This therefore is the *First* no-  
 tion, which those words in the Text, *Let*  
*him bear*, do obviously carry along with  
 them; They are expressive of the *Autho-*  
*riety* of God, and of the *Weight and*  
*Importance* of what is spoken by His  
 Command.

BUT This is not All. For as they  
 express the *Authority* of God, in *requi-*  
*ring* men to *attend*; so they do further  
 denote his *Goodness* likewise, in *propos-*  
*ing* to men, universally and plainly, *the Doc-*  
*trine and the Way of Life*. In *This* sense,  
 the words of our Lord in the Text, *Let*  
*him bear what the Spirit saith unto the*  
*Churches*; are well paraphrased by *Solo-*  
*mon*, Prov. i. 20, *Wisdom crieth without,*  
*she uttereth her Voice in the Streets; She*  
*crieth in the chief place of Concourse, in*  
*the opening of the Gates,——saying, How*  
*long, ye simple ones, will ye love Simplicity!*  
 ——*Turn*

— Turn you at my Reproof; Behold, I SERM.  
will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will XIV.  
make known my words unto you. And by  
the Author of the Book of *Wisdom*, ch. vi.  
16, 14, *She goeth about, seeking such as  
are worthy of Her; she showeth herself fa-  
vourable unto them in the Ways, and meet-  
eth them in every Thought; Whofo seeketh  
her early, shall have no great Travel; for  
he shall find her sitting at his doors.* St Paul  
in a very emphatical and lofty figure of  
speaking, carries this matter still further,  
2 Cor. v, 20; God, not only *propofes* to us  
the Means of reconciliation, but *as tho'*  
*God did Befeech you* (says he) *by us, we  
pray you —, be ye reconciled to God.* His  
manner of expreffion in That whole Verfe,  
is extremely remarkable: *We are* (says  
he) *Ambaffadors for Christ*; He does not  
fay, *We are the Ambaffadors of Christ*,  
(though That also *might* properly enough  
have been faid;) but we are, fays he,  
*Ambaffadors for Christ.* *Christ*, is the  
Great Ambaffador of the Father; (*the  
Apostle and High-Priest of our Profeflion,  
Christ Jesus*, Heb. iii. 1.) And, in *His*  
abfence, *We* (fays the Apostle) *are Ambaf-  
fadors*

S E R M. *sadors for him, Ambassadors in his stead,*  
 XIV. *Ambassadors from God to men, if we deliver his words faithfully; And therefore, as though God did Beseech you by Us, We (says he) in Christ's stead, (in the Absence of Christ the Great Ambassador of the Covenant, We in his stead) pray you, be ye reconciled to God. This is the Second notion included in the words, Let him bear; They denote the Goodness of God, in proposing to men, universally and plainly, the Doctrine and the way of Life. Whosoever hath Ears, let him bear; and whosoever beareth, let him obey; and whosoever obeyeth already, let him persevere in so doing unto the End: Rev. xxii. 11, He that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is Holy, let him be Holy still.*

THE *other* phrase in the Text, *He that hath an Ear;* signifies, he that hath *Understanding*, that hath *Ability*, that hath *Capacity* to apprehend what is spoken. Thus *Matt. xix. 12.* when our Saviour had given a Description of Some Excellent Persons, who had chosen to abstain from many even of the *Innocent* Enjoyments of Life, that they might have more  
 Time

*are offered to all Men.*

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Time and Opportunities to promote the S E R M. Interest of Religion and Virtue, which is XIV. the Kingdom of God; he adds, *He that is Able to receive it, let him receive it.* And in like manner, ch. xi. 14, after having given a large Character of the Person and Office of *John the Baptist*; *And if ye will receive it,* says he, *This is Elias which was for to come: He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear.* To have an Ear therefore, signifies to have *Understanding* and *Apprehension*. By which, however, is meant, *not* mere *Natural* Parts and Abilities; (For the Gospel is preached to the *Poor* and *Mean*, as well as to the *Learned*; Neither are Many of the *Wise* men of *This world*, called; Nor are *mere Natural* Parts and Abilities of *Any* consideration in *Moral* and *Religious* Estimation;) But to *have an Ear*, in the Scripture-sense, means, to have an *Understanding free and unprejudiced, open to attend unto, and apt to receive the Truth.* Which is a Qualification including *Probity* and *Fairness* of Mind, and is therefore highly *commendable* in the *moral* Sense. *Matt. xiii. 16, Blessed are your Eyes,*

S E R M. *Eyes, for they see; and your Ears, for they*  
 XIV. *hear. And the Want of it, is not, like*  
 the Want of *natural* Parts and Abilities,  
*piticible* and *compassionable*; but *faulty*,  
 and *deserving of severe Reproof*: Mar. viii.  
 17, 18, *Perceive ye not yet*, says our Lord  
 to his Disciples by way of *Expostulation*;  
*perceive ye not yet*, says he, *neither under-*  
*stand? Have ye your Heart yet harden-*  
*ed? Having Eyes, see ye not? And having*  
*Ears, hear ye not, and do ye not remem-*  
*ber?* From which *Rebuke* given by our  
 Lord to his Disciples, in so earnest and  
 affectionate a manner, for not making  
 Use of their *Reason* and *Understanding*;  
 we cannot fail to infer this *important*  
*Observation* in matters of Religion; that  
 the *Taste* or *Relish*, the *Judgment*, the  
*Understanding*, by which men are to dis-  
 cern and chuse, and by which they are  
 to form their Sentiments concerning the  
 Truth or Error of any religious doc-  
 trines; must never be, any *Entbusiastick*  
*Fancy*, any *strong Imagination*, or *unac-*  
*countable impression of Mind*, which is the  
*Spirit of Delusion*; but it must always  
 be, an *impartial Attention* to the *Right*  
 and

*are offered to all Men.*

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*and Reason of the Case, and to the Nature and Evidence of the Thing.* This is in the Gospel-sense, having *Ears to hear,* and *Eyes to see* and *Understandings* wherewith to *Understand.* According to which *explication* of the words; This Phrase, so often used by our Saviour, *he that hath Ears to hear,* does plainly contain a very affectionate and strong Appeal to the unprejudiced Sense of Mankind, for the *Reasonableness, Truth, and Excellency* of the *Things spoken,* or the *Doctrines delivered by him.*

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AND as *This Challenge, Whoso hath an Ear,* contains thus a declaration of the Reasonableness of the *Doctrine proposed;* and the *other* part of the Words, let *him hear,* are expressive of the *Authority and Goodness* of God who speaks: So *Both* of them together, plainly infer and set forth the *Capacity* men have, and the indispensable Obligation they are under, to hearken to, and obey, what God delivers to them. *He that hath an Ear, let him hear, what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.*

T H E

SERM. THE Words being thus explained, we  
 XIV. may from hence in the ensuing Discourse  
 naturally deduce the *four* following Doctrinal Observations. 1<sup>st</sup>, That God, the Great Creator, and righteous Governour, and merciful Judge of the Whole Earth, offers to *All men* the gracious Terms and Possibilities of Salvation: Let him hear, (let every man hear,) *what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.* 2<sup>dly</sup>, That. This Offer, though graciously made to *All*, yet in Event becomes *Effectual* to *Those only*, who are *qualified* and *capable* to receive it: *He that hath an Ear, let him hear.* 3<sup>dly</sup>, That they who *want* an *Ear*; they who *want* the *Dispositions necessary* to their receiving and embracing this gracious Offer of Salvation, or are prevented by any of the *Hindrances* which render it ineffectual, are always very severely reprov'd in Scripture; plainly denoting it to be their *own Fault*, their own *Perverseness* only, that they have not *Ears to hear.* 4<sup>thly</sup> and *Lastly*, That hence consequently All those passages of Scripture, wherein God is at any time represented as *blinding mens Eyes*, or *closing their Ears*,



or hardning their Hearts, or taking away S E R M. their Understanding from them; must of XIV. necessity be understood to be figurative Expressions only; not denoting literally what God actually effects by his Power, but what by his Providence he justly and wisely permits.

I. *First*, G O D, the Great Creator, and righteous Governour, and merciful Judge of the Whole Earth, offers to *All men* the gracious Terms and Possibilities of Salvation: Let *him hear*, (let every man hear,) *what the Spirit saith unto the Churches*. God *speaks* to men Originally by the *Light of Nature*, by the *Order and Proportions of Things*, by the *Voice of Reason*, by the *Dictates of Conscience*. 'Tis every man's Duty, and 'tis in every man's Power, to *hearken* to this *Voice of Reason and Conscience*; to this *Candle of the Lord*, as the Wise man stiles it, *Prov. xx. 27*. And concerning *Them* who do so St Paul declares, that, *having not the Law*, (that is, having no revealed Law given them, yet) *they are a Law unto themselves*. And by *that Law*, by the *Law of Reason, of Nature and Conscience*, shall

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shall they finally be judged. For every man is accepted according to what he *Hath*, and not according to what he *Hath not*. This *Light of Reason*, is *universal*; the *First*, and *Great Gift of God*; *implanted* in the Minds of *All men*; *acknowledged* by the *Conscience*, even of the *Unrighteous* themselves; attested to by the *necessary judgment and approbation* even of the most abandoned and *Corrupt*, in all Cases wherein their *own particular Interest* is not concerned. The acting *contrary* to This Light, by any profane, unjust, fraudulent, or debauched Practices whatsoever, is in *All persons*, under *All Dispensations*, the highest and most inexcusable Fault; as being destructive of the very *Foundation* of *All Religion*. And the acting *agreeably* to it, is in *All persons Always* acceptable to God; and, in Those to whom no Light of Revelation hath been afforded, 'tis All *that is required* of them. For *in every Nation*, *he that feareth God and worketh Righteousness*, is *accepted of him*. When, thro' the growing Corruptions and Idolatry of many Ages, Custom and Example and  
bad

bad Education had almost universally extinguished the natural Light of Conscience; and caused *Reason*, That Great Gift and Witness of God, to be almost totally neglected; God raised up the *Patriarchs*, both before and after the Flood, to be *Preachers of Righteousness* to the World, to be as *Lights shining in a dark place*, to invite *All men* to *Repentance*, to the *Acknowledgment of the Truth* and to the *Practice of Virtue*, in their several and respective *Generations*. After which, by the giving of the *Law* to the *Israelites*, he placed That people as a *City on a Hill*, an eminent and standing Witness to all the Nations around, calling them off from impious and abominable Idolatries to the Worship of the God of Heaven: *Is. xlix. 22, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.* And by a Succession of *Prophets* for Many Ages, he declared continually to the whole People of the Jews, and by Them to All Others who were

SER M. willing to retain God in their Knowledge,  
 XIV. and had not wholly given themselves up  
 to a *reprobate Mind*; he declared his readi-  
 ness to accept That Repentance and A-  
 mendment of Sinners, which even the  
 Light of Nature itself, if they had at-  
 tended to it, would in a good degree have  
 led them to; *God having never left him-  
 self wholly without Witness, in that he did  
 good, and gave men rain from heaven, and  
 fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with  
 food and gladness; and their own consci-  
 ences in the mean time, according to their  
 moral or immoral Behaviour, accusing or  
 else excusing one another.* God, I say, by  
 a continual Succession of *Prophets*, de-  
 clared (what the Light of Nature itself  
 gave reasonable but obscurer Hopes of,) his  
 readiness to accept the Repentance  
 and Amendment of Sinners, and to re-  
 ceive *All men* to his Mercy, upon Their  
 returning into the way of Righteousness.  
*Exek. xxxiii. 11, As I live, saith the Lord  
 God, I have no pleasure in the Death of  
 the Wicked, but that he turn from his way  
 and live. And Is. lv. 1, 3, 6, 7, Ho, eve-  
 ry one that thirsteth, come ye to the Wa-  
 ters:*

*ters: And he that hath no money; come ye, SERM.  
buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and XIV.  
milk without Money and without Price.——*

*Incline your ear, and come unto me; bear, and your Soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.—— Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his Thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have Mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. By the Gospel of his Son, God has still more expressly and explicitly declared, and commanded to be preached to every Nation under Heaven, the merciful Offer of Salvation made unto All Mankind, upon the most reasonable and necessary Terms of Faith and Repentance, That is, of sincere renewed Obedience; Excluding None from this gracious Invitation; but commanding his Servants to go out into All places, and to exhort men, to beseech them, to urge them, to be instant with them, nay even to compel them, (by the most kind and earnest Intreaties, by the most affectionate and pressing Importunities, compel them) to*

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come in, that his house may be filled. Accordingly, *their Sound has gone forth into all the Earth, and their Words unto the Ends of the World.* And no man, to whom this Doctrine has been preached, can say, that his Duty and the Way to Happiness has not been clearly made known to him; unless he wilfully closes his *Eyes* that he may not see, and his *Ears* that he may not *hear*. Our Saviour *himself*, who was in the *Bosom* of his *Father*, (and who knew perfectly, and was sent by him on purpose to reveal to us his Whole Will concerning the Salvation of Mankind;) thus testifies in the most express words: *God* (says he) *so loved the World, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life; and that the World through him might be saved, Joh. iii. 16, 17:* He does not say, he was sent *that a few particular persons*, but *that the World*, if they would hearken to him, and be prevailed upon to return into the ways of Righteousness, *thro' him might be saved.* And accordingly when he set about this great Work for which he

was

was sent; he applies himself to *All men* S E R M. XIV. without reserve; *Matt. xi. 28, Come unto me All ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest: And Job. vii. 37, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.*

IN *one* place indeed, we find him affirming, that *he was not sent, save unto the lost Sheep of the house of Israel.* But the occasion, and manner, of his affirming this; and his Treatment of the person afterwards, to whom he had said this; and the whole History and Tenour of Scripture, plainly show, that his Meaning herein was not to affirm, that he was not sent to Others *at all*; but only that, in order of *Time*, he was not sent to Others *so soon*, as to *the lost sheep of the House of Israel.* The Gospel was to be preached *first* to the Jews; and our Lord was *first* to be the *Glory of God's people Israel*: But *afterwards* he was to be also a *Light to lighten the Gentiles*, and to be their *Salvation unto the Ends of the Earth.* The *Apostles themselves*, at the Beginning, were under very strong Prejudices concerning this Matter: But they were con-

SER M. vinced afterwards by frequent Admonitions from our Lord; And then they Fully and Clearly testified this Great Truth. *The Grace of God, saith St Paul, which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to All men, Tit. ii. 11: And 1 Tim. ii. 4, Who will have All men to be saved, and to come to the Knowledge of the Truth. St Peter in like manner, in his Second Epistle, ch. iii. 9, The Lord, saith he, is not willing that Any should perish, but that All should come to Repentance: To Repentance; That is, to a real and effectual Amendment and Reformation of Life; Which is Always the meaning of Repentance in Scripture. Some Writers have contended, that, in these several Texts, the words, All men, must be understood to signify only, Some of All sorts of men, Some from among the Jews, Some from among the Gentiles, Some from among the Rich, Some from among the Poor; and the like. But This interpretation arises merely from a great Unskilfulness in Language. For though the words All men, do indeed in Scripture, as in vulgar Speech, signify very frequently, not All men*



men *absolutely*, but, in a limited sense, SERM. XIV.  
*All* against whom no exception is plainly understood; yet in no *language*, according to *Any* vulgar manner of speaking, can they mean, *Some only out of every Sort of men*; and consequently in *Scripture*, which always expresses itself in the language of the *Vulgar*, the words cannot possibly have *That Meaning*. But the Sense plainly is, that God really and sincerely intends the Salvation of *All men*; and that 'tis for his *Own Fault* only, for *Wickedness* only, and *deliberate Unrighteousness*, that *Any man* shall be condemned. Besides the places before-cited, This great and fundamental Truth is still *more clearly* (if more clearly it *can* be,) expressed in the *xxi<sup>id</sup>* chapter of the *Revelations*, ver. 16, 17; *I Jesus have sent mine Angel to testify unto you these things in the Churches: — And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come; And let him that beareth, say, Come: And let him that is athirst, come; And whosoever will, (i. e. whosoever will live a virtuous life,) let him take the Water of Life freely.* And, to add still greater Weight to this solemn

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XIV.



declaration; God, even the *Father* himself in Person, is introduced as affirming the same thing from the Throne of his Glory; ch. xxi. 5, 6, *And he that sat upon the Throne, said;—these words are true and faithful;—I will give unto him that is athirst, of the Fountain of the Water of Life freely: He that overcometh,* (that is, who resists the temptations of a wicked and debauched World,) *shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son.* The Sense is the same, as in the words of my Text; *He that hath an Ear, let him hear, what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.*

THIS therefore is the *First Particular*. God offers to *All men* the gracious Terms and Possibilities of Salvation.

II. THE *Second* is: That This Offer, though graciously made to *All*, yet in Event becomes *effectual* to *Those only*, who are *qualified* and *capable* to receive it. But referring This to a further Opportunity, I shall conclude at present with This *One Inference* from what has been already said; *viz.* That from hence all *unrighteous*, all *wicked* and *debauched* persons, being

*are offered to all Men.*

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being convinced that the destruction is *of themselves*, if they continue in the Practice of Unrighteousness; and not from any Appointment of *God*; may be prevailed with to reform their Lives, while they have yet Time. That *so* they may escape the Wrath of God, from which there is *no other* possible Means of escaping.

SERM.  
XIV.  
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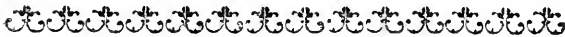
SERMON





# SERMON XV.

The Qualifications necessary to receive the Terms of Salvation.



REV. ii. 29.

*He that hath an Ear, let him hear, what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.*



IN discoursing upon these words of our Saviour, I have proposed to deduce from them the four following Doctrinal Observations. *1<sup>st</sup>*, that God, the Great Creator, and righteous Governor, and merciful Judge of the whole Earth, offers to *all men* the graci-

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SERMONS Terms and Possibilities of Salvation:

XV. *Let him hear; (let every man hear,) what the Spirit saith unto the Churches. 2dly, that This Offer, 'tho' graciously made to All, yet in Event becomes effectual to Those only, who are qualified and capable to receive it: He that hath an Ear, let him hear. 3dly, That they who want an Ear; they who want the dispositions necessary to their receiving and embracing this gracious Offer of Salvation, or are prevented by any of the Hindrances which render it ineffectual; are always very severely reprov'd in Scripture, plainly denoting it to be their own Fault, that they have not Ears to hear. 4thly and Lastly; That hence consequently All those Passages of Scripture, wherein God is at any time represented as blinding men's Eyes, or closing their Ears, or hardning their Hearts, or taking away their Understanding from them; must of necessity be understood to be figurative Expressions only; not denoting literally What God actually effects by his Power, but what by his Providence he justly and wisely permits.*

THE *First* of these, I have already S E R M. gone through; that God offers to *All* XV.  
*men* the gracious Terms and Possibilities of Salvation: Let *him* hear, (let every man hear,) *what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.* I proceed Now to the *Second* General Head:

II. THAT this Offer of Salvation though graciously made to *All*, yet in Event becomes *effectual* to *Those only*, who are *qualified* and *capable* to receive it: *He that hath an Ear, let him hear.* Light introduced upon Any Object, supposes always that there be *Eyes* to view, and to discern it *by That Light.* The *Sound* of a *Voice*, or the Use of *Speech* supposes always that men have *Ears* to hear, what the Speaker uttereth. *Truth* and *Right Reason* and *Argument*, *These* likewise suppose always that men have *Sense* and *Understanding*, to judge of what is offered to their consideration. And, in matters of *Religion*; God's offering to men certain *Terms* or *Conditions* of Salvation, supposes in like manner a certain *moral Disposition* in the Mind, which causes it to have a *Regard* to things of


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That nature, to have a *Sense* and *Relish* of things relating to *Morality*: Otherwise *Men* would, in their *Nature*, be no more *capable* of Religion, than *Beasts*. *Sweetness* is No *Sweetness* to a person whose *Palate* has no *Taste*: *Light* is No *Light*, to him who has put out his own *Eyes*: And *Religion*, or the *Preaching of the Gospel*, is as *Nothing* to That *Man*, whose *Mind* has no *Regard* to, nor *Care* to make any *Distinction* between, what in the nature of things is *moral* and *immoral*. *St Paul* sets *This* observation in a very clear light, *1 Cor. ii. 14*; *The natural man* (says he) receiveth not *the things of the Spirit of God*; for they are *Foolishness* unto him; neither can he know them, because they are *spiritually discerned*. The words are not rightly rendred, *The Natural man*; as if *God* had made men, *naturally*, incapable of Religion. Which is the very same thing, as it would be to find *Fault* with a *Man* for *not Seeing*, when he was *Born Blind*. But the *True meaning* of the *Apostle*, is, *The Sensual man*; He who, by habitual *Debauchery*, by a course of Any vitious or corrupt *Practice*,



Practice, has extinguished the Eyes of his own Understanding; such a one *can* have no true Sense of things relating to Religion, of things which are only spiritually discerned. Our Saviour represents the same notion to us, in a very lively and expressive similitude, *St Matt. xi. 17*; where he compares the *Pharisees*, who hated to see Truth in *Any* Light, and refused to hear Reason under *Any* form; (who were neither moved by *John Baptist's* preaching, who had come in the more *reserved* and *austere* way; nor by our Saviour's *own* preaching, who came in the more *free* way of conversation and instruction;) he compares them to *children sitting in the Markets, and calling unto their Fellows, and saying; We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented: They had No Ear; they heard not; they gave no Attention; they knew nothing of the Tune which their Fellows plaid to them, in what manner soever they diversified it. The Application our Lord makes of the similitude, is; that to argue with the Pharisees about morality,*  
about

SERM. about the *true* nature of *religion* and *vir-*  
 XV. *tue*, in *what* manner *soever* it was done;  
 whether in *John Baptist's* more *severe*  
 way, or in his own more *mild* way; 'twas  
 All One; 'twas talking to them about a  
 matter they had no sense of; 'twas speak-  
 ing to them in a strange Tongue, in a  
 Language they understood nothing of.  
 There is an Allusion to the *same* Simi-  
 litude, in *Rev. xiv. 3.* *No man could*  
*learn That Song, but the one hundred and*  
*forty four thousand, which were redeemed*  
*from the Earth:* *No man can Understand*  
*and Practise the Religion of Heaven,* but  
 they who by a worthy disposition of  
 Mind, by an habitual Love of Truth and  
 Virtue, are qualified to be redeemed from  
 the *Earth.* These are the Persons, whom  
 our Lord calls his *Sheep*; which *bear* and  
*know* his Voice, *Job. x. 27:* Who readi-  
 ly perceive the excellency of his Doctrine,  
 and its perfect agreeableness to eternal  
 Truth and Reason: Who receive instru-  
 ction in the ways of Truth and Righte-  
 ousness with the *same kind* of Pleasure,  
 as the Eye is entertained with at the Ap-  
 proach at Light: Who *come unto Christ*  
 because

because the Father *draws them*; That is, S E R M.  
because their Love of Right and Equity, XV.  
which is *natural* religion, recommends to   
them That which is *revealed*; and, thro'  
the Love of Righteousness and true Vir-  
tue, they are *led* to believe and embrace  
the Gospel of Christ. These are They,  
of whom our Lord declares, *Matt. xiii.*  
*12, Whosoever hath, to Him shall be given,*  
*and he shall have more Abundance.* But,  
on the contrary, *Whosoever hath not,*  
*from Him shall be taken away even That*  
*he hath:* Whosoever is so insensible of  
the essential and eternal Differences of  
Good and Evil; whosoever hath so *little*  
*Discernment* in matters of religion, as to  
think *Any thing whatsoever* can be an e-  
quivalent for the neglect or Breach of the  
*least Moral Virtue*; *whosoever shall break*  
*one of these least commandments, and shall*  
*teach men so; he shall be called the least*  
*in the Kingdom of Heaven:* That is, he  
shall be the *Last person* that shall be ad-  
mitted there, or shall be very far from  
*ever* entering therein at all. Thus, tho' the  
Offer of Salvation is graciously made to  
*All*, yet in event it becomes *effectual* to

S E R M. *Those only, who are qualified and capable*  
 XV. *to receive it.*

IN order to make which Doctrine more useful to us in Practice, I shall proceed to show distinctly, *1st, in general*, that That Disposition of Mind, which qualifies and makes Men capable to receive and embrace effectually the Terms of Salvation, is somewhat which the Scripture always speaks of, as a matter of *singular excellency*, and worthy of *Great Commendation*. *2dly*, In what *Particulars* this excellent temper and disposition principally consists. And *3dly*, What are the *opposite Qualities*, or chief *Hindrances*, which generally *prevent* the Offers of Salvation from being *effectually* embraced.

*First*; I observe *in general*, that That Disposition of Mind which qualifies and makes Men capable to receive and embrace effectually the Terms of Salvation, is somewhat which the Scripture always speaks of, as a matter of *singular Excellency*, and worthy of *Great Commendation*. 'Tis an eminent *Gift*, or *Grace*, of *God*; not in the sense of *Those*, who think God works upon men *mechanically*, as upon mere *Machines*, but in such a Sense, as  
*Reason*

*Reason* is the Gift of God, which makes S E R M  
us to be *Men*, to be *rational* and *intelli-* XV.  
*gent* Creatures. Which we receive indeed  
wholly from God the Author of our  
Being; and yet 'tis a commendable and  
praise-worthy Excellency in him that has  
it, because, in the *Use* and *Exercise* of it,  
it depends entirely upon the *Free Will* of  
the person himself, either to *use* or to *a-*  
*bus*e it, either to *improve* or to neglect and  
*lose* it. Upon which account, *St. Peter's*  
Admonition is both very elegant and ve-  
ry exact; *2. Pet. iii. 18, Grow in Grace.*  
The Thing to be acquired, is the *Free*  
*Gift* of God; and yet his Exhortation sup-  
poses it to be their own Duty, and conse-  
quently in their own Power, to *receive*,  
to *use*, and to *improve* That Gift. And  
because, though *all* men are created *rati-*  
*onal*, yet *Few* actually make use of their  
*rea*son; though *all* men are indued with  
the Sense of *Hearing*, yet *Few* (as our  
Saviour in the Text expresses it) *have an*  
*Ear* to *bear*; therefore That Temper,  
That Spirit, That Disposition of Mind,  
which is in Scripture denoted by this *fi-*  
*gurative Phrase*, is therein always set

SER M. forth, under characters of the *Highest*  
 XV. *Excellency and singular Distinction.* 'Tis  
 That, which causes men to prefer *God*  
 and *Virtue* before the sinful enjoyments of  
 a vitious and corrupt *World*; to choose  
*Truth* and *Right* and *Reason*, before *popu-*  
*lar Errour* and *prevailing Wrong*; to  
 strive to enter in at the *strait gate*, rather  
 than accompany the *Power*, and the *Num-*  
*bers*, of an unrighteous and debauched  
 age. 'Tis *This*, that, even in the *Hea-*  
*then* world, caused *Socrates* to choose  
*Death* rather than not maintain the  
 Knowledge of *the One True God* against  
 his superstitious and idolatrous *Country-*  
*men*. 'Tis *This*, that made the *Patri-*  
*archs* of old, to go out from their native  
 Country, not knowing whither they  
 went. 'Tis *This*, that, in *Elijah's* time,  
 when the whole *House of Israel* had de-  
 parted from *God*, and introduced almost  
 universally a false Religion, caused seven  
 thousand men to distinguish themselves,  
 by forbearing to bow the knee to *Baal*.  
 They loved, and bearkned to, *Truth*:  
 They had an *Ear* to discern the *Voice* of  
*God*, even in the midst of the most cor-  
 rupt

rupt Times and Nations ; and they chose, S E R M.  
to follow That Call. And by adhering to XV.  
That Choice, with Courage, Patience,  
and Perseverance ; they acquired to them-  
selves the Character of those whom the  
Prophet *Malachi* speaks of, *ch. iii. 17,*  
*They shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts,*  
*in That day when I make up my Jewels:*  
And whom our Saviour describes, as per-  
sons thought worthy to obtain That Life,  
and the Resurrection from the Dead : And  
calls them his elect, which shall be gather-  
ed together from the four winds, from eve-  
ry corner under Heaven : And whom St.  
*Paul* means, when he applies to *Christi-*  
*ans* That Passage of the Prophet, *Though*  
*Israel be as the Sand of the Sea, yet a*  
*Remnant shall be saved:* And of whom,  
Lastly, St *John* speaks, *Rev. xv. 2,* when  
he saw in his vision *Them that had gotten*  
*the Victory over the Beast:* In the Original  
it is, which from out of the midst of  
the *Beast*, that is, from the midst of the  
most idolatrous and wicked, the most  
corrupt and perverse Generations, had sa-  
ved themselves, and overcome the Tempta-

SERMONS of a corrupt World. But This in

XV. *General*: I proceed now in the

Second place, to consider *more* particularly, *Wherein* consists This excellent Temper and Disposition of Mind, which qualifies Men to receive thus effectually, and to embrace stedfastly, the Terms of Salvation proposed to them; And in *What Particulars* This Disposition principally shows forth itself. And

1<sup>st</sup>; THE *first* Instance wherein this Good Disposition shows forth itself, is *Attentiveness* or *Consideration*. Without *Attention* and *Consideration*, a Man's Mind is in the same State with regard to *religious* Knowledge, as it would be with regard to the Knowledge of things in the *World*, had his *Eyes* always been *closed*, and his *Ears* always *stopped*. God has given us *Faculties* of the *Mind* to *understand*, just as he has given us *Senses* in the *Body* to *perceive*. Neither the *One* nor the *Other* are of Any Use, unless *applied* and *attending* to their proper Objects. He that hath *an Ear*, must *hearken*: And he that hath *Understanding*, must *attend*. *Behold*, (says our Saviour to his Disciples, when




when he had foretold them how *false* S E R M.  
*Prophets* and *false Teachers* should arise XV.  
and deceive the whole World; *Behold,*  
saith he, (*take Notice,*) *I have told you*  
*before,* Matt. xxiv. 25. And *Moses,* when  
he had delivered to the *Israelites* the *Mo-*  
*ral* part of the *Law*; *See,* saith he,  
*Deut. xxx. 15*; *See,* (that is, *Observe and*  
*Attend,*) *I have set before thee this day*  
*Life and Good, Death and Evil.*

2dly, T H E *second* particular, wherein  
This excellent disposition of Mind shews  
forth itself, (and which is the *natural*  
*Consequence* of *Attention and Considera-*  
*tion,*) is a *Delight* in *Examining* into  
*Truth and Right*; a *taking pleasure* at all  
times in *beholding the Light,* and in *hear-*  
*ing the Voice,* of *Reason.* Among *igno-*  
*rant* and among *superstitious* men, No-  
thing is more *neglected* than *Reason*; That  
Great Gift of God, That bright and sin-  
gular Ornament of our Nature; which  
distinguishes us on the *one* hand from *ir-*  
*rational* natures, such as are the *Beasts*  
that perish; and on the *other* hand from  
*unreasonable* and *perverse* natures, which  
is the character of *Devils.* But how far

SERMON. soever this Gift of Reason may be neglected by *corrupt* Minds; yet 'tis (as Solomon elegantly expresses it, *Prov. xx. 27*: 'tis) *the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the Belly*. Nor is there any severer Punishment in This Life threatned any where in Scripture, than God's taking away men's Reason and Understanding from them; *Job xviii. 5. The Light of the Wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his Fire shall not shine; The Light shall be dark in his Tabernacle, and his Candle shall be put out with him. To This Light God requires us to attend; and They who do so, are acceptable to him. And he appeals to men to judge thereby, even concerning his own Proceedings with them: Is. i. 18. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; and, Let us plead together, ch. xliii. 26; Judge, I pray you, betwixt Me and my Vineyard. Which Appeal of God to the Reason of Mankind for the Equity of his Dealings with them, is alluded to in That Passage of the Psalmist, cited by St. Paul. Rom. iii. 4. That thou mightest be justified in thy Sayings, and mightest overcome*

Micah. vi.  
2. 5.  
L. v. 3.

come when thou art judged. Now if we S E R M. are required to *judge* in this manner con- XV. concerning God's dealings with *Us*; much  *more* must it needs be criminal in us, to neglect to make use of this Light in judging what *we* are to do *Ourselves*. Our Saviour *reproves* the *Jews*, Luke xii. 57, *Why even of yourselves* (saith he) *judge ye not what is right?* And St Paul speaks in like manner to *Christians*, 1 Cor. xi. 13. *Judge in yourselves, is it comely?* and again, *ch. x. 15. I speak as to wise men,* that is, to *reasonable and intelligent persons*; *judge ye what I say.*

FROM the Texts cited under This Head, I cannot but observe here by the way, that the Scripture (in direct opposition to the *Romish* doctrine) every where *supposes*, that men must of necessity *judge for themselves* in matters of Religion: And that there is *never* any *Infal- lible Guide*, *There* recommended; *never* any *Credulity*, or *Implicit Faith in Men*, *There* required or encouraged. As indeed, in the very *nature of things*, how is it at all *possible*, that ignorant and un-  
learned

S E R M. learned men should be able to look over  
 XV. the World, and to see and judge *Which*  
 of all Nations is the fittest to be relied on  
 implicitly? On the contrary, men are al-  
 ways in Scripture *supposed* to have an *Ear*;  
 and they are *commanded* to *bear*, and to  
*consider*: To call no man *Master* upon  
*Earth*, but *themselves* to prove all things,  
 and to Try the *Spirits* whether they be  
 of God: To satisfy their *Own* minds;  
 as *Abraham*, Heb. xi. 19, accounted, (in  
 the original it is, Reasoned *with himself*;) that  
 God *Could* raise his Son from the  
 dead: And to be able also to give Sa-  
 tisfaction to *Others*, who at any time  
*ask them a Reason of the Hope that is*  
*in them*, 1 Pet. iii. 15. In the Great  
 and Weighty Matters of Religion, the  
 forming of This Judgment is not a Busi-  
 ness of Skill, of Parts and Learning; but  
 of Integrity and Simplicity of Mind.  
 Which whosoever is indued with, though  
 otherwise of mean Abilities, will judge  
 better concerning any religious and moral  
 Truth, than the most Learned Philoso-  
 pher in the World. But if this Simpli-  
 city of Judgment, this natural Eye and  
 Guide

Guide of the Mind, be *itself* corrupted and depraved by Vice or Superstition, no wonder if men fall into endless and inextricable Errors. Our Saviour excellently represents this to us, *Mat. vi. 22* ; *The Light of the Body is the Eye: If therefore thine Eye be single, thy whole Body shall be full of Light: But if thine Eye be Evil, thy whole Body shall be full of Darkness: If therefore the Light that is in thee be darkness, how great is That darkness!* SERM.  
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The Mind of a Man, whose moral judgment is thus vitiated by departing from the Guidance of Reason and from The Love of Truth, is, in the spiritual sense, a land of Darkness as Darkness itself, and of the shadow of Death, without any order, and where the Light is as Darkness, *Job. x. 22.*

3dly, Therefore; The *Third and Principal* Particular, wherein consists That excellent Temper and Disposition of Spirit which fits and qualifies men to embrace effectually the Terms of Salvation: is *Moral Probity, Sincerity, and Integrity of Mind.* If any man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine, whether it  
be

SERMON. *be of God, Jo. vii. 17. If thou desire*  
 XV. *Wisdom, keep the Commandments, and the*  
 Lord shall give her unto thee; For he that  
 keepeth the Law of the Lord, getteth the  
 Understanding thereof, Ecclus. i. 26, xxi.  
 11. This is what our Saviour, in his  
 Parable, calls the *Good Ground*, which  
 brings forth *sixty and an hundred fold*.  
 These are the persons which our Lord  
 Joh. x. 27. calls his *Sheep*; which *bear and know his*  
*Voice*. These are they, of whom we read  
 Acts xiii. 48. that they are *ordained*, or (as the Greek  
 signifies,) *prepared and set in Order to re-*  
*ceive the Means of eternal Life*. These  
 are they to whom 'tis promised, that *the*  
 Dan. xii. 10. *Wise shall understand*; that *the Meek,*  
 Pl. xxv. 9, 14. *God will guide in judgment; and such as*  
*are gentle, Them he will teach his Way*.  
 Of this kind was *Nathaniel*; of whom  
 our Saviour declared, when he *first* saw  
 Jo. i. 47. him; *Behold an Israelite indeed, in*  
*whom there is No Guile*. Of the same  
 kind seems to have been *That Other per-*  
*son*, to whom our Saviour said, *Mar. xii.*  
*34. (though indeed it is not recorded in*  
*the Gospel, what further Progress he af-*  
*terwards made;) Thou art not far from*  
*the*

*to receive the Terms of Salvation.* 365

*the Kingdom of God. Lastly, of This* S E R M  
XV.  
kind are All Those, who come unto *Christ*, because the *Father* draws them; that is, Joh.vi.44  
who through the *Love of God*, through the *Love of Righteousness and true Virtue*, are led to believe and embrace the *Gospel of Christ*. For

4<sup>thly</sup>, The *fourth* and *last* Instance, wherein this Good Disposition I am speaking of, shows forth itself, is a *Readiness* to *bearken* to the Voice of Revelation, as well as of *Reason*. A well-disposed mind presently feels the *Goodness*, and is struck with a sense of the *Beauty and Excellency*, and acknowledgeth the *agreeableness* of the *Doctrine of Christ*, to the *eternal Truths of Nature*. And This *real* Harmony of Reason and Revelation, not any *Enthusiastick Fancy*, is the true *internal* evidence of Scripture; is God's *Spirit*, bearing Witness with *Our's*. St *Paul*, Rom. x. 8. applies to the *Gospel*, what *Moses* had said of the *Moral Law*, *The Word is Nigh thee, even in thy Mouth and in thy Heart*: 'Tis, in a manner, almost *connatural* to a reasonable and well-disposed Mind. *The Sound* of the *Apostle's*  
Preaching,

S E R M. Preaching, saith he again, *ver. 18.* (what  
 XV. by the *Psalmist* was spoken concerning the  
 Motion of the *Stars of Heaven*;) *Their*  
 Sound, saith he, is *gone forth into all*  
 Lands, and *their words unto the Ends of*  
 the World. He that hath *Ears to bear*  
 Hab. ii. 2. cannot but bear their *Doctrine*; He that  
 has *Eyes to see*, even tho' he runs, may  
 read it; He that has *Understanding and*  
*Probity of Mind to apprehend*, cannot but  
 embrace it, when proposed to him fairly  
 and uncorruptly. As the regular *Motions*  
 of the *Stars in the Heavens*, are an unde-  
 Pf. xix. 1. niable Proof of the *Power and Wisdom*  
 Rom. x. 18. of *God*, and of the consequent *Obligati-*  
 ons of *Natural Religion*; so the *Doctrine*  
 of the *Gospel* carries along with it, to rea-  
 sonable Minds, by its *intrinsic Excellen-*  
 cy, bright *Evidences of Divine Truth* in  
 what it reveals. Christ is come a *Light*  
 Joh. xii. 46. into the World, And the *Gospel* is the  
*Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of*  
*God in the Face of Jesus Christ*; shining in  
 our *Hearts*, saith *St Paul*, as conspicu-  
 ously in the *Moral Sense*, as in the *natu-*  
*ral sense* God originally, at the creation  
 of the World, caused the *Light to shine*  
 out



*to receive the Terms of Salvation.* 367

*out of Darkneſs,* 2 Cor. iv. 6. Again, S E R M. XV.  
Our Saviour himſelf uſes the ſame Simi-  
litude, *Luke xvii. 21. The Kingdom of*  
*God, ſays he, is within you:—And if*  
*they ſhall ſay to you, See here, or See*  
*there; go not after them, nor follow them:*  
*For as the Lightning that lightneth out of*  
*the one part under heaven, ſhineth unto*  
*the other part under heaven; ſo ſhall alſo*  
*the Son of Man be in his day.* This uni-  
verſal Light of revealed Truth is to be  
found by all men, not by following This  
or the Other particular man or Body of  
men as a Guide; which is the very thing  
our Lord forbids in the Paſſage now-ci-  
ted: But 'tis to be found only by attend-  
ing to the Revelation itſelf: According to  
our Saviour's direction, *Search the Scrip-  
tures;* And after the Example of Thoſe,  
whom we find particularly commended,  
*Acts xvii, 11. for ſearching the Scriptures*  
*daily, whether the things that were taught*  
*them, were ſo or no:* The conſequence of  
which, was, that they received the word  
(ſo the Text expreſſes it,) *with all readi-  
neſs of Mind.*

T H E S E

SERM.

XV.



THESE are the Principal *Particulars*, wherein consists that excellent Temper and Disposition of Mind, which qualifies and makes men capable to receive and embrace effectually the Terms of Salvation. The

*Third* and *Last* thing I proposed to consider under *This* Head, was; what are the *opposite* Qualities, or chief *Hindrances*, which generally *prevent* the Offers of Salvation from being effectually embraced. Of these, the

*1st* is *Carelessness*, and *Want of Attention*. Which Temper cannot possibly be described in any livelier and more expressive manner, than it is by our Saviour in the following Similitude, *Luke viii. 5, A Sower went out to sow his Seed; and as he sowed, some fell by the way's side, and it was troden down, and the Fowls of the Air devoured it.* The

*2d* Hindrance, is *Prejudice* or *Prepossession*. This was the Case of the *Jews in general*, concerning whom St Paul says, that *the Veil was upon their Heart*, 2 Cor. iii. 15: And of those *Pharisees* more *particularly*, to whom our Lord said,

said *Matt. ix. 13. Go ye and learn what* S E R M.  
*That meaneth, I will have Mercy and not* XV.  
*Sacrifice.* False and superstitious Notions; or groundless, unreasonable, unintelligible Opinions in religion, taken up upon *Prejudice*, are a greater Impediment to Truth, than even the most Profound Ignorance. The

3<sup>d</sup> Hinderance, is *Perverseness* and *Obstinacy*. This Temper is admirably expressed in Scripture by That Phrase of a *stony Heart*. *Zech. vii. 12. They stopped their Ears that they should not bear; yea, they made their Hearts as an Adamant-stone, lest they should hear the Law.* This was eminently the Temper of those Jews, who because *John the Baptist* came neither eating nor drinking, they said *He hath a Devil*; and because *Christ* came both eating and drinking, they said he was a *wine-bibber and a glutton*: But in Both these and in all other various circumstances, *Wisdom* is justified of all her children. The

4<sup>th</sup> and last, and of all Others the *Greatest Impediment*, is a *Love of Vice*. *Into a Malicious Soul*, saith the Scripture,

SERM. *Wisdom will not enter; and None of the*  
 XV. *Wicked shall understand.* Concerning such  
 a Person, St John elegantly expresses him-  
 self, that *Darkness has blinded his eyes,*  
 1 Job. ii. 11. St Paul, by a like figure  
 of Speech, calls it *Blindness of Heart,*  
 Eph. iv. 18: and tells us that *the God of*  
*this World has blinded the minds of some*  
*men,* 2 Cor. iv. 4; and deludes them  
 with *all deceivableness of unrighteousness;*  
 because they have not a *Love of the Truth,*  
*that they might be saved;* but take plea-  
 sure in *unrighteousness,* 2 Th. ii. 10, 12;  
 placing their Religion in *any thing* rather  
 than in true Virtue. And our Saviour,  
 in a phrase very like to That in my Text,  
 upbraids the Pharisees, Job. viii. 43, *Why*  
*do ye not understand my Speech; even be-*  
*cause ye cannot hear my word: Ye are of*  
*your Father the Devil; and the Lusts of*  
*your Father ye will do.* They had a  
 strong Love to some Great Vices, which  
 they were very unwilling to reform; and  
 therefore they had *No Ear,* to bear *His*  
*Words.*

THUS

THUS have I largely shown, (which SERM.  
was my *II<sup>d</sup>* General Head of Discourse,) XV.  
that the Offer of Salvation, tho' graciously made to *All*, yet in Event becomes *effectual* to *Those only* who are *qualified* and *capable* to receive it: *He that hath an Ear, let him hear.* The

*III<sup>d</sup>*, Proposition was, that they who want an *Ear*; they who *want* the *Dispositions necessary* to their receiving and embracing this gracious Offer of Salvation, or are prevented by any of the *hindrances* which render it ineffectual, are always very severely reprov'd in Scripture, plainly denoting it to be their *own Fault*, that they have not *Ears to bear*,







# SERMON XVI.

Mens not accepting the Terms of  
Salvation is from Themselves.



REV. ii. 29.

*He that hath an Ear, let him hear,  
what the Spirit saith unto the  
Churches.*



THE Observations or Doc-<sup>SERM.</sup>  
trines I have proposed to XVI.  
discourse upon from these  
words of our Saviour, are  
Four. 1<sup>st</sup>, That God, the  
Great Creator, and righteous Governour,  
and merciful Judge of the whole Earth, of-

SER M. fers to *All men* the gracious Terms and  
 XVI. Possibilities of Salvation: Let *him hear*, (let  
 every man hear,) what the *Spirit saith*  
*unto the Churches.* 2dly, That This Of-  
 fer, though graciously made to *All*, yet  
 in Event becoms *effectual* to *Those only*,  
 who are *qualified* and *capable* to *receive*  
 it: *He that hath an Ear, let him hear.*  
 3dly, That They who *want* an *Ear*; they  
 who *want* the *dispositions necessary* to their  
 receiving and embracing this gracious  
 Offer of Salvation, or are prevented by  
 any of the *Hindrances* which render it  
*ineffectual*, are always very severely re-  
 proved in Scripture, plainly denoting it  
 to be their *Own Fault*, that they have  
 not *Ears to hear.* 4thly and *Lastly*, That  
 hence consequently All those Passages of  
 Scripture, wherein God is at any time re-  
 presented as *blinding mens Eyes*, or *closing*  
*their Ears*, or *hardning their Hearts*, or  
*taking away their Understanding* from  
 them, must of necessity be understood  
 to be *figurative* Expressions only; not  
 denoting literally what God actually ef-  
 fects by his Power, but what by his Pro-  
 vidence he justly and wisely permits.



THE *Two former* of these Propositions I have already discoursed upon: That God offers to *All Men* the gracious Terms and Possibilities of Salvation: And yet, that in Event This Offer becomes *effectual* to *Those only*, who are *qualified* and *capable* to receive it: *He that bath an Ear, let him hear.*

S E R M.  
XVI.  
~

I am now to proceed to the

III<sup>d</sup> general Observation: That they who want an *Ear*; they who *want* the *Dispositions necessary* to their receiving and embracing This Gracious Offer of Salvation, or are prevented by any of the *Hindrances* which render it *ineffectual*, are always *very severely reprov'd* in Scripture; plainly denoting it to be entirely their *Own Fault*, that they have not *Ears to hear*. The *Reason* is, because these *necessary Dispositions* are not *natural* but *moral Qualifications*; and the contrary *Impediments* are not *natural* but *moral Defects*. Did *Religion* depend upon the strength or weakness of mens *natural Parts and Abilities of Mind*, as *Quickness of Hearing or Seeing* depends upon the Goodness of the *Bodily Organs of Sense*; (Neither of which are at all

SERM. in mens *Own Power*; ) It would follow,  
 XVI. that *Want of Religion* was no more blame-  
 worthy, than the *Want of good Eyes* or  
 the *Want of deep Understanding*. But  
*Religion* depends *entirely* upon such Qua-  
 lities as are *Moral*; and the Capacity of  
*Hearing* mentioned in the Text hath evi-  
 dently relation to the *Heart*, and *Will* of  
 the Hearer. Of This we have a most  
 exprefs and undeniable Evidence, in that  
 eloquent and sharp Reproof given by  
 St *Stephen* to the Jews, *Acts* .vii. 51, *Ye*  
*stiff-necked and uncircumcised in Heart and*  
*Ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.*  
 Every one that heard him *well* under-  
 stood, that his calling them *uncircumci-*  
*sed in Heart and Ears*, was no more meant  
 as a Censure upon their *natural Under-*  
*standing*, than upon their *Bodily Organs*;  
 but that it was a severe Rebuke upon  
 them for *Another* kind of Defect, where-  
 of they could by no means lay the Blame  
 either upon God or Nature. Persons of  
 the *Meanest* natural *Capacities* may have  
 a *Mind Attentive* to instruction; may  
 have a *Love to Truth and Right*; may  
 have great *Probity* and *Integrity* of Heart:  
 Which *weak things of the World* (as  
 St. Paul

St Paul elegantly stiles them) are in religion much superior to *the things that are Mighty*. And on the contrary; men of the *Greatest Abilities* in other respects may yet very possibly have *no Relish of moral Truths*; may lie under powerful *Prejudices*; may be very *Perverse* in their *Tempers*; or may have violent *Passions*, and strong *Affections* to particular *Vices*. Upon which Account, St Paul tells us that *not many Wise men after the Flesh, not many Mighty, not many Noble are called*: It being very possible, that such persons, notwithstanding *All Other Advantages* both of *Mind* and *Fortune*, yet, as to the matter of *Religion*, may be in the State our Saviour represents the Church of *Laodicea*, Rev. iii. 17, *Thou sayest, I am rich,—and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*. Whoever has once carefully considered This, will find *no difficulty* in understanding such expressions as These; *Is. xliii. 8, Bring forth the Blind people that have Eyes, and the Deaf that have Ears*: And *Jer. v. 21, Hear now This, O foolish people, and without Under-*

S E R M.

XVI.

*Understanding ; which have Eyes and see not, which have Ears and hear not. Again, Is. xlii. 18, 19, 20, Hear, ye deaf ; and look, ye blind, that ye may see : Who is Blind, but my Servant ; or deaf, as my Messenger that I sent ? — Seeing many things, but thou observedst not ; opening the ears, but he heareth not. 'Tis evident from the Manner in which these Expressions are introduced in the respective Contexts, and from the whole Tenor and Phraseology of Scripture, and from particular additional Circumstances in Other Passages wherein the like Expressions are used ; that None of these Phrases signify natural Want of Capacity, which is an Object of Compassion ; but a wilful indisposition to hear reason, which is a most just ground for the severest Reproof. In Ezek. xii. 2, 'tis Thus expressed : Son of Man, Thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have Eyes to see, and see not ; they have Ears to hear, and hear not ; for they are a rebellious house. He does not say, they wanted Capacity, or natural Understanding ; but they were a Rebellious house. They were the same,*

of

of whom he speaks, ch. xxiv. 13, *I have* S E R M.  
*purged thee, and thou wast not purged.* XVI.  
In the *Gospel* 'tis alleged by our Saviour,  
not as a *pitiable Infirmary*, but as an Ar-  
gument of mens *Unworthiness*, and of their  
*deserving to be cast off*: Mat. xiii. 13,  
Therefore *speak I to them in Parables*,  
because *they seeing, see not; and hearing,*  
*they hear not, neither do they understand.*  
In the *natural and literal* sense of the  
words; not to *see*, not to *hear*, not to  
*understand*, is no *Fault* at all. But when  
men *seeing, see not; and hearing, hear*  
*not; This is the great Reproach of humane*  
*nature*, and what makes men *worthy* even  
to be *left without instruction*. Hence our  
Saviour could *not*, (so the Scripture ex-Mat. xiii.  
presses it:) *That is*, Agreeably to his ge-58.  
neral *Design and Method* of acting, he  
could *not* do many mighty works in his  
*own Country*, because of their *Unbelief*:  
And he advises his *Disciples*, after the ex-  
ample of his *own Practice*, *not to give* Mat. vii. 6.  
*that which is Holy unto the Dogs*, nor to  
*cast their Pearls before Swine*. In obedi-  
ence to which Direction, St *Paul* tells  
the *Jews* who continued to reject his  
Preaching,

SER M. Preaching, after many repeated Admonitions, *Acts* xiii. 46, and xxviii. 28, *Seeing ye put from you the Word of God, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal Life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles; and They will bear it.* In his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, after a more gentle manner of Reproof, but still in way of Reproof it was, as for something which was *entirely their own Fault*, that he complains of them as being *dull of Hearing*, ch. v. 11; and that They who *for the Time* ought to have been *Teachers of Others*, had still need of being *Taught Themselves*. This was a *Faulty and blame-worthy Imperfection; a Want of Improvement in Religion; a Want of employing those Talents, where-with God had intrusted them; a Want of Growing in Grace and in the Knowledge of God.* As for those who are *Totally ignorant*, and have no *Discernment* at all in *Moral Matters*; of *These*, the Scripture always speaks with *still Greater Indignation*, and with the *utmost Severity of Reproof*; as of persons labouring under a *Defect*, the Blame whereof cannot possibly in Any wise be laid either upon *God*

or Nature, but merely upon the *Wilful* SERM.  
and *Obstinate Negligence* of the *Persons* XVI.  
*themselves.* They are like the *Deaf Ad-*  
*der*, saith the Psalmist, *which stoppeth*  
*her ears, which refuseth to hear the Voice*  
*of the Charmer, charm he never so wisely :*  
They wilfully and obstinately refuse to  
consider the *Reasonableness*, and the *Proofs*  
of true religion. 'Tis not a *natural*  
*Deafness*, but a *Deafness* which proceeds  
from *stopping* the Ears, and *Refusing* to  
hear the Voice of the Charmer. The  
Prophet *Jeremy*, ch. vi. 10, sets forth this  
Case to us in a very bold and lively si-  
militude; *Behold*, saith he, *their Ear is*  
*uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken;*  
*behold, the word of the Lord is unto them*  
*a Reproach, they have no Delight in it.*  
To which *beautiful* and *expressive Figure*  
of Speech *St Stephen* plainly alludes, in  
that sharp and cutting *Reproof* before-  
mentioned, *Acts vii. 51, Ye Stiff-necked,*  
*and Uncircumcised in Heart and Ears, ye*  
*do always resist the Holy Ghost.* *St John*,  
by *Another Comparison* of the *Like Na-*  
*ture*, tells us that whosoever *hateth his*  
*Brother*, (that is, whosoever thinks *Un-*  
*chari-*

SER M. *charitableness* to be consistent with True  
 X.VI. Religion,) *is in Darknes, and—Dark-*  
 ~~~~~  
*ness has Blinded his Eyes, 1 Job. ii. 11.*  
 Which being the case, 'tis no wonder that  
 the Scripture here pronounces a *Woe* with  
 a particular *Emphasis*: *Wo be to them that*  
*call Evil Good, and Good Evil; that put*  
*Darkness for Light, and Light for Dark-*  
*ness, Ifai. v. 20.* And though in Scrip-  
 ture-phrafe, 'tis to the Delusions of *Sa-*  
*tan* that this Moral Incapacity of men  
 is frequently ascribed; as when *Satan* is  
 said to *take away* the Word out of mens  
 Hearts; and *Satan* has filled *their Hearts*;  
 and the like: Yet this is never spoken by  
 way of *Excuse*, but always on the con-  
 trary, of *High Aggravation*. They, *out*  
*of whose Heart Satan taketh away the*  
*word*, are by our Saviour compared to,  
 and *blamed* for being like unto, the *very*  
*worst* and *most unfruitful* Ground. And  
*Ananias*, whose *Heart Satan had filled*,  
 was asked by *St Peter* in way of *severe*  
*Reproof*; *Why hath Satan filled*, (that is,  
*why hast thou been so wicked, so covetous*  
*so corrupt, as to suffer Satan to fill) thine*  
*Heart, Acts v. 3.* Nay, in all those pla-  
 ces,



ces, where *God himself* is represented as S E R M. depriving men of their Understanding; XVI. 'tis still always, (which is a *Demonstration* of the True Meaning of such Phrases,) 'tis always (I say) in the way of most *severe Reproof* and *Blame*, to the Persons of whom it is spoken. Of This, we have a singular and very remarkable Instance, in *Deut. xxix. 4*: Where *Moses* bitterly expostulating with the *Israelites* for their incorrigible rebelliousness, *Thine eyes* (says he) *have seen the Signs, and those Great Miracles*; Yet the Lord hath not given you *an Heart to perceive, and Eyes to see, and Ears to hear unto this day*. Nothing ever was more evident, than that *Moses* here did not mean to affirm literally, that any thing was wanting on *God's* part; (For he is here urging *That very Argument*, that *God* had done all that was fit for him to do;) but on the contrary his plain Intent was, in a most affectionate manner, to *expostulate* with the *people* for their *Negligence, Obstinacy* and *Perverseness*, in not being led by the Sight of *God's* Great and numerous *Miracles*, to *Repentance*. *Your own Eyes have*  
*Seen*

S E R M. *Seen those Great Miracles: Yet so unrea-*  
 XVI. *sonably obstinate and perverse are ye, that*  
 ~~~~~ *the Lord hath not given you; i. e. all the*  
*Means he has used, have not caused in*  
*you a Heart to perceive, even unto This*  
*day. And This brings me to the*

*IVth and Last General Proposition:*  
 That, since the Scripture always thus  
*expressly* lays the *Blame* upon mens *selves*;  
 hence consequently All those Passages,  
 wherein *God* is at any time represented as  
*blinding mens Eyes, or closing their Ears,*  
 or *hardning their Hearts, or taking away*  
*their Understanding* from them; must of  
 Necessity be understood to be *figurative*  
 expressions only; not denoting literally  
 what *God* actually effects by his Power,  
 but what by his Providence he justly and  
 wisely permits. And because the Passages  
 of This kind are very numerous, I shall,  
 for Method's sake, distinguish them un-  
 der the following Heads.

1<sup>st</sup>, S O M E of these sorts of expres-  
 sions denote jonly the *general Analogy* or  
*Fitness* of the thing to be done.

2<sup>dly</sup>,

2dly, Others of them, are only figurative Acknowledgments of the universal Superintendency of Providence over All Events; without whose Permission, nothing happens in the World.

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XVI.  
~~~~~

3dly, OTHERS of them, are only Applications of Prophecies, or Declarations of certain Prophecies being fulfilled.

4thly and Lastly, SOME others of them, are Denunciations or Threatnings of God's justly and in a judicial manner leaving incorrigible men to themselves, after many repeated Provocations.

1st, SOME of those Expressions, wherein God may seem to be represented as blinding men, and hardening them to destruction, do indeed in strictness denote nothing more, than the general Analogy or Fitness of the thing to be done. Thus Prov. xvi. 4, *The Lord has made all things for Himself;* (the true Rendering is, *The Lord has made all things, one answerable to another;*) yea, even the wicked to the day of Evil: That is, (as the Scripture elsewhere expresses it,) *The wicked is reserved to the day of Destruction, they shall be brought forth to the day of Wrath:*

SERMON. *For the Good, are good things created from the Beginning; so likewise evil things for Sinners.*

XVI.

Ecclus.

xxxix. 25.

xi. 16.

xl. 9.

AGAIN, I *Sam.* ii. 25, The Sons of *Eli* hearkned not unto the Voice of their Father, because the Lord would slay them. The reason here assigned, *because the Lord would slay them*, answers exactly to *That* expression in modern language, *Because they were Abandoned, Profligate or Graceless.* In which manner of speaking, nobody understands *Want of Grace* to be a charging of any Defect on God's part, but a describing of the *Persons themselves* to be *worthy of Destruction.*

2dly, SOME other Expressions of This kind, are only figurative *Acknowledgments* of the *universal Superintendency of Providence* over all events; without whose *Permission*, nothing happens in the world; without whom, not a *Sparrow* falls to the Ground, or a *Hair of our Head* perishes. Thus, in Scripture-language, *God delivers into his Neighbour's hand*, that is, *Providence permits to fall*, every person who happens to be *slain by Chance.* Thus *the Lord smote Nabal, that he died;*  
where

I *Sam.*

xxv. 38.

Acts xii.

23.

where the History is not recording a S E R M. XVI.  
*Miracle*, but only the man's being struck 2 Chron. xiv. 12.  
with a mortal disease. And, *the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa*, that is, in the course of Providence they were defeated by him in Battle. And what *Moses* says concerning the King of *Heshbon*; *the Lord God hardened his Spirit, and made his Heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand*; and *Joshua* concerning the *Canaanites*, *it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly*; is plainly of the same import only, as if he had said, *it pleased God to let their Obstinacy destroy them*. Thus, *God's hardening Pharaoh's heart*, evidently means no more, than that the *Miracles* God worked before him, instead of convincing him as they ought to have done, made him only more obstinate and stubborn. And when God says of him, *Rom. ix. 17, Even for this purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my Power in thee*; *St Paul* thus explains it expressly, ver. 22, *What if God willing to show his Wrath,*

SERM. and to make his Power known, endured.  
 XVI. *with much long-suffering, the Vessels of Wrath, fitted to Destruction? Pharaoh was by his Own Wickedness fitted to Destruction: God endured him with much long-suffering, and waited long for his Repentance: But he appearing incorrigible, God therefore chose him as a proper Instrument, and raised him up into an eminent Example, upon whom he might show forth his Wrath, and make his Power known; for a Terror to such as should imitate his Obstinacy, in all succeeding generations. And exactly the same, was the Case of Judas. And in general, he Hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth; That is, not arbitrarily, irrespectively, and without regard to mens behaviour: But the Meaning is; God, who knoweth the Heart, and not We, is the only Proper Judge, who are fit Objects of his Mercy, and who of his Wrath. Even in Humane Judicatures, a Judge may very reasonably be supposed to say to an ignorant multitude, not arbitrarily, but as having himself a most perfect knowledge both of the Law and*  
 of

of the *Fact*; I will acquit whom I will S E R M.  
acquit; and I will condemn whom I see fit XVI.  
to condemn. And that *This* is indeed the  
whole meaning of the word, *harden*, ap-  
pears clearly from hence; that 'tis used,  
not only of *Pharaoh* and *Other Enemies*,  
but also of *God's own people*. If. lxiii. 17,  
*Lord, why hast thou made us to err from  
thy ways, and hardned our heart from  
thy Fear?* Undoubtedly the Prophet in  
This Prayer, did not mean to charge *God*  
with the Sins of the People; but merely  
to express his Sorrow for their being, in  
*fact*, corrupted. And, in the place be-  
fore-cited, *Deut. xxix. 4, The Lord, says  
Moses* by way of expostulation to the  
people, *bath not given you an Heart to  
perceive*; that is, his many wondrous  
Works have not yet had their due Ef-  
fect upon you. And concerning our  
Lord's *Disciples themselves*, 'tis written in  
the Gospel, *Mar. vi. 52, viii. 17, that  
they considered not the Miracle, for their  
Heart was heardned*: Which is thus ex-  
plained, *Luke ix. 45, xviii. 34, They un-  
derstood not this Saying, and it was hid  
from them, that they perceived it not.*

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To give but *One* instance, or *Two*, more. By comparing 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 1, with 1 *Chron.* xxi. 1; it appears evidently, that God's moving *David*; or Satan's provoking him; or *his* own *distrustful Heart* tempting him to number the People; are All Phrases, that have one and the same Meaning. In like manner The men of *Sechem's* falling out with, and *dealing treacherously* with *Abimelech*, *Judg.* ix. 23, is stiled, God's *sending an Evil Spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem.* The Princes of *Egypt* acting *foolishly*, in *Is.* xx. 14, is; *The Lord has mingled a perverse Spirit in the midst thereof.* The *Hypocrisy* of the *Jews*, in *drawing near with their mouth, and honouring God with their Lips, when they had removed their Heart far from him,* *Is.* xxix. 13, is Thus expressed just before, ver. 10, *The Lord hath poured out upon you the Spirit of deep Sleep, and hath closed your Eyes.* And the Prophet *Jeremy's* Prayer, ch. iv. 10, *Ab Lord God, surely Thou hast greatly deceived this people;* evidently was not intended as charging God with causing the people to err, but merely



merely as an expression of his Sorrow for S E R M.  
their being justly suffered to err. But XVI.

3dly, SOME *Other Expressions* of this kind are *Only Applications of Prophecies, or Declarations of certain Prophecies being fulfilled.* Thus *Jude 4; Ungodly Men, who were before of Old ordained to this condemnation; wherunto also they were appointed, 1 Pet. ii. 8.* Not, appointed of God to be Wicked, but *foretold* by the Antient Prophets, that such persons would arise. Of the like sense, are the following expressions, *Dan. xii. 10, The wicked shall do wickedly. 2 Tim. iii. 13, Evil men and Seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. And Rev. xvii. 17, God hath put it in their Hearts to fulfill his Will, (that is, hath caused them, not by influencing of their Wills, but by his all-wise Conduct of Providential Events, he hath caused them to accomplish the Prophecies,) and to agree, and give their Kingdom unto the Beast, until the Words of God shall be fulfilled. And Rom. xi. 7, 10, The election, (that is, the elect people, those who believe in Christ,) have obtained it, and the*

SERM. *rest (i. e. the Unbelievers) were blinded :*  
 XVI. According as it is written, God has given  
 ~~~~~ them the Spirit of slumber, Eyes that they  
 should not see, and Ears that they should  
 not hear. — And David saith, — Let  
 their Eyes be darkned, that they may not  
 see.

BUT the most remarkable Text to This  
 purpose in the Whole Scripture, is That  
 in the *xii<sup>th</sup>* of St *John*, ver. 37, 39, 40,  
*Though he had done so many Miracles be-*  
*fore them, yet they believed not on him:—*  
*Therefore they could not believe, because*  
*that Esaias said, He hath blinded their*  
*Eyes, and hardned their Heart, that they*  
*should not see with their Eyes, nor under-*  
*stand with their Heart, and be converted,*  
*and I should heal them.* Evidently the  
 Meaning of these words is ; not, that  
*Isaiab's Prophecy* was the Reason or Cause  
 of the *Jews Unbelief*; but only that the  
*Jews Unbelief* was the Accomplishment of  
*Isaiab's Prophecy*. For as, in many other  
 passages of the Gospels, according to the  
 Nature and Phraseology of the Jewish  
 language, 'tis written that such a thing  
 was done, that it might be fulfilled *which*  
 was

was spoken by the Prophet; and yet 'tis S E R M. certain the thing was not *therefore done* XVI. because it had been foretold, but had *therefore been foretold* because it would certainly be done; and the words, that it might be fulfilled, mean nothing more than, *thereby Was fulfilled*: So is it likewise in the present case; They could not believe, because *that Isaias had said it*: That is, Their Unbelief was not to be wondred at; 'twas nothing more than what *Isaiab* had foretold; and it could not indeed be expected of so corrupt a people, that they should do better. That This is the true and only sense of the Passage, will appear undeniably, by considering the *Original Prophecy itself*, and the manner how it is quoted in *Many Other* places of the New Testament. The words of *Isaiab* are, ch. vi. 9, Go and tell this people, *Hear ye indeed but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not; make the Heart of this people fat, and make their Ears heavy, and shut their Eyes; lest they see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand with their Heart, and convert and be healed.*

Our

SER M. Our Saviour himself, citing these words,  
 XVI. applies them by way of *Reproof*, Matt.  
 xiii. 13, *Because they seeing, see not; and hearing they hear not; -----and in Them is fulfilled the Prophecy of Esaias.* St Paul cites and applies them in the way of a still sharper *Rebuke* to those who rejected his Preaching; *Acts xxviii. 26, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias unto our Fathers, saying, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand.* In St Mark and St Luke, they are Thus cited; That *seeing, they might not see; and hearing they might not understand*: Expressing, as is evident from the parallel Texts, not the *Design of God*, but the *Event of the Thing*: In the same sense, as our Saviour says concerning *Himself, I come not to send Peace but a Sword*: And to the *Pharisees, Joh. ix. 39, For judgment I am come into this World; that they which see not, might see; and that they which see, might be made blind.* By comparing together all which several References to that one Prophecy of *Isaiab*, and the manner how it is always alleged in the way of a most severe *Reproof* to the persons to whom it is applied; it  
 most

Mar. iv.

12.

Luke viii.

10.

most manifestly appears, that there is never in Scripture any Intention to ascribe to God any actual efficiency in the making men hard and wicked; but only a perpetual declaration of God's *just Judgments*, and of the *Wisdom of his Providence*, manifested in the *Truth of the Prophecies*, and in the exact *Fitness* of the respective *Applications*. The most that is ever *literally* and *strictly* ascribed to God, is what Those Expressions amount to, which I observe in the

4th and Last place, To be *Denunciations* or *Threatnings* of God's justly and in a judicial manner *leaving* incorrigible men to *themselves*, after many repeated Provocations. Of This kind is That of *Ezekiel*, ch. xxiv. 13, *Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged; thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more.* And *Is.* xxix. 13, *Forasmuch as this people has removed their Heart far from me; — therefore — the Wisdom of their Wise men shall perish, and the Understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.* The *Heathen-world*, because, departing from the Light of natural Con-

S E R M. science, they liked not to retain God in  
 XVI. *their Knowledge*; therefore God gave them  
 up unto vile *Affections*, Rom. i. 24. The  
*Jews*, after long provocations, God gave  
 up unto *their own hearts lust*, Pf. lxxxii. 12;  
 and let them follow *their own imagination*;  
 even so far as to *worship the Host of Hea-*  
*ven*, Acts vii. 42. And of *Christians*, in  
 the Times of great Corruptions of the  
 Church, St Paul prophecies, 2 *Thess.* ii.  
 11, that since they *loved not the Truth*,  
 God should send them strong Delusion,  
 that they might believe a Lye. 'Tis a se-  
 vere, but very just Threatning, which we  
 read in Ezek. xiv. 3, 9: *Since these men*  
*have set up their Idols in their Heart,*—  
*if the Prophet be deceived when he hath*  
*spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived*  
*That Prophet,*—*and they shall bear the*  
*Punishment of their iniquity.* Of the ful-  
 filling which Threatning we have a re-  
 markable instance in the Case of *Idola-*  
*trous Abab*: Concerning whom, the Scri-  
 pture in a *figurative* indeed, but very  
*emphatical and expressive* manner, describes  
 the Prophet in a Vision beholding *the*  
*Lord sitting upon his Throne*, and all the  
 Host

Host of Heaven standing about him, and the Lord giving Leave to an Evil Spirit to deceive the Prophets of *Abab*. Yet even here 'tis very observable, that, as a Last Warning to *Abab*, if it had been possible to bring him to Repentance; *this very thing*, even the deceiving of his Prophets, was itself told him beforehand by *Micaiah*. But he was under the strong Prejudice of an idolatrous Mind, and therefore he *had not Ears to bear*. More than This, God was not obliged, nor was it fit, to Do for him. Nor will God to *Any man*, after he has used all reasonable Motives, add irresistible Means, to convert him whether he will or no. When the *Jews*, after our Saviour had worked Many Miracles, still called for a Sign from Heaven; he told them, there should no Sign be given to an *adulterous and perverse generation*. And after his Resurrection, he showed himself alive, not to all the people, but to chosen and sufficient Witnesses. And when his unbelieving Countrymen, perversely, and not with any real Desire of being satisfied, urged him to repeat the same Miracles among

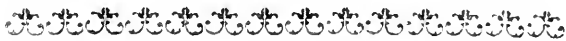
SERMON among *Them*, as he had already worked  
 XVI. in *other* places; he made them this sharp  
 Reply, (the Sense whereof is a Paraphrase  
 on the words of my Text, and where-  
 with I shall conclude;) *Luke iv. 25, I  
 tell you of a Truth, many Widows were in  
 Israel in the days of Elias,— but unto none  
 of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta  
 a City of Sidon, unto a woman that was a  
 widow. And many Lepers were in Israel  
 in the time of Eliseus the Prophet; and  
 none of them was cleansed saving Naaman  
 the Syrian.* The Manifestations God was  
 pleased to make of Himself, were abun-  
 dantly sufficient; and they that had *Ears* to  
 hear, could not fail of understanding them.  
 The case is the same *Now*, and in *All*  
 Ages: God has made abundant Manifest-  
 ations of Himself, both by *Reason* and  
*Revelation*; and no man can excusably be  
 ignorant of Him.





# SERMON XVII.

Of the Nature of true Christian  
Zeal.



REV. iii. 15, 16.

*I know thy Works, that thou art nei-  
ther cold nor hot: I would thou  
wert cold or hot. So then, because  
thou art lukewarm, and neither  
cold nor hot, I will spue thee out  
of my Mouth.*



**R**ELIGION is the Great Or-  
nament and Glory of Humane  
Nature; that which princi-  
pally distinguishes *Men* from  
the inferiour Orders of Crea-  
tures; and upon which Alone are ground-  
ed

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ed all Hopes of Life and Happiness here-  
after, when this short and transitory World  
shall be passed away. In a matter of so  
great importance therefore, 'tis very won-  
derful, that any man who calls himself a  
reasonable Creature should be careless  
and indifferent; careless whether he has  
*Any Religion*, or *None*; indifferent whe-  
ther his religion, when he *does profess* any,  
be *True* or *False*; careless, when he *has*  
embraced the *True Religion*, whether he  
makes *Any Improvement* in his *Practice*  
answerable to it, or no. The Words of  
the Text are a Reproof sent by our Sa-  
viour to the Church of *Laodicea*, upon  
account of their remissness and lukewarm-  
ness in this *last particular*. The Church  
of *Laodicea*, signifies either *literally* one  
of the Seven primitive Churches of *Asia*,  
or *figuratively* one of the seven successive  
States or Conditions of the Primitive  
Church Catholick, before its falling into  
That Universal Antichristian corruption  
described in the following chapters of this  
Book. In whichsoever of these two senses  
we understand the Church of *Laodicea* to  
be meant, yet still, it being part of the  
*Primitive Church* before the times of

That Great and Total Apostacy; 'tis plain the lukewarmness here charged upon them, cannot signify a *general* carelessness whether they had *Any* Religion or *None*; nor an indifferency whether the Religion they professed was *True* or *False*; (for These are the Crimes of *later* Ages, not of the *Primitive* days:) But *Their* lukewarmness was a remissness or neglect of making improvement in *Practice*, answerable to the excellency of the Religion they professed. *I know thy Works, that thou art neither cold nor hot.* The Defect was in their *Works*, or *Practice*: They would not lay aside the *Profession* of Religion, and yet they would not live answerable to it by being *zealous of good works*. This is what our Saviour reproves them for in the Text: And to add Weight and Dignity to the Reproof, 'tis introduced with a Solemn description of the Greatness and Excellency of the Person who sent it: *Unto the Angel* (says he) *of the Church of the Laodiceans, write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God.* *I know thy works, that*

## Of the Nature of

SERMON. *thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold, or hot: So then, because thou art luke-warm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my Mouth: Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; They prospered, (it seems,) in all worldly appearance, and had much Form of religion; but knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: Naked, that is, destitute of the works of righteousness; and Blind, that is, insensible of the dangerousness of their condition. The words therefore are a Reproof to the Laodiceans for their Want of Zeal; and an intimation wherein the nature of True Zeal consists. Thou art luke-warm, and neither cold nor hot, is the Reproof for want of Zeal; And, I know thy Works, that — thou art blind and naked, is an intimation What was the Zeal they wanted. Now since These things are Our Examples; and the Scriptures are written for Our Admonition, upon whom the Ends of the World are come; and the Faults of which the Primitive Church was guilty, are much more increased*

creased in the *Ages of Apostacy*: It cannot but be very proper for us, from the consideration of these affectionate words of our Saviour, to inquire, for our Own instruction, into the nature of True Zeal, which the *Laodiceans* are here reprov'd for wanting; and also of That False Zeal, which is apt to make Christians think themselves to be *rich* (in the spiritual sense,) and to *have need of nothing*, when indeed they are most *wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*.

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TRUE Zeal then, which is the *Virtue* of a *Christian*, may be distinguished from False Zeal, which is the Character of private *Parties* or *Factions*; principally by *Three* ways: By the *Object*, about which it is employed; by the *Manner and Circumstances*, in which it expresses itself; and by the *End*, to which it is directed.

I. THE *First* Mark, by which True and Christian Zeal may be distinguished from that which is False and Unchristian, is the *Object* about which it is employed. The Object of *True Christian Zeal* is the *Study of Truth*, and the *Practice of*

SERMON XVII. Right: The continued, impartial, unprejudiced *Inquiring* after Truth *ourselves*; and the giving constant *encouragement* to *All Others* to search for it after the same manner: The conforming constantly *our own Practice*, to the unquestionable eternal Rules of *Right and Equity*; and using continually all just, honourable, and Christian means, to prevail with *Others* likewise to do the same. On the contrary: The Object of *False and Unchristian Zeal*, never is an *Impartial Inquiring What and Where* the *Truth* is; but always the *promoting* violently, *establishing*, and *forcing men into* the Profession of some *Imagined Truth*, without ever considering carefully whether it be *really a Truth* or no: And in like manner, the *insisting on* the *practice*, not of such things as are unquestionable and undisputed Acts of *Virtue and Righteousness*; but of such things principally as are the *distinguishing* practices, or practices built upon the *distinguishing* opinions, of particular Sects or Parties.

To explain this matter more particularly: The primary and proper-Object of a *Christian and good Zeal*, is the *promoting*

ting the Practice of *Virtue and Righteousness*. But because *right Practice* can hardly be built, at least can never be built with any certainty and steddiness, but upon the Foundation of *Truth*; therefore the *Object* of Zeal *first* in the Order of Nature, is the *Knowledge of Truth*. And Zeal for searching after and discovering of *Truth* can never possibly be *excessive*. *The Price of Wisdom*, Job xxviii. 18, is *above Rubies*; *The Topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure Gold*. Buy the *Truth*, (saith Solomon,) and sell it not; also *Wisdom, and Instruction, and Understanding*, Prov. xxiii. 23. The like phrase is used by our Saviour in the words immediately following my Text; *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the Fire*, (that is, to inquire diligently after the *un corrupted Doctrines* of the Gospel, which will bear the *Trial* of the most *impartial examination*;)—and *anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see*; that is, lay aside blind prejudices and corrupt affections, which hinder men from discerning the *Truth*; And *search the Scriptures*

SERM. with an unbiaſſed underſtanding, that in  
 XVII. Them you may find the words of eternal  
 Life. *This Zeal* therefore, Zeal for in-  
 quiring and ſearching after the *Truth*,  
 Zeal to know perfectly the Will of God,  
 can never poſſibly be faulty in *Exceſs*.  
 All Faultineſs upon This Head, is always  
 and only on the *Defective* ſide: A want  
 of *Zeal*, a Coldneſs and Luke-warmneſs,  
 a Careleſneſs and Indifferency in men,  
 whether the things they profeſs to be-  
 lieve, be *true* or *not*. They receive things  
 ignorantly and negligently at all adven-  
 tures; They take their Religion upon  
 Truſt, upon the Authority of common  
 Repute; without being at all ſollicitous  
 to *underſtand* it, or to *know* whereof they  
 affirm: As if it was nothing more than  
 the Cuſtom of the Country, or the Fa-  
 ſhion of the place they live in. Hence,  
 though the Doctrin of Chriſt is ſo plain-  
 ly and clearly expreſſed in the Goſpel,  
 that *he who runs may read it*; and All  
 Chriſtians, at all Times and in all Places,  
 have been baptized into the Profeſſion of  
 the Same Faith, and into an Obligation  
 to obey the Same Commandments; yet  
 for



for all this, what hath vulgarly been cal-  
led *Christian Religion*, has been at diffe-  
rent Times in the Same Country, and is  
Now in different Countries at the Same  
Time, as different from itself, as Light is  
from Darknes: *God having* (in great Ju-  
stice) *sent men strong Delusion, that they*  
*should believe a Lye,* 2 Theff. ii. 11; that  
they should entertain innumerable and in-  
credible absurdities; because they received  
not the Truth in the Love thereof, and  
according to the Simplicity of the Gospel  
of Christ. The *first*, therefore, and *ori-*  
*ginal* cause of all corruptions in religion,  
is *Want of Zeal* for inquiring after *Truth*;  
a coldness or luke-warmness, a carelesness  
or indifferency in men, whether the things  
they profess to believe, be *true*, or *no*.  
But then *further*; if we have never so  
much *Zeal* for inquiring after the *Truth*,  
and never so much *Success* in That In-  
quiry; yet still even *This* is nothing with-  
out *virtuous Practice*: And therefore, as  
I before observed, the *Great*, the *Princi-*  
*pal*, the *Proper Object* of *Zeal*, is the  
*Practice of Virtue and True Righteousness*.  
And *here* likewise, as well as in the case

S E R M. of Searching after Truth, there is no room  
 XVII. for our Zeal to be *too Great*. Men may  
 mistake the Object, and be zealous for  
 something *else* instead of *Virtue*; or, when  
 the Object is right, the *manner and cir-*  
*cumstances* in which it expresses itself,  
 may be very faulty: But the *degree* of the  
*Zeal itself*; the Zeal for *Virtue, Righte-*  
*ousness, and Equity*, can never possibly be  
*too Great*. It is good (saith St Paul) to  
 be zealously affected always in a good mat-  
 ter, Gal. iv. 18. And the Zeal of the  
 2 Cor ix. *Corinthians* in their liberality to the Poor  
 of other Churches, is by the same Apostle  
 commended as highly exemplary. And  
 in his Epistle to *Titus*, ch. ii. 14, he de-  
 clares that Christ gave himself for us, and  
 redeemed us to this very end, that we  
 might be a people zealous of good Works.  
 Our Lord himself, by a figure of Speech  
 expressing a Zeal which cannot be ex-  
 cessive, *Blessed*, says he, *are they that hun-*  
*ger and thirst after righteousness*. And  
 describing his Own Practice, *My Meat*,  
 says he, *is to do the Will of him that sent*  
*me, and to finish his Work*. And again,  
*Job. ii. 17, The Zeal of thy House has*  
 eaten

eaten me up. And when, in the words S E R M. of the Text, he had severely rebuked the XVII. *Laodiceans*, for being *luke-warm and neither cold nor hot*; for making *profession* of his Religion, and yet being remiss and negligent to improve themselves in *virtuous practice*, answerable to the excellency of the Religion they professed; he adds immediately in the 19<sup>th</sup> verse, *Be zealous therefore, and repent*. This is the full Notion of *Christian and good Zeal*, with respect to the Object about which it is employed: 'Tis a *Zeal* for the *Knowledge of Truth*, and for the *Practice of Right*; And This *Zeal*, if it be not faulty in *Other* Circumstances, the *Degree of it* can never be *excessive*; Men can never be *too zealous* for *inquiring* impartially into *Truth*, or for *doing* what is confessedly and unquestionably *Right*.

BUT what has been said upon *This* head, will be still further illustrated, by considering, on the *Other* hand, the nature of *False and unchristian Zeal*, with regard to the Object about which *That* also is employed. And the Object of *That*, as I observed at the Beginning, is always

*Some*

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*Some Imagined Truth*, never carefully examined whether it be *really* such; Or else some *Form* or *Ceremony*, of no great moment to Religion and Virtue; Or perhaps some *distinguishing* Practice, or Practice founded upon some *distinguishing* Opinion, of some particular Sect or Party. To explain this, by *Instances*: St Paul relates, that the *Corinthians* were *zealous*, some of them for *Paul*, some of them for *Apollos*, and some for *Cephas*; and This their *Zeal*, he tells them, was not *spiritual*, but *carnal*; that is to say, 'twas not for the *Religion* of *Christ*, but for *Parties among Men*. Again: *Some* (he tells us,) upon the foundation of *Christ*, instead of gold, silver, and precious stones, built *wood, bay* and *stubble*; materials which would not bear the *Test* of the *Fire*: The *Meaning* is; They were *zealous* for *opinions*, of which they had never carefully examined the *Truth*; for *Doctrines*, which had no useful *Influence* upon *Practice*; for *Forms and Ceremonies*, which made men not at all the more careful to lead a *virtuous* Life. And of this sort of things it is, that our *Saviour* speaks, in  
the

the words following my Text, ver. 17, *Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* Again: We read, 2 Sam. xxi. 2, concerning the *Gibeonites*, to whom *Joshua* and all *Israel* had solemnly sworn they should not be destroyed, that yet *Saul* long after ought to slay them, in his Zeal to the children of *Israel* and *Judah*. The Object of his Zeal was *False*, as well as the Manner of it *Cruel*: It was a Zeal for the *Power and Interest* (as *He* fancied) of the children of *Israel* and *Judah*, in opposition to the *Reason of the Thing*, and to the *Oath of God*. To mention but one Instance more: The whole Body of the *Jewish Nation* in our Saviour's days, were extremely *zealous* for the Observation of the *Law*: But 'twas a *Zeal*, without *Knowledge*; 'twas a *Zeal*, without careful *Examination*; 'twas a *Zeal* for the *ceremonial* part of the *Law*, more than for the *moral*; 'twas a *Zeal* for the *Traditions of the Elders*, and for the *Doctrines*

SERMON. *trines each of their own particular Sect,*  
 XVII. more than for the *Law* of God: And  
 the Zeal which they had even for the  
*Law itself*, was without considering,  
 that the very *End and Design* of the  
*Law* was to lead men to the *Gospel*;  
 that it was *itself*, in its own nature, but  
 a *Type* of Christ; and that God by the  
*Prophets* had all along clearly enough in-  
 timated, that there was to be such a  
*Change* in the *Dispensation*. For want of  
 considering these things carefully and im-  
 partially, even those Jews who were *con-*  
*verted*, continued still, generally speak-  
 ing, *all zealous of the Law*, Acts xxi.  
 20: And were *very earnest* to enforce the  
 observation of it upon other Christians:  
 Concerning whom St Paul thus speaks,  
*Gal. iv. 17, They zealously affect you, but*  
*not well.* And Those of them who were  
 not *converted*, were infinitely zealous, in  
 their opposing the Gospel: *I bear them re-*  
*cord*, says St Paul, *Rom. x. 2, that they*  
*have a zeal of God, but not according to*  
*knowledge; For they being ignorant of*  
*God's righteousness, (of That Method of*  
 Salvation

Rom. ix.  
 3<sup>vs</sup> 32.

Salvation which God has appointed,) and *going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God; For Christ (saith he) is the End of the Law.* Of these, St Paul himself, before his conversion, was *One. According to the perfect manner of the Law of the Fathers, I was zealous (says he) towards God, as ye all are this day, Acts xxii. 3; being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my Fathers, Gal. i. 14; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless; concerning zeal, persecuting the church, Phil. iii. 6; because I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus, Acts xxvi. 9.* For when the *Object* of Zeal, is not the *Searching after Truth* and the *Practice of Moral Viriue*, but the *inconsiderately and rashly promoting, violently and by all means, some unexamined or imagined Truth*; it often comes to pass that even *Zeal itself for Truth*, degenerates into the most *inveterate Prejudice*, and most *incurable Obstinacy* against it  
and

SERMON. and puts men upon the most *unrighteous*  
 XVII. *Methods*, of *propagating* (as they think,  
 but indeed of *opposing*) it. *They shall put you out of the Synagogues*, saith our Saviour, *Job. xvi. 2; yea, the time cometh; that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service.* The Reason follows, *ver. 3; These things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father; nor Me; that is, because they have no true Notion, either of Natural Religion, or of Christian.* The Malignity of this sort of *Prejudice* is set forth to us under a most lively and expressive figure, *Act vii. 57, They stopped their Ears, and ran upon Stephen, — and stoned him.* They took effectual care, not to be convinced by what he should say. *They were, as the Psalmist expresses it, like the deaf adder that stoppeth her Ears; which refuseth to bear the Voice of the Charmer, charm he never so wisely.* Our Saviour describes the *unreasonable Prejudices* of the *Pharisees*; by the same figure of speech, *Job. viii. 43; Why do ye not understand my Speech? even because ye cannot bear my word.* His  
 Meaning



Meaning is; Their vitious and corrupt S E R M. XVII.  
inclinations, would not suffer them to  
hearken to the Truth. And elsewhere in  
the same Gospel, he more than once ex-  
presses the same thing again, by stiling  
them *Blind*. But

*2dly*; THE *next* mark, by which  
True and Christian Zeal may be distin-  
guished from that which is False and  
Unchristian, is the Manner and Circum-  
stances in which it expresses itself. 'Tis  
manifest that Zeal cannot be at all a *Chri-  
stian Virtue*, except it be employed about  
its true and proper *Object*, the *Search af-  
ter Truth* and the *Practice of Right*. But  
This *alone* is not sufficient. For, be its  
*Object* never so good, so that the Zeal  
cannot possible be excessive in its *Degree*;  
yet still by the *Manner and Circumstances*  
in which it expresses itself, it may easily,  
if great Care be not taken, degenerate  
into a False and Unchristian Zeal. *Wrath*  
*and Fierceness*, *Contentiousness* and *Animo-  
sity*, *Violence* and *Hatred*, are vitious and  
*ungodly* Practises, whether the *Object* of  
a man's zeal be good or bad. St Paul

SERM. WAS not only faulty for persecuting the  
 XVII. *Christians*, when Himself was a *Jew*;  
 but he would also still have continued to  
 have been equally faulty, if he had per-  
 secuted the *Jews*, when Himself was a  
*Christian*. The character of the *great*  
*Author* of our Religion is This, *Matt.*  
*xii. 18, Behold, — my beloved, in whom*  
*my Soul is well pleased, I will put my Spi-*  
*rit upon him, and he shall show judgment*  
*unto the Gentiles; He shall not strive, nor*  
*cry, neither shall any man hear his voice*  
*in the streets; A bruised reed shall he not*  
*break, and smoking flax shall he not*  
*quench, till he send forth judgment unto*  
*victory.* And when some of his own dis-  
 ciples, beginning to depart from this ex-  
 ample, would have called for Fire from  
 Heaven upon the *Samaritans*, he rebuked  
 them, saying, *Ye know not what manner*  
*of Spirit ye are of.* According to this  
 Great Pattern, *St Paul* directs, *2 Tim. ii.*  
*24, that the Servant of the Lord must not*  
*strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to*  
*teach, patient, in Meekness instructing*  
*those that oppose themselves.* And he ad-  
 vises

vise All Christians, to let their Moderation be known unto all men: Their Moderation; that is, not a luke-warmness or indifferency in religion, an indifferency in the great and weightier matters of the Law, (which is the luke-warmness reprov'd in the Text, and which is very consistent with men's being infinitely zealous about Trifles;) but, by Moderation, St Paul means That Meekness, Calmness, and Equitableness of Spirit, which very well agrees with, and indeed usually accompanies, the highest possible Zeal for Truth and Virtue. The Want of This Spirit it was, that the same Apostle complains of in the *Corinthians*, in the following manner; *Whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* His Meaning is, do ye not act like men who are more concerned for your own private parties and passions, than for the religion of Christ? *Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as Kings without us;* that as, ye are puffed up, and grown insolent and domineering, in your several Parties and

SERM.

XVII.

Phil. iv. 5.

1 Cor. iii.

3.

1 Cor. iv.

8.

SERM. Divisions, one against another. The  
XVII. manner of expression, is exactly like

That in the Text; where our Saviour, having rebuked the Church of *Laodicea* for being *luke-warm* and *careless* as to the *Works* or *Fruits* of true religion, immediately adds, *Yet thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*

BUT to proceed: How right soever the *Object* of our Zeal be, yet if That Zeal be accompanied with the *Wrath* Jam. i. 20. *of man*, the nature of it (St *James* tells us) is entirely altered, and it *worketh not the righteousness of God*. For *Wars and Fightings*, Jam. iv. 1. (that is *Hatred, Animosities, Contentiousness, and Desire of Rule over each other,*) can proceed from nothing but from *your Lusts*, that is, from worldly passions, not from Zeal for true Religion. And who-soever takes pleasure in injuring his *Brother*, 'tis absurd and ridiculous (St *John* assures us) for such a one to pretend he  
does

does it out of Zeal towards God: *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a liar,* 1 Joh. iv. 20. SERM.  
XVII.

3dly and Lastly. THE Last particular, by which a *religious Zeal* is distinguished from a *human passion*, and by which it becomes truly and properly a *Christian virtue*, is the End or Intention towards which it is directed. A Zeal for inquiring after *Truth* may possibly be nothing but *Curiosity*; and a Zeal even for *doing what is right*, may possibly sometimes proceed merely from *Temporal Views*. In which cases; possibly indeed it may be an *useful and commendable Passion*; provided the *Manner and Circumstances*, in which it expresses itself, be not faulty. But nothing makes it properly a *Christian virtue*, but when, *together with* all the forementioned *requisites*, the End also or Intention, to which it is ultimately directed, is the *Honour and Glory of God*. By the *Honour and Glory of God*, always taking care that we mean not any thing *imaginary and enthusiastick*, which often turns *religious zeal* into some of the *worst*

SERM. and most *pernicious* of all vices; but that  
 XVII. thereby be constantly meant the *establiſh-*  
 ment of God's Kingdom of righteousness  
*here*, in Truth and Peace and charity;  
 in order to the *ſalvation* of men's ſouls  
*hereafter* in his eternal Kingdom of Glory.  
 I conclude therefore with the words of  
 the wiſe Son of *Sirach*, Eccluſ. vii. 36.  
*Whatſoever thou takeſt in hand, remember*  
*the End, and thou ſhalt never do amiſs.*

The End of VOL. IV.



ADDITIONS to the Account  
of Dr. CLARKE'S Life, prefix'd  
to the *First* Edition of the *First*  
*Volume*.

**P**AGE vi. Lin. 13, *after* for, *add*, near.  
P. xx. l. 14, *after* another, *add*,  
The Questions were These:

1. *Nullum Fidei Christianæ Dogma, in  
S. Scripturis traditum, est Rectæ Rationi  
dissentaneum.*

2. *Sine Actionum humanarum Libertate  
nulla potest esse Religio.*

1. *No Article of the Christian Faith,  
delivered in the Holy Scriptures, is Disa-  
greeable to Right Reason.*

2. *Without the Liberty of Humane Ac-  
tions there can be No Religion. Two  
Questions, worthy of such a Divine and  
such a Philosopher, to propose for Pub-  
lick Debate.*

*Ib.* l. 6, *from the bottom after* Thesis,  
*add* (which was an Elaborate Discourse  
upon the *Former* of these two *Questions*.)

P. xxi. l. *ult.* *after* Disputation, *add*,  
(an Accidental Debate having arisen, as

I have

## A D D I T I O N S &c.

I have been informed, about the meaning of the word *Exacuo*.)

*P. xxii. l. 5,* after *up*, *add*, Others think the word was *Exercuisti*. They remember that the Professor used often to speak to a *Respondent*, after a long Disputation, *Finem jam faciam; Nam Te probè exercui: I will now make an End; for I have sufficiently work'd You:* and say, That He was going to use the same Expression to *Dr. Clarke*: but after the word *Te*, stop'd and corrected Himself, and said,—*Nam ME probè Exercuisti.*——*For You have work'd Me thoroughly.*

*P. xxvii. l. ult. after 1712. add*, in *Folio*.

*P. xxx. l. 7. after the, add* Proportion of.

*P. xlvi. l. 11,* after *Life. add*, And, agreeably to this Character, As He sought after No promotion in the *Church*; so, He refused the offer of a very beneficial *Civil Office*.



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## ERRATA in the First Edition of VOL. I.

**P**AGE 41, Line 15, for highly, read lightly. p. 43, l. 19, for Branch, r. Breach. p. 70, l. 15, after of, add, the. p. 80, l. 6, for them, r. him. p. 133, l. 8, for removed, r. revealed. p. 137, l. 15, for not, r. now. p. 155, l. 19, for Father's sake, r. Father's fakes. p. 156, l. 12, for them, r. him. p. 216, l. 25, for Power, a doing; r. Power of doing; p. 216, l. 26, for making, r. mocking. p. 239, l. 7, for Evi, r. Evil. p. 264, l. 11, for Necessity, r. necessary. p. 284, l. 7, after to, add, the. p. 296, l. ult. for Law, r. Laws. p. 308, l. 19, after beneath, add the incomprehensible Majesty of God himself to inspect, direct, and over-rule the motions of every particle of inanimate matter in the univèrse. p. 364, l. 8, for as, r. at. l. 10. dele by. p. 368, l. 14, for noe, r. onc. p. 385, l. 9, dele and. p. 388, l. 12, for the Father's sake, r. the Fathers fakes.

## VOL. II.

**P**AGE 57, Line 16, read I proceed. p. 86, l. 24, for (.) r. (,) p. 99, l. 16, for him, r. them. p. 149, l. 26, for an, r. and. p. 228, l. 11, for pefect, r. perfect. p. 264, l. 2, for be things, r. things be. p. 297, l. 17, for righteotousness, r. righteousness. p. 321, l. 10, for out, r. our. p. 327, l. 16, for eternal, r. external. p. 369, l. 24, for Objections, r. Objects. p. 393, l. ult. after commands, add, us.

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