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# S E R M O N S

O N T H E

## Following SUBJECTS,

V I Z.

The miraculous Birth of CHRIST.

The Prediction of the MESSIAH.

The Character of the MESSIAH.

Of the Fulness of Time in which  
CHRIST appeared.

Of the Meaning of, The Name of  
GOD.

The Doctrines of Religion reason-  
able to be believed.

Unreasonable Expectations not to  
be gratified in Religion.

How the Law is said to be the  
Strength of Sin.

How CHRIST has enabled us to  
conquer Sin.

How CHRIST has given us the  
Victory over Death.

The Inexcusableness of rejecting  
the Gospel.

Different Tempers judge different-  
ly of Religion.

Of the Resurrection of CHRIST.

Of CHRIST's Descent into Hell.

Of CHRIST's Sitting on the Right  
Hand of GOD.

The Conversation of Christians is  
in Heaven.

Of the Spiritual Nature of the  
Gospel.

---

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

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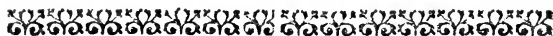




# S E R M O N I.

The miraculous Birth of CHRIST.

[*Preached on Christmas-Day.*]



MATT. i. 22, 23.

*Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying; Behold, a Virgin shall be with Child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his Name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with Us.*



THIS is a very usual Method with S E R M. Unbelievers;---And yet here, I. before I proceed, it may be proper and necessary to premise, that by Unbelievers I would at This Time be understood to  
 VOL. V. B mean


S E R M. mean, *not*, men of such a disposition as  
 I. St *Thomas* was before his Conversion; rational and inquisitive persons, Lovers of Truth and Virtue, men desirous to know and to obey the Will of God, and careful to keep a Conscience void of Offence both towards God and towards Men; yet, at the same time, sensible of the Difficulties wherewith the Divine Providence has thought fit to permit even very important Truths to be sometimes attended; and careful, for That Reason, not to be imposed upon, nor to receive things without good Evidence, either of Reason, or of Revelation: These, I say, are *not* the *Unbelievers* I would at present be understood to have in View. For concerning such persons as these, our Saviour seems to speak, when he says, they are *not far*  
 Mark xii. *from the Kingdom of God.* But there is  
 34. *another* sort of *Unbelievers*, who, having no right sense of the Liberty of Human Actions, of the natural, and essential Difference of Good and Evil, of the Moral Government of God over the World, of a Judgment to come, and of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments; do therefore

fore seek all possible opportunities, not of S E R M. enquiring into, and impartially examining, I. but of *cavilling* against the Authority of Christ and the Truth of his Religion, as being the great Support and Confirmation of these Doctrines of Nature, with the Belief of which all Notions of Fatality or Necessity, and all Licentiousness either of Sceptical Opinions or of Vicious Practice, is altogether inconsistent.


Now of *This* sort of *Unbelievers*, I say, the *usual Method* is to attack some particular uncertain Doctrines in the *Systems* of disagreeing Sects of Christians, and then conclude that they have destroyed *Christianity* itself: Or they set themselves to expose particular *Weak Writers*; and then leave it to be supposed, that *All* Defenders of the Doctrine of Christ are *Fools*: Or they pick perhaps out of *Better Writers* some inconclusive Reasonings, and *weak Arguments*; trusting it will thence be inferred, that there is *no Strength* in the *Strongest*: Or they represent Christianity as *relying* upon some *Foundation*, upon which it *does not rely*; and then conclude that it has *no Foundation* at all:

S E R M. Or they demonstrate some *Facts* to be *no*  
 I. *Proofs* of the *Truth* of the Gospel, which  
 never were intended for Proofs; and then  
 infer, that there is *no Proof* of it at all: Or  
 they dress up particular *Facts* or *Doctrines*,  
 in *ridiculous Circumstances*; and then re-  
 present the *Things* themselves, as *Objects*  
 of *Ridicule*: Or they lay *great Stress* up-  
 on some very *obscure*, or more *difficult*  
*Prophecy*: and thence infer, that *no Stress*  
 is to be laid upon *Any*: Or because, in  
 the nature of the Thing, almost *Any single*  
*Prophecy* may possibly be *imagined* appli-  
 cable, in some sense or other, to Some  
*Other* person; therefore *all of them toge-*  
*ther*, centring uniformly in *Christ* and in  
*Him alone*, yet are not rightly in *Fact* ap-  
 plied to *Him*.

THE words of *my Text* are a parti-  
 cular and very remarkable *Instance* of  
 Some of the Cases in the foregoing Ob-  
 servation. It has been supposed by Many,  
 that this *singular* and *miraculous* Fact, of  
 the *manner* of our Lord's *Birth*, record-  
 ed thus in the *Beginning* and *first En-*  
*trance* of the Gospel-History, both by  
 St *Matthew* and St. *Luke*; and urged more-  
 over

over by St *Matthew* as an unquestionable S E R M.  
Verification of an Antient and (at first I.  
Sight) as remarkable a Prophecy, as any   
is to be found in the whole *Old Testa-*  
*ment* : It has been supposed (I say) by  
Many, that *This Miraculous Fact*, thus  
circumstantiated, and thus ushering-in the  
whole following History of the Gospel,  
must needs have been intended by the  
Evangelist, as a primary and fundamenal  
Part of the *Proof* of our Lord's divine  
Commiffion. Which fince in reality it  
*could not poffibly* be ; as being a Fact which,  
in the nature of things, could not *itself*  
be proved, till the Truth of Christ's Mis-  
fion and the Veracity of his Followers had  
*first* been clearly established : Hence they  
have endeavoured to destroy the Autho-  
rity of the Sacred Writer, as infifting (at  
the very Beginning of his History) upon  
a *Proof* which could not poffibly be of  
any Use towards the Conviction of Unbe-  
lievers ; and as confirming it by a *Pro-*  
*phesy*, which they think cannot be shown  
to be rightly applied, fince the Words  
may be capable of another Interpretation.

## 6      *The miraculous Birth of Christ.*

S E R M.    F O R the removing therefore of This  
I.    Prejudice, and to clear more fully the  
 Meaning and Intent of my Text, I shall  
endeavour distinctly to make out the *three*  
following Particulars.

1. T H A T this History of our Lord's  
*miraculous Birth*, evidently in fact *was*  
*not*, and in the nature of Things *could not*  
*possibly* be, intended by the Evangelist in  
this place, as any *Proof*, for the Convic-  
tion of Unbelievers, either of the Digni-  
ty of Christ's Person, or of the Truth of  
his Doctrine, or of the Reality of his Di-  
vine Commission.


2. T H A T yet nevertheless, in the Na-  
ture of the Thing, when a Person of such  
Dignity as our Lord professed himself to  
be, and with such a Divine Commission,  
was to come into the World; this one  
particular Distinction, the *miraculous* man-  
ner of his *Birth*, was in itself a very *rea-*  
*sonable, proper, and not incredible* Circum-  
stance.

3. T H A T consequently the Sacred Wri-  
ter of the *Life* of our Saviour, had *just*  
*reason*, when assured of the Truth of the  
Fact from things which *followed*, to in-  
sert

sert this miraculous Circumstance into the *Beginning* of his *History*; and, in That Manner and to That Purpose for which he relates it, had a *just Right*, and *good and sufficient Grounds*, to *apply the Prophecy* here cited, as a Prediction of it.

I. I say, This History of our Lord's *miraculous Birth*, evidently in fact *was not*, and in the Nature of Things *could not possibly* be, intended by the Evangelist in this place, as any *Proof*, for the conviction of Unbelievers, either of the Dignity of Christ's Person, or of the Truth of his Doctrine, or of the Reality of his Divine Commission. That it *could not possibly* be alledged in way of *Proof* of any of these things to Unbelievers, is most evident for This Plain Reason; because in the Nature of Things the Fact was *itself* incapable of being proved, till the Truth of Christ's Mission and the Veracity of his Followers had *first* been established. And that *in fact* it was *never* by the Evangelist *intended* as such, appears no less evidently from hence; that though both by St *Matthew* and St *Luke* it be laid down as the *Beginning and Foundation* of

# 8      *The miraculous Birth of Christ.*

S E R M. their Account of the *Life* of Christ, yet  
 1. in the Account they give us of his *Preach-*  
 *ing*, it is never once mentioned by Either  
 of These very Evangelists, or by Either  
 of the Two Other Evangelists, as ever al-  
 ledged by *Christ* in proof of his being the  
 true Messiah. Nor in the Book of the  
*Acts*, is it ever mentioned as urged by the  
*Apostles*, in *Their Preaching* at any time  
 either to *Jews* or *Gentiles*. Nor in any  
 of the *Epistles* of *Paul*, or of any *other*  
 of the Apostles, is it ever referred to un-  
 der That View. It would have been *ab-*  
*surd* to alledge, in preaching to Unbe-  
 lievers, a Fact which *itself presupposed* the  
 Truth of Christ's Mission; and which  
 could not have been proved, without first  
 taking for granted the Truth of That very  
 Doctrine, in Proof of which This Fact  
 was to have been alledged. But the *Be-*  
*ginning* of the *History* of the *Life* of  
 Christ, is a very different thing from the  
*History* of his *beginning* to *Preach* the  
 Gospel. What happened *First* in *Time*,  
 could not but of necessity be *Last* in  
*Proof*: The *Credibility* of the *Invisible*  
 Miracle of his *Birth*, depending entirely  
 on



## The miraculous Birth of Christ.

9


on the *Visible* miraculous Proofs, by which S E R M.  
our Lord afterwards gave Evidence of *his* I.  
own Commission, and by which his Apo-  
stles ascertained *Their own* Veracity, and  
the *Truth* of the Accounts they gave con-  
cerning *Him*.

2. THOUGH it could not indeed be al-  
luded properly, in *Proof* of the Truth of  
his Doctrine to Unbelievers; yet never-  
theless, in the *nature of the Thing*, when  
a Person of such Dignity as our Lord pro-  
fessed himself to be, and with such a Di-  
vine Commission, was to come into the  
World; this one particular Distinction,  
the *miraculous* manner of his *Birth*, was  
*in itself* a very *reasonable, proper, and not*  
*incredible* Circumstance. We are taught  
in Scripture, that as *the first man* and his , Cor. xv.  
Posterity, *were of the Earth, Earthy; the* 47.  
*second man was the Lord from Heaven*.  
And our Lord himself frequently declared  
to his Disciples, that he *came down from* Joh iii. 13.  
*Heaven; that he came forth from the* xvi. 28.  
*Father, and came into the World*. The  
Meaning of these Expressions is explain-  
ed to us in Other places; where it is de-  
clared that he *was in the Beginning The*  
*Word*

S E R M. *Word of God, the original Revealer of the*  
 I. Will of the Almighty to his Creatures,  
 long before he *was made Flesh and dwelt*  
 among Us, even from the Creation of the  
 World: Having been (as St Paul ex-  
 presses it) *in the Form of God*, that is, in  
 the Prophetick Language, the *Angel* or  
*Messenger of the Covenant*, before he *took*  
*upon him the Form of a Servant*, and *was*  
*made in the Likeness of Men*, and *found*  
*in fashion as a Man*; Phil. ii. 8. Now  
 This being the Case; The most *obvious*  
 manner in which it might *naturally* be  
 expected that so extraordinary a Person, a  
 Person of such Dignity as to have had  
 glory with God before the World was; I  
 say, the manner in which it was most  
 natural to have expected that such a Per-  
 son should come into the World, was in  
 a way *different* from the *Sons of Men*.  
 It was the Appointment of Divine Wis-  
 dom, for *Reasons of Government* in the  
 infinite and eternal Kingdom of God over  
 the Universe, that his Mercy and Com-  
 passion towards Penitent Sinners should  
 be dispensed in a particular Method  
 through the Atonement made by the  
 Blood

## *The miraculous Birth of Christ.*

II

Blood of Christ. In order to make This S E R M.  
Atonement, and to become capable of I.  
Suffering as a Sacrifice by the shedding of   
his Blood, it was necessary for the Son of  
God to have *a Body prepared for him* ;  
Heb. x. 5 ; and to be *born* after the *Like-*  
*ness of Men* : Ch. ii. 14 ; *Forasmuch as*  
*the children are Partakers of Flesh and*  
*Blood, he also himself likewise took part of*  
*the same, that through Death he might de-*  
*stroy him that had the Power of Death,*  
*that is, the Devil.* Yet, being *such a*  
Person as the Scripture describes him,  
sent down immediately *from Heaven* ; his  
*Birth* could not *naturally*, if I may so  
speak, but be, *miraculous*, as the Text  
represents it. And *miraculous* as it was,  
it was yet really, in the *nature of the*  
*Thing*, nothing *more miraculous*, except-  
ing only that God has not thought fit  
to do the like *continually* ; it was *in itself*,  
I say, not at all *more miraculous*, than  
what we vulgarly call (without *Any*  
*Meaning* or *Signification* in that Phrase,) *the*  
*Course of Nature* ; that is, the *Course*  
of a *mere empty Word*, or *abstract Notion*,  
which has no *Being* or *Reality of Exis-*  
*tence,*

S E R M. *tence*, and consequently cannot be the efficient *Cause* of any thing.

I.



3. *T H I S* *miraculous Birth* of Christ, the Evangelist had *just reason*, when assured of the Truth of the Fact from things which *followed*, to insert at the *Beginning* of his *History* of our Saviour's *Life*; and, in That Manner, and to That Purpose for which he relates it, had a *just Right*, and *good and sufficient Grounds*, to *apply* the *Prophecy* here cited, as a Prediction of it.


W H E N our Lord first told his Disciples that he *came down from Heaven*, that *he came forth from the Father*, and *came into the World*; they did not clearly understand his Meaning; nor probably did the *Blessed Virgin* herself comprehend the *Reason* of That miraculous Work which God worked in *Her*. But, as St. *Luke* tells us, *Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her Heart*; ch. ii. 19: And so did his Disciples, both with regard to *This*, and to *Many Other* things that *Jesus* did and said; Which at first they *understood not*, and *were afraid to ask him*. But *when Jesus was glorified*; Joh. xii. 16, and

Joh. iii. 13.  
xvi. 28.


Mar. ix.  
32.  
Luke ii.  
50. ix. 45.  
xviii. 34.  
Joh. viii.  
27. x. 6.

## *The miraculous Birth of Christ.*

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and *Luke* xxxiv. 8; *then remembered they* and *S E R M.*  
*understood many things that were written* I.  
*of him, and done and spoken by him.*   
*Again; Job* ii. 22; *When Jesus was risen*  
*from the Dead, then his Disciples remem-*  
*bered that he had said these things unto*  
*them: And they believed the Scripture,*  
*and the Word, which Jesus had said.*  
*When our Lord, by his Resurrection from*  
*the Dead, had confirmed to his Disciples*  
*all the Miracles which he had worked,*  
*and all the Doctrines which he had taught*  
*in his Life-time; and particularly, before*  
*his Ascension into Heaven, had explained*  
*to them the manner of his Descent from*  
*thence; which, among other things, in-*  
*fused them of the Truth, and unfolded to*  
*them the Reason, of the Miraculousness*  
*of his Birth: Then had they just grounds*  
*to declare the Dignity of his Person, and*  
*to expect that Credit should be given by*  
*Believers to the Accounts they had recei-*  
*ved of this miraculous Nativity; though*  
*it was what, in the Nature of the Thing,*  
*could never properly be alledged in their*  
*Preaching, among the Proofs they were*  
*to urge for the Conviction of Infidels.*

FURTHER:

SERM. FURTHER: When our Lord, after  
 I. his Resurrection, *beginning at Moses and*  
 *all the Prophets*, had expounded unto his  
 Apostles *in all the Scriptures the things*  
*concerning himself*, and opened their Un-  
*derstanding*, that they might understand  
*the Scriptures*; Luke xxiv. 27, 45; Then  
 they saw plainly, (and any one Now, who  
 will trace the whole Thread of the Old  
 Testament, may plainly see) that there  
 is a continued Series and Connexion, one  
 uniform Analogy and Design, carried on  
 for many Ages by Divine Prescience through  
 a Succession of Prophecies; which, as in  
 their proper *Centre*, do *All* meet together  
 in *Christ*, and in *Him only*; however the  
*single lines*, when considered *apart*, may  
 many of them be imagined to have ano-  
 ther Direction, and point to intermediate  
 Events. Nothing is more *evident*, than  
 that the *Whole Succession* of *Prophecies*,  
 can possibly be applied to *None* but *Christ*.  
 Nothing is more *miraculous*, than that  
 they should all of them be *capable* of be-  
 ing possibly applied to *Him*. And what-  
 ever *intermediate* Deliverances or Deli-  
 verers of God's People, may *seemingly* or  
*really*

really be spoken of upon particular Oc-  
 casions; nothing is more *reasonable* than  
 to believe; (in the *Apostles* certainly, who  
 conversed personally with our Lord after  
 his Resurrection, nothing could be more  
*reasonable* than to believe,) that the *Ul-  
 timate and General View of the Prophe-  
 tick Spirit* Always was fixed on *Him*, of  
 whom in *Some* of the Antient Prophecies  
 it is *expressly* affirmed, that God's *Servant*  
*David shall be the Prince* over his People  
*for ever*; that *his Dominion* shall be an  
*everlasting Dominion, which shall not pass*  
*away; and his Kingdom, that which shall*  
*not be destroyed.* The Apostle St Matthew  
 therefore had a *just Right, and good and*  
*sufficient Grounds, to apply* to our Lord  
 the *Prophecy* cited by him in my Text.  
 Nor is it of any moment, to what person  
*Abaz* perhaps might think it confined;  
 or in what sense even *Isaiab* himself, pos-  
 sibly, might understand the words. For  
 the Prophets themselves *saw* These things,  
 but *as through a Glass, darkly*; even as  
 the *Apostles* afterwards did, and *We* still  
 do, things that are yet future. For which  
 reason,

S E R M.  
 I.  


Ezek.  
 xxxvii. 25.  
 Dan. vii.  
 14.


## 16      *The miraculous Birth of Christ.*

S E R M. reason, *no Prophecy of the Scripture is*  
I. (as *St Peter* tells us) *of any private In-*  
2 Pet. i. *terpretation*; that is, it relates not to  
20. things within the Prophet's own [*ιδίαις*]  
*personal Knowledge*; For the Prophecy  
*came not in old time by the Will of Man,*  
*but Holy men of God spake as they were*  
*moved by the Holy Ghost.* So that even  
the Prophets themselves could do nothing  
1 Pet. i. more, but *enquire and search diligently*; 10.  
as the same *Apostle* expresses it: *Search-*  
*ing what, or what manner of time, the*  
*Spirit of Christ which was in them did*  
*signify, when it testified beforehand the*  
*Sufferings of Christ, and the glory that*  
*should follow.*-----*Which things,* not on-  
ly the Prophets, but even the *Angels*  
(says he) *desire to look into.* All that was  
*possible,* and all that was *intended,* and all  
that was *needful* to be understood by  
Those who lived in the Ages *before* our  
Saviour; was, that God designed by his  
Prophets to keep up in the world a per-  
petual Expectation and Reliance upon his  
Promises in general, that his True Wor-  
shippers should be sure finally to meet  

2

with



with an *everlasting Deliverance* ; and a S E R M.  
*Saviour*, of whose Kingdom there should I.  
be *no End*. This is what *Abraham* saw   
*afar off*, and rejoiced and *was glad*. And  
This is what *All the Prophecies* in the  
Old Testament most evidently *end* in,  
whatever intermediate Events sometimes  
they may occasionally *begin* with. *That*  
*Prophecy* particularly, cited here by the  
Evangelist in my Text, has *at least thus*  
*much* in it ; what construction *soever* be  
put upon the Words. Whatever can be  
*imagined* to have been in this Prediction  
promised personally to *Abaz*, was fulfil-  
led in its Season : But that the words in  
the Text had *principally*, if not *solely*, a  
Reference to some far greater and more  
lasting Event ; cannot (I think) be doubt-  
ed by any rational person, who considers  
the Solemn *Apostrophe* from *Abaz* to the  
*whole House of Judah*, wherewith they  
are introduced : *Hear ye now, O House* II. vii. 13.  
*of David ;-----the Lord himself shall give*  
*you a Sign*, (that is, not a Sign to *That*  
*generation* then present ; but to *Them* a  
*Promise* of what should *finally* be a Sign

S E R M. or Evidence of God's everlasting Care of  
 I. his People,) *Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his Name Immanuel.* And This is still the more reasonable to be so understood, if it be compared with what the same Prophet says concerning the same person in a chapter nearly following : *Unto Us a Child is born, unto Us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder :----Of the Increase of his Government and Peace there shall be no End,-----from henceforth even for ever.*

THE Application of what has been said, is ; that We who are perswaded of the Truth of Christ's *Mission*, and consequently of his *Doctrine*, must endeavour to live suitably to That Holy Religion, of which We make Profession : Always remembering, that the End and Design of the Gospel is to *Teach us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World ; looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious appearance of the Great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

*The miraculous Birth of Christ.* 19

*Christ.* And particularly that at This S E R M.  
time when we commemorate his Birth, I.  
we keep the Feast, not with the Leaven of  
*Malice and Wickedness*, or of Rioting and  
Debauchery ; but with the unleavened  
*Bread of Sincerity, Soberness, and Truth.*







# S E R M O N II.

The Prediction of the MESSIAH.

[ *Preached on Christmas-Day.* ]



I S A I A H ix. 6.

*Unto Us a Child is born, unto Us a Son  
is given, and the government shall be  
upon his shoulder ; and his Name shall  
be called Wonderful, Counsellour, The  
mighty God, the everlasting Father, the  
Prince of Peace.*



O D, the Supreme Governour S E R M.  
and Lord of the Universe ; II.  
who *worketh all things after*  
*the Council of his Will ;* having  
appointed, in the unsearchable Wisdom

S E R M.

II.



of his Government that the Method by which sinful men should be brought unto Salvation, should be by his Son's Appearing and Suffering in the Flesh; thought fit, from the Beginning of the World, to give men at first obscure Notices, and afterwards by degrees clearer and clearer Predictions, of a Saviour who should come in the fulness of Time, to be their Redeemer, Mediator, Intercessor and Judge. In which whole Dispensation, as in all other Matters, when we affirm that God disposes things *after the Counsel of his own Will*, we must always take care so to understand this, and other the like Expressions of Scripture, that it may signify, not what vain and presumptuous *men* are apt to mean, when *They* talk of acting according to their *own Will and Pleasure*, that is, arbitrarily and without reason; but the meaning of this sort of expressions, when applied to *God*, who can never *please* to do any thing but what is best, is *This only*; that *his* mere Will and Pleasure ought abundantly to satisfy us, that tho' *we* do not perhaps know in particular *what* all the reasons are, yet

*in*

*in reality there always are in the things* S E R M.  
*themselves* the greatest and strongest reasons,  
 upon account of which every thing that II.  
*He* does, is *in itself* the best and fittest  
 to be done. Having therefore in perfect  
 Wisdom, as Supreme Governour and  
 Lord of all, determined to bring sinful  
 Man to Salvation by this particular Method;  
 he opened his divine Intention at first  
 obscurely to *Adam*, by promising that  
*the Seed of the Woman should bruise the*  
*Serpent's Head*: And afterwards a little  
 further to *Abraham*, by showing him  
 that *in His seed should all the Nations*  
*of the Earth be blessed*: Then, with still  
 more distinct circumstances, to *Moses*;  
 under the numerous types and shadows  
 of the Law. And lastly, more and more  
 plainly and explicitly, as the Time drew  
 nearer, by full and clear Predictions  
 of many successive *Prophets*. Under  
 all which several Dispensations, they  
 who obeyed the word of God, according  
 to the manner in which it was Then  
 respectively revealed to them, were each  
 of them entitled to the Benefit of the  
 whole Salyation; and, notwithstanding their

S E R M. different degrees of Knowledge, are all of  
 II. them finally to be gathered together into  
 One in Christ ; so that He, to whom  
 much is revealed, shall have nothing o-  
 ver ; and He, to whom was revealed but  
 little, shall have no lack ; when, at the  
 consummation of all things, they shall all  
 meet in one great and general Assembly of  
 the first-born which are written in Hea-  
 ven ; Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles ;  
 and whosoever have in all Ages, after the  
 pattern of these great Examples, obeyed  
 the Commandments of God as made  
 known to them, whether by the Light of  
 Nature, or by the Law of *Moses*, or by  
 the Gospel of Christ,

OF all the Prophecies in the Old Testa-  
 ment, concerning this Method which the  
 divine Wisdom has appointed, of bring-  
 ing men to Salvation ; there is none that  
 contains a clearer and more distinct, a ful-  
 ler and more particular prediction, than  
 the words now read unto you for the Sub-  
 ject of our present Meditations: *Unto us  
 a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given, and  
 the Government shall be upon his shoulder ;  
 and his Name shall be called Wonderful,  
 Counsellor,*




## *The Prediction of the Messiah.*

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*Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.* In S E R M.  
II.


In discoursing upon which words at This Time, the Method shall be, to consider and explain distinctly the several particulars, whereof the Text consists, in the Order they lie; and from each particular so explained, to infer in its place, as we go along, what may be usefully and practically deduced therefrom.

*Unto Us a Child is born*: These words, as they sound in the *English*, may seem at first sight to express nothing more, than the natural Birth of some eminent person. But in the strict sense of the original, and according to the intention of the whole Prophecy, it is plain they must be so understood, as if they had been thus rendred; *Unto us is born The Child*, absolutely and by way of eminence; That *Child*, whom *all* the Prophecies from the beginning of the World, in their final intention pointed at; whom *this* Prophecy of *Isaiah*, thro' every part of it, describes under different Characters; and whom the Text may reasonably be supposed to refer to as *particularly before-mentioned*; ch. vii. 14.  
*The*


S E R M. *The Lord himself shall give you a Sign ;*  
 II. *behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a*  
 *Son, and shall call his Name Immanuel.*

This Birth of Christ ; as its being of a *Virgin*, was a mark of Dignity more than human ; that He, who by the Will of his Father was the *Author* of Nature, might be distinguished by being born not after the *Course* of Nature ; so the *Birth, itself*, his *being born at all*, and coming into the World as a *Child*, was an evidence of the reality of his Incarnation. He was *found* (saith St Paul) *in fashion as a Man*, and was *made in the likeness of Men* : The meaning is ; not in the likeness of our *nature*, in the *appearance* only, as opposed to the *reality* ; but he was made after the likeness of *other Men*, by *really* partaking of our infirm *Nature*.

I N order to *redeem* mankind after *that* Method which the Wisdom of God had from the beginning appointed, it was necessary that Christ should *suffer* ; and in order to *That Suffering*, it was necessary that he should be *born* after the likeness of Men. *Forasmuch as the children* (saith the Apostle) *are partakers of Flesh and Blood,*  
 be


he also himself took part of the same, that S E R M.  
 through Death he might destroy him that II.  
 had the Power of Death, that is, the De-  
 vil;-----Wherefore in all things it beho-  
 ved him to be made like unto his Brethren,  
 (tempted in all points like as we are, only  
 without sin; and capable of being touch-ch. iv. 15.  
 ed with the feeling of our infirmities;)   
 that he might be a merciful and faithful  
 High-Priest in things pertaining to God,  
 to make reconciliation for the Sins of the  
 people; For in that He himself has suffered  
 being tempted, he is able to succour them  
 that are tempted; Heb. ii. 14. And from  
 hence the same Apostle in another place,  
 though There indeed he speaks figuratively  
 concerning Christ's mystical Body the  
 Church, yet from hence it is that the  
 Ground of his manner of expressing him-  
 self is taken; We are members (saith he)  
 of his Body, of his Flesh and of his  
 Bones.

THE proper Use of this first Observa-  
 tion in the Text, the humiliation of Christ  
 in his Birth, is what St Paul infers from  
 the same observation; *Phil. ii. 5; Let This*  
*mind, the same humble mind, be in You,*  
*which*

S E R M. *which was also in Christ Jesus ; who tho'*  
 II. *he was in the form of God, invested with*  
 *Divine Authority and Dominion, yet was*  
*not greedy of appearing as God (so the*  
*words are in the Original ; ) but----took*  
*upon him the form of a servant, and was*  
*made in the Likeness of Men ; and glori-*  
*fied not Himself to be made an High-Priest,*  
*but was glorified by Him that begat him ;*  
*Heb. v. 5 ; and honoured not Himself,*  
*but was honoured by Him that sent him ;*  
*Joh. viii. 54.*

IT follows ; *Unto Us a Son is gi-*  
*ven.* And these words also, like those  
 fore-going, must be understood absolute-  
 ly and by way of Eminence : *Unto us is*  
*given The Son ; That Son of Man, who*  
*was so, as no other ever was, the Son of*  
*Man ; who was so, as no other ever can*  
*be, the Son of God : That divine Person,*  
*who was the Subject of all the Prophecies,*  
*from the foundation of the World, and*  
*the Expectation of all Nations. The*  
*original of the former character, his being*  
*the Son of Man, is that sublime descrip-*  
*tion which the prophet Daniel gives of his*  
*Vision ; ch. vii. 13 ; I saw in the Night-*  
*Visions,*


*Visions, and behold, one like the Son of S E R M. Man, came with the clouds of Heaven, and II. came to the antient of days, and they brought him near before him; and there was given him dominion and glory and a Kingdom.* From this prophetic description it is, that our Saviour in the Gospels is so constantly characterized by That Title of *the Son of Man*: Mat. xxiv. 30; *Then shall appear the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven,* (the Signal given you by the Prophet *Daniel*, the Signal of That *Son of Man* there described,) *and they shall see him coming in the clouds of Heaven with Power and great Glory.* And *Joh. iii. 13; The Son of Man which is in Heaven.* And in the book of the *Revelation. ch. i. 13; the very words of Daniel* are transcribed; *one like unto the Son of Man; and ch. xiv. 14; Upon the cloud one sat, like unto the Son of Man.* The other character of our Saviour, his being the *Son of God*, was given him *first* upon account of his being *born miraculously* of the Virgin by the immediate Power of God, *Luc. i. 35; Then again, upon account of his being raised from the dead by* *Luc. i. 32. Mar. v. 7.*  
the

S E R M. the like miraculous Power of the Almighty; *Rom. i. 4: Acts xiii. 33.* And  
 II.  lastly, upon account of his being revealed to be That divine Person, who, deriving his Being from the Father in a singular and incomprehensible manner; and having been with the Father, from the Beginning; and having had Glory with Him, before the World was; and having originally exercised the Father's Power, in the Creation of the World; and having since in all ages appeared *in the form of God*, as the Word, the Messenger, the Representative, the *Image, of the Invisible God*; at length, in the Fulness of  
 Joh. i. 14. Time, was *made Flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

U N T O Us, says the Prophet in the Text, is this Son of God given: unto Us, as it was *Then* literally understood, the *posterity of Abraham*, the Nation of the *Jews*; but, as it is *Now* distinctly revealed in the Gospel, and as it was even *Then* obscurely predicted, unto Us *Gentiles* also is he given; unto us that are *far off*,

## *The Prediction of the Messiah.*

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off, as well as to them that are *near* ; unto S E R M.  
us *Sinners*, of all Nations and of all Ages ; II.  
even unto *all Mankind*, who are willing   
to repent, and reform their manners, and  
make acknowledgment of the Truth ;  
For God *would have all men to be saved*,  
and wills *not that any should perish*, but  
*that all should come to repentance* : Nay  
even to *Them* therefore which never heard  
of him, must the Benefit of his Coming  
extend, according to the proportion of  
their Capacities unknown to us ; For *the*  
*Mercy of God is, without exception, over*  
*all his works.*

To Us is This Son *given*. It is not with-  
out reason, that the word *given* is so care-  
fully and constantly inserted, and so great  
an emphasis and stress laid upon it, in al-  
most all the Texts of both the Old and  
New Testament, which mention the com-  
ing of Christ into the World. The intent of  
it is, to express to us distinctly the respec-  
tive parts, which the Father and the Son  
bore in the redemption of the World ;  
that neither the One, nor the Other, nei-  
ther he that gave, nor he that was willing  
to be given for us, should be defrauded  
of

S E R M. of their proper Honour. That God gave  
 II. his Son, out of his bosom ; is expressive  
 to us of the *Father's Supreme Authority*,  
 and of his original, essential, and eternal  
*Goodness*: That the Son gave *himself* for  
 us, or was *willing* to be given, denotes the  
*Love* of *Christ* towards Mankind ; and  
 explains the *Justice* of his being appointed  
 to suffer, tho' he was an *innocent* person ;  
 because *That* appointment, as it was  
 by the Will of the Father, so it was also  
 by his own free consent. The *first* of  
 these, *viz.* the *Supreme Authority* of the  
*Father*, is set forth in those Texts of  
 Scripture, where it is affirmed that *in*  
*the fulness of Time* God sent forth his Son,  
 Gal. iv. 4 ; that he saved us according to  
 his own purpose and grace in *Christ Jesus*,  
 2 Tim. viii. 9 ; even according to the pur-  
 pose of Him who worketh all things after  
 the counsel of his own Will ; Eph. i. 11.  
 And indeed in the Nature of things it is  
 evident, that the Supreme Power to  
 whom the satisfaction is to be made, must  
 appoint *what* satisfaction he will be pleas-  
 ed to accept. The *Second* of these, *viz.*  
 the *original Goodness* of the *Father*, is  
 set



set forth in those Texts, where the Scrip- S E R M.  
ture teaches us, *that God so loved the* II.  
*World, that he gave his only begotten Son,*  
*that whosoever believeth on him should not*  
*perish, but have everlasting life; Joh. iii.*  
*16; and 1 Joh. iv. 9; In this was mani-*  
*fested the Love of God towards us, because*  
*that God sent his only-begotten Son into the*  
*World, that we might live through Him;*  
*and ver. 10; he loved us, and sent his Son*  
*to be the propitiation for our Sins. The*  
*third particular, viz. the Love of Christ*  
*in being willing to be thus sent or given*  
*for us, is expressed in those Texts, where-*  
*in we are taught, that Christ gave himself*  
*a ransom for all; 1 Tim. ii. 6; that he*  
*gave himself for us, that he might redeem*  
*us from all iniquity; Tit. ii. 14. And*  
*Both these together, (the Authority and*  
*Goodness of the Father in giving his Son,*  
*and the Love of Christ in being willing*  
*to be given for us,) are expressed in one,*  
*Gal. i. 4; who gave himself for us, ac-*  
*ording to the Will of God and our Fa-*  
*ther.*

S E R M.

II.

that we acknowledge *primarily* the original essential *Goodness* and *Compassion* of God our Father, as the *first* Cause and Author of our Salvation; upon which account, St Paul frequently styles the Father, *God our Saviour*; and that therefore we look not upon him as a cruel and implacable Judge; but on the contrary extoll with all thankfulness our *Redemption* through Christ, *to the praise of the glory of His Grace, who has made us accepted in the beloved, and has given us the Adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his own Will*; Eph i. 5. 2dly, That in the next place we thankfully express our Gratitude also to our *Saviour himself*, who condescended for our sakes to become Man; who Eph. v. 2. *loved us, and gave himself for us*; and Rev. i. 5. *washed us from our Sins in his own blood, and has made us Kings and Priests to God and his Father*. 3dly, That from *This Great Instance* of the divine Grace and Goodness, we learn to depend upon the same Beneficence for all *other* good things likewise: For *He that spared not his own Son,*

Son, but delivered him for us all, how shall he not with Him also freely give us all things; Rom. viii. 32. Not, a Liberty to sin, that Grace may further abound; God forbid; but all good things, all things really profitable to our present and future Happiness. Lastly, that from this wonderful Love of God towards Us, we learn our own Obligation to love one another; 1 Joh. iv. 11; Beloved, if God so loved Us, we ought also to love one another.

S E R M.  
II.  



AND thus much concerning the first part of the words, *Unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given.*

IT follows; *And the Government shall be upon his Shoulder.* The Jews, though they acknowledged these words were to be applied to the Messiah, yet they understood them of the Dominion only of a temporal Prince, who should subdue their enemies for them. But the opening of this Prophecy by degrees in further predictions, was such as ought to have given Them better Notions of this matter; and the Account We have in the New Testament of the accomplishment of all those


S E R M. II. predictions has from Us removed all appearance of difficulty in the understanding them. The true meaning of the words, is begun to be opened in the very next verse immediately following the Text; *Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the Throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever*; ver. 7. In the Prophecy of Daniel, it is explained a little further; ch. ii. 44; *The God of Heaven shall set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed,--- and it shall stand for ever.* And still more clearly; ch. vii. 13; *I saw in the night-visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of Heaven, and came to the Antient of days, and they brought him near before him; And there was given him dominion and glory and a Kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* This was a sufficiently plain intimation, that the Kingdom of the Messiah was not to be  
a worldly

a worldly temporal Kingdom. The Ap-<sup>S E R M.</sup>  
plication of these Prophecies to *Christ*, is <sup>II.</sup>  
made expressly by the Angel to the Blef-  
fed Virgin; *Luke i. 32: He shall be great,*  
*and shall be called the Son of the Highest,*  
*-----and he shall reign over the house of*  
*Jacob for ever, and of his Kingdom there*  
*shall be no end.* What manner of Domi-  
nion this was to be, our Saviour himself  
began more clearly to explain; *Mat. xxviii.*  
*18: All Power is given to me in Heaven*  
*and Earth.* This discovered that it was  
to be a *spiritual* Kingdom, more *exten-*  
*sive*, as well as more *lasting*, than Earth-  
ly Dominions. The Principal *Acts* of  
Power in this spiritual Kingdom, are ex-  
pressed by *St. Peter*; *Acts x. 42: He is or-*  
*dained of God to be Judge of Quick and*  
*Dead*; and *that through his Name whosoever*  
*believeth in him shall receive remission of*  
*Sins.* And the full *Extent* of this whole  
*Dominion* is set forth by *St Paul*, in those  
passages of his *Epistles*, where he tells us  
that *Christ sitteth at the right hand of the*  
*Throne of God*, being *Head over all things*; <sup>Heb. xii.</sup>  
*exalted far above all principality, and pow-*  
*er, and might, and dominion, and every* <sup>Eph. i. 22.</sup>  
<sup>Col. ii. 10.</sup>  
<sup>Phil. ii. 11.</sup>  
<sup>Eph. i. 22.</sup>

S E R M . *name that is named not only in This World,*  
 II. *but also in that which is to come ; Angels*  
 I Pet. iii. *and Authorities and Powers being made*  
 22. *subject unto him, and all things put under*  
 I Cor. xv. *his feet.* To which description, the Apo-  
 27. *stle yet thought it necessary to add the*  
 Eph. i. 22. *following caution ;* I Cor. xv. 24, 27 ;  
 Heb. ii. 8. *But when he saith all things are put under*  
*him, it is manifest that he is accepted which*  
*did put all things under him ; And (in the*  
*end) when all things shall be subdued unto*  
*him, then shall the Son also himself be sub-*  
*ject unto Him that put all things under*  
*Him, (having delivered up the Kingdom to*  
*God even the Father,) that God even the*  
*Father may be all in all.* Which deliver-  
*ing up of the Kingdom, if any one asked*  
*how it is consistent with those foremen-*  
*tioned prophecies of his reigning for ever ;*  
*the Answer is plain, That as of the Saints,*  
*under Christ their Head and Lord, it is*  
*affirmed, Rev. xxii. 5, that they shall reign*  
*for ever and ever ; so of Christ in an in-*  
*initely higher sense, even after his deli-*  
*vering up the Kingdom to the Father, it*  
*will still be true, that of his Dominion*  
*with and under the Father, there shall be*

*no End.* And This is the full meaning of S E R M.  
*That* Expression, *The Government shall* II.  
*be upon his shoulder.* 

THE remaining part of the Text, is a further Description of the *Person*, upon *whose shoulder* it was prophesied *This Government should be*; it is a further description of his *Person*, under four distinct Names or Characters. The *First* is; *And his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor.* The term, *Wonderful*, signifies, that the Person was to be of *Secret* and *Greater Dignity*, than the *Jews* expected: And so the word is of the same import, with that more antient intimation given to *Jacob*, when he wrestled with him; *Gen. xxxii. 29*; *Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my Name?* and to *Manoah*; *Judg. xiii. 18*; *Why askest thou thus after my Name, seeing it is secret?* The other term, *Counsellor*, signifies the Re-  
μεγάλης  
βουλῆς  
ἐγγυηλῆ  
Acts xx.  
27.  
1 Cor. ii. 7.  
Eph. iii. 9.  
10, 11.  
Col. i. 26.  
Rom. xvi.  
25.  
*vealer of the Secret Counsel of God*; For so the Gospel is frequently stiled in Scripture, the whole *Counsel of God*; the *hidden wisdom*; the *mystery which has been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his Saints*; the *mystery* which

S E R M. *which was kept secret since the World began, but now is made manifest: and by the*  
 II. *Scriptures of the Prophets, according to the*  
 *commandment of the everlasting God, made*  
*known to all Nations for the obedience of*  
 John i. 1. *Faith. Upon This account it is, that*  
 Rev. xix. *Christ is called The Word of God, the*  
 13. *Revealer of his Will, the Angel or Mes-*  
 Mal. iii. 1. *senger of his Covenant, and, in the words*  
*of the Text, Wonderful, Counsellor.*

THE *Second Character* is, He shall be  
 called *The mighty God, or mighty Lord.*  
 The meaning of which phrase, has been  
 already in good measure explained under  
 that foregoing character, *The government*  
*shall be upon his shoulder; And the com-*  
*pleat import of it is more fully expres-*  
*sed to us in those places of the New Te-*  
 Heb. i. 2. *stament, wherein Christ is stiled Heir of*  
 Acts x. 36. *all things, Lord of all or over all, Lord*  
 Rom x. *both of the Dead and Living, the Prince*  
 12. xiv. 9. *of the Kings of the Earth, the Lord of*  
 Rev. i. 5. *Lords and King of Kings, and, in one*  
 xvii. 14. *word, (by the appointment of the Fa-*  
 xix. 16. *ther,) our Judge, our Lord, and our God:*  
 Heb i. 8. *The Sum and Intent of all which Titles*  
 John i. 1. *together, is accurately set forth by St*  
 xx. 28.



## *The Prediction of the Messiah.*

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*Paul in that most lively description ; S E R M. II.*  
*Phil. ii. 9 ; God has given him a Name*  
*which is above every Name ; that at the*  
*name of Jesus every knee should bow, (every*  
*Creature should submit to His Authority,) of things in Heaven, and things in Earth,*  
*and things under the Earth ; and that*  
*ever tongue should confess that Jesus*  
*Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the*  
*Father.*

THE *Third Character is, He shall be called the everlasting Father.* Which Phrase, as it lies in our Translation, is very apt to be mistaken. For if thereby be understood, that the *Son* is the *Father* ; this would be plainly *confounding the Persons* of the *Father* and the *Son*, and (by a manifest Absurdity) making *the Son* to be *the Father of Himself*. Which manner of speaking is so much the worse, because there were in the Primitive times certain False Teachers who did so speak, and whose Doctrine (being of worse consequence than at first sight appeared) was severely reprov'd by the Apostles. *He is an Antichrist, saith St John, that denieth the Father and the Son ; 1 Joh. ii. 22 : And they*

S E R M. *they shall bring in, saith St Peter, dam-*  
 II. *nable heresies, even denying the Lord that*  
 ~~~~~ *bought them ; 2 Pet. ii. 1 ; speaking of*  
*those, who in reality denied our Saviour*  
*to have any Being at all, by making the*  
*Son to be nothing else but merely another*  
 Best Co. Name for the Father. The true render-  
 pies of ing therefore of these words of the Pro-  
 LXX. phet, is, not *the everlasting Father*, but  
 Πατήρ μέλ- the Father or Lord of the future ever-  
 λοντος αἰῶ- lasting Age, the Age of the Gospel ; con-  
 ρου. cerning which the Apostle declares ; Heb. ii.  
 Pater se- 5 ; that to Christ only, and not to Angels,  
 culi finiri. hath God put in subjection this Age to  
 Vulg. come.

*Lastly ; THE Fourth and Last Character* here given to our Saviour, is, that He shall be called *The Prince of Peace*. The meaning of which Title, was first in some degree explained by the Angels to the Shepherds, when they sung that Hymn ; *Luke ii. 14 ; Peace on Earth, good will towards Men ;* which was well answered with That *Hosannah*, the Disciples sung to our Saviour ; *ch. xix. 38 : Peace in Heaven*, that is, reconciliation with God. More distinctly afterwards by *St. Peter ;*

*Acts*

*Acts* x. 36, 43 ; God sent unto the children S E R M.  
of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, II.  
he is Lord of All; (that is, establishing   
Peace and Unity between Jews and Gen-  
tiles, under Jesus Christ their Common  
Lord,) that through his Name whosoever  
believeth in him, should receive remission of  
Sins. Most fully and clearly of all, by  
St Paul ; *Rom.* v. 1 : Being justified by  
Faith, we have Peace with God, through  
our Lord Jesus Christ : and *Eph.* ii. 14 ;  
He is our Peace, who hath made Both One,  
that is, both Jews and Gentiles ; and hath  
-----reconciled Both unto God in one Body  
by the Cross, having-----preached Peace  
to you which were afar off, and to them  
that were nigh : and *Col.* 19 ; It plea-  
sed the Father-----by Him, (having made  
Peace through the Blood of his Cross) 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. The Uses of  
this last particular are ; First, Since God  
has graciously been pleased to send us this  
Word of reconciliation by the Prince of  
Peace, that therefore *We on our part* be  
also willing to be reconciled to Him, by  
forsaking

S E R M. forsaking those Sins which are the cause  
 II. of his displeasure ; *Now then, saith St Paul, we are ambassadors for Christ ; as though God did beseech you by us ; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God ; 2 Cor. v. 20. Secondly, Having so great an Intercessour for us, as the Prince of Peace Himself, the Son of the living God ; that therefore we come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, having access with confidence through the Faith of him ; Heb. x. 19 ; Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us ;-----and having an High-Priest over the house of God ; let us draw near with a true Heart, in full assurance of Faith. Thirdly, That yet we be careful to consider, that this peace and reconciliation purchased for us by Christ, is only upon condition of our future obedience : For so the Apostle adds in the words next immediately following those now cited ; let us draw near-----in full assurance of faith, having our Heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure Water ; that is, having our minds cleansed with that purification*

Heb. iv.  
 16.  
 Eph. iii.  
 12.

rification from wickedness, the Sign and S E R M.  
Emblem of which is the Baptism of Wa- II.  
ter : And *Col. i. 23* ; God hath now re-  
*conciled you to himself, saith St. Paul, if*  
*ye continue in the faith, grounded and set-*  
*tled, and be not moved away from the hope of*  
*the Gospel. Fourthly, That having so great*  
*a Mediatour as the Prince of Peace appoint-*  
*ed us of God, we suffer no others to be*  
*joined with him by humane invention. For*  
*as worshipping any other God, besides the*  
*Father Almighty, is Idolatry against God :*  
*So worshipping any other Mediatour, besides*  
*his only Son our Lord, is Idolatry against*  
*Christ, or setting up Idol-Mediatours. They*  
*who worship Saints and Angels, beguile*  
*themselves of their reward, saith the Apo-*  
*stle, not holding the Head, which is Christ ;*  
*Col. ii. 18. Lastly, Upon this particular*  
*great occasion of commemorating thank-*  
*fully the Birth of the Prince of Peace,*  
*let us keep the Feast worthily and as be-*  
*cometh Christians ; not with old leaven, nei-*  
*ther with the leaven of malice and wicked-*  
*ness, or of rioting and debauchery, but*  
*with the unleavened bread of Sincerity,*  
*Soberness and Truth.*





# S E R M O N III.

The Character of the MESSIAH.

[*Preached on Christmas-Day.*]



GAL. iv. 4, 5.

*But when the fulness of time was come,  
God sent forth his Son made of a woman,  
made under the law ; To redeem them  
that were under the law, that we might  
receive the adoption of Sons.*




THE principal Design of St Paul S E R M. III.  
in this Epistle, is to vindicate the truth and justice of  
God in abolishing the Jew-  
ish religion so far as concerned the Gen-  
tile Converts, and establishing the Chri-  
stian

## III.



*stian* alone in its room: against those who contended that even the *Gentile* Disciples were obliged to observe the law of *Moses*, and that the Religion of Christ was to be added to That of *Moses*, and not That of *Moses* to be taken away by Christ. Amongst many Arguments which the Apostle makes use of to confute these false Teachers, he begins this *ivth* chapter with the Similitude of a young Heir's being under Tutors and Governours; ver. 1 and 2; *Now I say, that the Heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a Servant, though he be lord of all; But is under Tutors and Governours, until the time appointed of the Father.* Which Similitude he applies in the *3d* verse, and in the words of the Text; *Even So We*, says he, *when we were children, We of the Jewish dispensation, were in bondage under the elements of the world; But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons.* The Meaning is: Before the World was prepared for the reception of the Gospel,  
God



God thought fit to oblige men to observe S E R M.  
those first and more imperfect rudiments, III.  
which were instituted in the *Jewish* law ;   
But when the time was come that the *Messiah*  
should appear, God did by him abolish *That*  
institution of religion, (at least as to the  
Necessity of its being embraced by the  
*Gentiles*) and redeemed or freed men from  
the servile obedience thereof ; requiring from  
them thenceforward, only *That* free, *That*  
manly and rational obedience, which is the  
duty and privilege not of Servants but of  
Sons ; *That we might receive the Adoption of Sons.*

IN the Words we may observe, *1st,*  
The Character of the person sent into the  
World ; *God sent forth his Son.* *2dly,* His  
Condition and Manner of Conversation  
among men ; *he was made of a woman,*  
*made under the law.* *3dly,* The Design  
of this his coming ; it was *To redeem*  
*those that were under the law, that we*  
*might receive the adoption of Sons.* And  
*4thly,* The particular Time of his ap-  
pearing ; *When the fulness of time was*  
*come.*

S E R M.

III.



Ist, H E R E is the Character of the person sent into the World ; *God sent forth his Son.* The Phrase is of the same import, with those other expressions we meet with in Scripture ; *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life ;* Joh. iii. 16 : and, *God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son ;* Heb. i. 1. The Meaning is : God having of old established several Forms of Religion among men, by divers ways of revelation, by discovering himself to the Patriarchs, by the delivering of the law to *Moses*, and by the preaching of the prophets ; and all these Methods having proved severally ineffectual to make men truly virtuous, to recover God's Creation from the *Corruption and Bondage* of Sin, and much more insufficient to afford any effectual means of redeeming them from the *Guilt* thereof ; he did at last in mercy and compassion to mankind vouchsafe to afford them one more clear and perfect revelation of his

his

his Will, by the preaching of a person S E R M.  
of far greater excellence and authority than III.  
*Any before* ; even by his *own Son*. This  
expression therefore of *God's sending forth*  
*his Son*, implies plainly these two things ;  
*first*, that the person here declared to be  
sent forth into the World, was in a sin-  
gular and peculiar manner the Son of  
God ; and *2dly*, that he was *with* God,  
before he was sent into the World. *1st*,  
The person here declared to be sent into  
the World, was in a peculiar manner the  
Son of God. Many Senses there are in  
which a person may be said to be the Son  
of God ; and in great variety of signifi-  
cation does the Scripture itself make use  
of this expression. The *Angels* are styled  
the *Sons of God*, Job. xxxviii. 7 ; and *Adam*  
is said to be the *Son of God*, Luk. iii. 38 ;  
because immediately created by him :  
They who are *sanctified* by the *Spirit of*  
*God*, are called the *Sons of God*, Rom. viii.  
14 ; because they live in obedience to his  
government, and so are Members of his  
Family or Household ; They who shall be  
thought worthy to obtain *that life which*  
*is to come*, are called the *Sons of God*, Luk.

S E R M. XX. 36 ; because they are as it were anew  
 III. created of God, being the Children of  
 the resurrection, to eternal Happiness :  
 They who are appointed to any *high Office* by the special and immediate Will of God, are also called *Gods*, or the *Sons of God*, because they act in his stead, or as his Vicegerents ; and in this Sense our Saviour himself uses the phrase in his Reply to the *Jews* ; John x. 34 ; *Is it not written in your law, I said ye are Gods ? If he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God ?* These therefore and some other Senses there are, in which the Scripture gives men that great title of being *the Sons of God*. And the reason why any person is so called, is generally expressly added, or at least plainly included in the words ; as in the instance of *Adam* ; of those who shall be raised from the Dead ; and of Princes, or sanctified Men and Prophets being stiled *the Sons of God*. But when the title is given to our  
 Blessed



Blessed Saviour it is given him either *absolutely* and by way of eminence, or with some high and particular Note of distinction. It is sometimes given him *absolutely* and by way of *eminence*; as in the Text he is called *The Son of God*; and then 'tis plain from the manner of the expression, that it is to be understood in a high and peculiar Sense: For when a title which may be given men upon different respects, and frequently is so in very different significations, according to the occasion upon which it is conferred, and with manifest reference to that occasion; when I say such a title is given to any particular person *absolutely and by way of eminence*, it is manifest it is then to be understood in the highest and most excellent Sense. In *other* passages of Scripture, this title is given him with some high and particular Note of *distinction*, as *only begotten, beloved, God's dear Son, his own Son*, and the like: *Rom. viii. 3; What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for Sin, i. e. as the Words may more*

S E R M. properly be rendred, *by being a Sacrifice*  
 III. *for Sin, condemned Sin in the flesh:* and  
 w Job. i. 14; *The Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* The Angels (as I before observed) are called *the Sons of God*; Job xxxviii. 7. But unto which of the Angels said he at any time with so peculiar an Emphasis, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?* Heb. i. 5. This therefore is so distinguishing an expression, that it necessarily implies our Saviour to be the Son of God in a different and more exalted sense than the Angels themselves are; For in the next verse the Apostle brings *Them* in as his Ministers, subjected unto him, and paying honour to him; ver. 6; *When he bringeth in the first begotten into the World, he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him.* And ch. ii. ver. 16; 'Tis said, *He took not on him the nature of Angels,* (which shows that it would have been a great condescension in him to have done even *That*) *but he took upon him the seed of Abraham, i. e. the nature*

ture of *Man*: But because this was written to the *Jews*, among whom Christ was born, and to whom he first preached, therefore it is not said the Nature of *Men*, but the Seed of *Abraham*. Further; even in that singular and peculiar application of it to *our Lord only*, there is also some variety: For he is so stiled, on account of his miraculous conception, *Luke* i. 35; then, of his Office, *Job*. x. 34; then, of his Resurrection, *Acts* xiii. 33, and *Rom*. i. 4; then, of his being appointed Heir of all things, and as a Son in his own house; *Heb*. iii. 6. But beyond all this, there is still something further implied in the Use of this Phrase: For the Text supposes, secondly, that he was *with* God, in the bosom of the Father, before he was sent into the World; *God sent forth his Son*; For though the word which we here render, *send forth*, be also applied in Scripture to God's sending his Prophets to the *Jews*, and our Saviour's commissioning his Apostles to preach the Gospel; and so may properly signify in *general*, *only* the *appointing* a person to execute any office or commission, yet when it is ap-

S E R M. plied to our Saviour's *coming into the*  
 III. *World*, (or coming forth from the Father  
 ~~~~~ into the World) as in the words now  
 mentiond, it clearly implies, that he who  
 was thus sent *into the world from God*,  
 was *with God*, in the glory of the Father,  
 before he was sent into the World: As  
 appears both from the natural Force of the  
 expreffion itself, and more fully from those  
 parallel places of Scripture, which men-  
 tion to us the same thing. *Job. xvii. 5* ;  
 Our Saviour prays thus to his Father, *And*  
*now, O Father, glorify me with thine own*  
*self, with the glory which I had with thee*  
*before the world was* : Again *Job. iii. 13* ;  
*No man hath ascended into Heaven, but*  
*he that came down from Heaven, even the*  
*Son of man which is in Heaven* : And a-  
 gain, *ch. xvi. 28* ; he saith unto his Dis-  
 ciples, *I came forth from the Father, and*  
*am come into the world* ; again, *I leave*  
*the world, and go to the Father*. Which  
 words his Disciples thought so plainly to  
 signify his having been *with God*, in the  
 glory of the Father, before he was sent  
 into the World ; that they immediately  
 answered him ; *ver. 29* ; *Now speakest thou*  
*plainly,*



*plainly, and speakest no parable: By this* S E R M.  
III.  
*we believe that thou camest forth from*  
*God. The Use the Scripture makes of*  
*This consideration, of the Dignity of the*  
*Person, by whom God has been pleased*  
*to declare his Mercy in the Gospel; that*  
*it was the only begotten Son of God, sent*  
*down from Heaven to take our Nature*  
*upon him; I say, the Use which the Scri-*  
*pture makes of This consideration, is*  
*This: Heb. ii. 2; If the word spoken by*  
*Angels was stedfast, and every transgres-*  
*sion and disobedience received a just re-*  
*compence of Reward; How shall we e-*  
*scape, if we neglect so great Salvation,*  
*which at the first began to be spoken by the*  
**L O R D !**

*Secondly, H E R E is a description of this*  
*divine Person's condition, and his manner*  
*of conversation in the World; He was*  
*made of a woman, made under the Law.*  
*He was made of a Woman, i. e. he be-*  
*came truly and really a Man; not taking*  
*upon him only the similitude of our Na-*  
*ture, and appearing in the form and ap-*  
*pearance of a Man, but being really and*  
*truly such; subjected to all the infirmities*  
*of*

S E R M. *of humane nature, and tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin ; Heb. iv. 15.*

III.



For (as the Apostle observes ; *Heb. ii. 17 ;*) *in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people : For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.* It follows ; *he was made under the law ; i. e.* he was subject and obedient to it. By the *law*, some understand here the moral law of God ; and that, by our Saviour's being made under the law, is meant his performing perfect and complete obedience to the law of God : that so, by having in his own person unfinning obedience to the law of God, he might become the Author of eternal Salvation, to all those that should believe and repent ; and that by having first obeyed those commandments himself, to which he required obedience from others, he might become an example of obedience to his Disciples. All which, is indeed very true : But yet, because by *the law* the Apostle  
in

in this Epistle means generally the ceremonial law, or that part of the *Mosaick* institution which is opposed to the Christian religion, and superseded by it; and because 'tis most probable he must in this place concerning our Saviour's submitting to *that* law, which in the words immediately following 'tis said the design of his coming into the World was to redeem men from; therefore 'tis more reasonable to conclude, that, by his being *made under the law*, the Apostle intends in this place, that our Saviour was born in the nation and under the religion of the *Jews*; that he was circumcised according to the commandment of *Moses*; that he submitted to and performed the whole ceremonial law, (fulfilling even in *that* sense all righteousness;) that having perfectly obeyed the law in his Life, he might for ever abolish that part of it at his Death, and free his followers from the Servitude thereof.

3dly, HERE is the *End* and *Design* of his coming thus into the World, set forth in the last part of the words; *To redeem them that were under the law, that we might*

S E R M.  
III.  


S E R M. *might receive the adoption of Sons.* The  
 III. same phrase the Apostle again makes use  
 of in the Epistle to the *Romans*; ch. viii.  
 ver. 15; *Ye have not received the Spirit of  
 Bondage again to fear, but ye have received  
 the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba,  
 Father; i. e.* God deals not with Us as a Ma-  
 ster with his Servants, but as a Father with  
 his Sons, requiring of us not any hard  
 and burdensome service, but only a ratio-  
 nal and sincere obedience. Our Lord came  
*to redeem them that were under the law;*  
*i. e.* to abrogate the burdensome ceremo-  
 nies of the *Jewish* institution; *That we  
 might receive the adoption of Sons; i. e.*  
 that he might establish with men a New  
 Covenant, which should be most *easy* to  
 observe, and most *sufficient* to justify those  
 that should observe it. Most *easy* to ob-  
 serve, is this Covenant of the Gospel;  
 because its precepts are not positive and  
 carnal Ordinances, but the great duties of  
 the moral and eternal law of God, which  
 are absolutely and in their own nature  
 most acceptable to God, and most per-  
 fective of men; and 'tis most *sufficient* to  
 justify those who shall live according to it,

because their works shall not be judged S E R M.  
III.  
with strictness and rigour, but through the intercession of Christ, their sincerity shall be accepted instead of perfect obedience: In the *former* respect (its being easy to observe;) the Christian institution is called the *Law of liberty*; Jam. i. 25: and the *glorious liberty* of the Sons of God; Rom. viii. 21: and Gal. iv. 7; *Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a Son.* In the *latter* respect, namely, in respect of its sufficiency to justify those that shall live suitably to it, the Christian institution is called the *righteousness of God*: Rom. iii. 20, 21; *By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God, which is by Faith in Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe; And, by it all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses*; Acts xiii. 39. There being several great Crimes, for which no regular Expiation was allowed under the law; from which Curse, men  
are

S E R M. are now by true Repentance and Amend-  
 III. ment, delivered under the Gospel: Which  
 is *therefore* stiled the Righteousness of  
 God to men. This is the Adoption, where-  
 by we become Sons of God, and Heirs of  
 Salvation: This is the Liberty wherewith  
 Christ has made us free: We are not ob-  
 liged to any impossible performances, nor  
 to any grievous and burdensome rites; but  
 if we sincerely repent, and return to the  
 obedience of God's Commands, according  
 to the gracious Terms and Conditions of  
 the Gospel; we shall, through the inter-  
 cession of Christ, be accepted by our hea-  
 venly Father. But then we must always  
 remember that *without* this obedience we  
 shall still be rejected, notwithstanding what  
 our Saviour has done for us; nay we shall  
 be condemned with so much a *severer*  
 Sentence, as he has afforded us greater  
 means and opportunities of Salvation.  
 Christ has given us the adoption and the  
 liberty of Sons; but if we abuse that li-  
 berty to rebel against God and disobey  
 his Commandments, living viciously and  
 profanely in this present World; *it had*  
*been better for us not to have known the*  
*way*

way of truth, than after we have known S E R M.  
 it, to turn from the holy commandment III.  
 delivered unto us. Our Saviour has pur-  
 chased redemption for us upon the gra-  
 cious terms of Faith and Obedience ; but  
 without this Obedience, we can have no  
 benefit, even of *That* most perfect re-  
 demption. Christ has suffered for us,  
 that we might receive the adoption of  
 Sons ; but if we continue not to live vir-  
 tuously as becomes the children of God,  
 it will nothing profit us to have received  
 this adoption. *They only who are led by  
 the Spirit of God, are the Sons of God ;*  
 Rom. viii. 14. Wherefore if we resist and  
 grieve that good Spirit by any vicious  
 practices, we have no part in him, nei-  
 ther will God receive us either as his Sons  
 or his Servants. *Whoſoever is born of God,*  
*ſaith St John, doth not commit Sin, for*  
*his ſeed remaineth in him, and he cannot*  
*ſin becauſe he is born of God : In this the*  
*children of God are manifeſt and the*  
*children of the devil : Whoſoever doth not*  
*righteouſneſs, is not of God, neither he that*  
*loveth not his brother ;* 1 Joh iii. 9 : A-  
 gain ; ver. 2 ; *Beloved, now are we the Sons*  
*of*

S E R M. of God, and it doth not yet appear what  
 III. we shall be ; But we know that when he  
 shall appear, we shall be like him, for we  
 shall see him as he is ; i. e. God doth in  
 This world acknowledge us as his chil-  
 dren ; how much more hereafter, shall he  
 that thus spared not his own Son, but de-  
 livered him up for us all, receive us to  
 the more immediate injoyment of himself ?  
 But then he adds immediately ; ver. 3 ; E-  
 very man that hath this hope in him, pu-  
 rifieth himself even as he is pure. This is  
 the only possible condition, upon which we  
 can obtain the Salvation of the Gospel.  
 Nay, on the contrary, we cannot escape  
 being condemned to a severer punishment,  
 if we neglect the offer of so great a Sal-  
 vation. For if he that despised Moses law,  
 died without mercy, Heb. x. 28 ; of how  
 much sorer punishment shall he be thought  
 worthy, who hath troden under foot the Son  
 of God, and hath counted the blood of the  
 Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an  
 unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the  
 Spirit of Grace ?

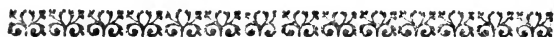




# S E R M O N I V.

Of the Fulness of Time in which  
C H R I S T appeared.

[*Preached on Christmas-Day.*]



GAL. iv. 4, 5.

*But when the fulness of time was come,  
God sent forth his Son made of a woman,  
made under the law ; To redeem them  
that were under the law, that we might  
receive the adoption of Sons.*




T remains, that I proceed now S E R M.  
IV.  
in the 4th and last place, to  
consider the Time of our  
Saviour's appearing in the  
flesh ; *When the fulness of  
time was come.* Now here, By the *fulness*  
V O L. V. F of

S E R M. of time, we must understand *that* time, which God in his infinite Wisdom thought fit to appoint ; And we may consider it either with respect to God's Fore-determination ; and then it was therefore the *fulness of time*, because determined and fore-appointed of God ; or we may consider it absolutely as the fittest and most proper season ; and then it was fore-appointed by the Wisdom of God, because it was in itself the *fulness of time*. 1<sup>st</sup> ; We may consider it with respect to God's Fore-determination ; and then it was therefore the Fulness of time, because determined and foretold by the prophets.

ACCORDING to that antient prediction of *Jacob* ; *Gon.* xlix. 10 ; the Messiah was to appear before the total dissolution of the *Jewish* Government. *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, till Shiloh come ; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.* By the word *Shiloh*, the antient *Jewish* interpreters constantly understood the Messiah ; and the *Jews* at this day are not able to interpret it to any other tolerable Sense : Now it is certain, that after our Saviour's Coming ; as soon  
as

as the *gathering* of the people, (or as the word may no less properly be rendered, the *obedience* of the people) was come *in* to him ; *viz.* as soon as he had settled that institution of Religion, which he came into the World to establish ; *Jerusalem* was destroyed, the whole nation of the *Jews* dispersed, and scattered among *all* people ; and the constitution of their government entirely dissolved. Our Saviour therefore *did* appear exactly at that period of Time, which the Prophecy of *Jacob* had so many ages before expressly determined. Again ; the Prophecy of *Malachi* ; ch. iii. 1 ; determines the Coming of our Saviour to be before the destruction of the Second Temple ; *Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare my way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come, he shall suddenly come to his temple ; even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in, behold he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.* And That no less remarkable prediction of *Haggai* ; ch. ii. ver. 6, 7, and 9 ; *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once it is a little while and I will shake the heavens and the earth,*

S E R M. *and the sea and the dry land; And I will*  
 IV. *shake all nations, and the desire of all na-*  
 *tions shall come, and I will fill This house*  
*with glory, saith the Lord of hosts; The*  
*glory of this latter house shall be greater*  
*than of the former; and in this place will*  
*I give peace. The solemn and sublime*  
*introduction with which this prophecy is*  
*ushered in, shows plainly that something*  
*of very great moment is therein foretold*  
*and promised; And the Words of the Pre-*  
*diction itself sufficiently intimate, when*  
*and in whom they were to be fulfilled.*

*The desire, or (as the word may more properly be rendered,) the expectation of all nations; is a clear and undisputed character of the Messiah: And as to the filling That House with greater Glory than the former, it is well known that That Second Temple was very far from equaling the Glory of Solomon's, in the magnificence of its Building, or in its rich ornaments: And besides the Jews themselves confess, that the Second Temple always wanted those five things, which were justly esteemed the great Glory and Excellence of the first. It wanted the*  
*Urim*

*Urim and Thummin, the Ark of the Covenant, the Fire from heaven which burnt continually on the Altar, the Shecinah or visible appearance of the glory of God, and the Spirit of Prophecy.* It remains therefore that the Glory wherein this Second Temple was to exceed the First, could be no other than This; that it was to be honoured with the Presence of the *King of Glory*, even the *promised Messiah*; Which would indeed be a far greater Glory, than all the riches of *Solomon's Temple*. Accordingly our Saviour *did* appear, during the standing of that Second Temple; he was presented therein by his parents, and acknowledged by *Siméon* and *Anna*, who praised God for him, and *spoke of him to all those that looked for redemption in Israel*; He also frequently *Taught* therein, and by his Gracious presence filled that house with glory; with the *Glory*, as of the only-begotten Son of God, full of Grace and Truth; with the *Glory of God*, manifested in the most illustrious *miracles*; with the *glorious Doctrine* of Peace and Salvation, of Grace, Righteousness, and Truth.

S E R M.  
IV.  


S E R M.

IV.



And to demonstrate that this prophecy was fulfilled in *him*, and could not possibly belong to any other, God, in his righteous judgment, not many years after our Saviour's Passion, suffered this Temple, at the final destruction of the City and People, to be so utterly overthrown and destroyed, that *not one stone was left upon another*, nor could it ever by any industry be built again. *Lastly*, That most clear prophecy of *Daniel*; ch. ix. ver. 24; *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon the holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to anoint the most Holy*; (who in the next verse is called *by name*, Messiah the Prince;) This prophecy, I say, determines the time from the rebuilding of the city after the captivity to the coming of the Messiah, to be seven times Seventy, *viz.* Four hundred and ninety years: Exactly after which period of time, (the different computations of Chronologers in this point, being but small Niceties;) exactly, I say, after this period of time, the

History

History of our Saviour shows us that he appeared in the World. It is evident therefore that the incarnation of Christ was *in the fulness of time*; that is, exactly at the time foretold and fore-determined by the Prophets. And indeed these Prophecies were so plain, that about the time of our Lord's appearance, the *Jews*, and from them the *Romans*, and all the Eastern parts of the World, were in great expectation of some extraordinary person to arise, who should be Governour of the World. This made *Herod* so inquisitive and solicitous, about *him that was born king of the Jews*; St *Mat.* ii. 2: And this gave occasion to the impostors, *Theudas and Judas of Galilee*, (of whom we read; *Acts* v. 36.) to profess themselves to be some great persons, and to draw away much people after them. The *Jews* were at that Time filled with expectation of the appearance of their promised Messiah; and from thence these Deceivers took occasion to set up for themselves; But as they managed their imposture in Such manner, as to suit with the *prejudices* and *false* notions the *Jews* had then conceived of their

S E R M. expected Messiah, so they acted directly  
 IV. contrary to his *True* character; and their  
 designs came accordingly to a deserved end.

BUT 2dly, Though it be evident that our Saviour came into the World *in the fulness of time*, viz. at the time foretold by the prophets, yet the question may still return, *why* was *That* time determined rather than any other, and accordingly foretold by the Prophets; for, without doubt, it was in itself *absolutely* the fittest and the properest season; and the Incarnation of our Lord was *therefore* by the Prophets fixed beforehand to that time, *because* it was the *full*, or most *proper* Season. And to This question it might be sufficient to answer, that the time of our Saviour's incarnation, as all *Other* times and seasons which the Father has put in his own power, was *therefore* the fittest, and the properest season, because it was the time chosen by the infinite and unerring Wisdom of God: But yet it cannot be denied to be an argument worthy our consideration, to enquire into the *reasons* of our Saviour's Coming into the World at such a particular time rather than any other,

so



so far as the history of the *Scripture*, S E R M.  
IV.  
which is what God has thought fit to open to us of his Divine Counsel; and so far as the *design* itself of our Lord's coming, will suggest to us. Now *Two* reasons there seem to have been more especially, of our Saviour's appearing at That time: The first is, because the insufficiency of the *Jewish* dispensation, as well as of natural religion, was then, after a long trial, become sufficiently apparent: Apparent; not to *God*, who knows all things at Once, and makes accordingly Provision for all things from the Beginning; and who is able to judge all men with justice and equity, according to their respective Circumstances under Every Dispensation: but to *Men*, to whom the Counsel of God is opened by degrees, and by the Events of things; to *Them*, the insufficiency of the *Jewish* Dispensation was by that Time become apparent. What *the law* could not do, saith St Paul, in *That it was weak through the flesh*, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for Sin condemned sin in the flesh; Rom. viii. 3. And  
in

S E R M. in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, the same  
 IV. Apostle all along insists on the *insufficiency*  
 ~~~~~ of the *Jewish* institution, as an Argument  
 to demonstrate the *necessity* of introducing the *Christian*: For if that first covenant, saith he, had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second; Heb. viii. 7: and ch. vii. ver. 18; There is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. In the old World, when men had entirely corrupted themselves, and almost wholly lost that natural and traditional Knowledge of God, which was at first the foundation of their Religion, and the rule of their lives; God began to reveal himself to *Abraham* and the Patriarchs; and chose their Posterity to give them afterwards his Laws by *Moses*, and to make them the Standard of true Religion, and of the Worship of the One God, to all Nations. Again, when this *new* Dispensation of Providence began likewise to grow ineffectual as the former had done, through the Vanity and Superstition wherewith it was by degrees over-run; When the com-  
 mandments

mandments of God were almost wholly S E R M. swallowed up by the traditions of Men, IV. and the weightier matters of the law forced to give place to the superstitious doctrines of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; then was the time for *him* to appear, who, as the prophet *Malachi* describes him, *was to be like a refiner's fire, and like fullers soap; who was to sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and to purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they might offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness; Mal. iii. 3.*

2dly; The Second reason, *why* we may suppose our Saviour appeared just at the time he did, was because the World was at that time by many extraordinary circumstances, peculiarly prepared for his reception. The great design of his Coming, (we know,) was to establish a Religion, which as it was to continue for ever without any further alteration, so it was not (like the *Jewish* dispensation) to be confined to one particular Nation or People, but to be *preached to all the nations of the earth from one end thereof unto the other: His Dominion shall be also*  
from

S E R M. *from the one Sea to the other, and from the*

IV. *Flood unto the World's end: All Kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall do him Service; Ps. lxxii. 8, 11.*

The Gospel of Christ, was to be an universal Religion; *a light to lighten the Gentiles*, as well as to be *the glory of his people Israel*; According to that remarkable prophecy of *Isaiab*; ch. xlix. ver. 6; *It is a light thing, that thou should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth.* Now about the time of our Saviour's Birth, it is observable there was a concurrence of many things in the World, to promote and further the propagating of *Such* a Religion. The *Romans* had then conquered almost all the *known* parts of the World; they had spread and settled their language among all the nations of their conquests, and had made the communication easy from one part to another. They had moreover improved *moral* Philosophy to its greatest height; and by having framed better

better notions of God and of the nature of things, than were usual in the idolatrous Heathen World, they were in some measure prepared for the Reception of the Truth. This appears plainly from the vast numbers of *Profelytes*, which were about this time converted to the *Jewish* Religion; so far converted, as to believe in and worship the One only true God, and to obey the moral Law, yet without observing the ritual and ceremonial performances of the *Mosaick* institution. These Profelytes are they which in the History of the *Acts of the Apostles* are stiled *devout men, worshippers of God, and men fearing God*; Of whom how great numbers there were at That time, may be seen in the 2d chapter of the *Acts*; ver. 5, &c. where it is said *that there were dwelling at Jerusalem devout men out of every nation under heaven; Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya, about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and profelytes, Cretes and*  
*Arabians,*

S E R M. *rabians, we do hear them speak in our*  
 IV. *tongues the wonderful works of God.*



Further; the great improvement and increase of *Learning* in the World about this time, (according to that prophecy of *Daniel, Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased;*) gave occasion to the *Jewish* books to be dispersed through the World: And particularly, the translating of the Bible some few Ages before the Birth of Christ, into one of the then most known and universal languages upon Earth, which had before been confined in a peculiar language to the *Jews* only; was a singular preparative to the reception of that great Prophet and Saviour of mankind, whose Coming was in that Book so plainly and so often foretold. Indeed this seems to have been the first step of God's discovering himself further than by the Light of Nature to *other* nations as well as to the *Jews*, and of his giving the *beathen also* the knowledge of his revealed laws; And remarkably instrumental it afterwards appeared to be, in the propagating

gating the Christian religion through the S E R M.  
*Gentile World.* IV.

BUT I barely mention these things, as only brief intimations to inquisitive and considerate persons; and hasten in the last place, to draw some more universally *useful* and *practical* inferences, from the particulars of the doctrine contained in the Text. And *1st*, If our Saviour came into the World precisely at the time determined and foretold by the prophets; then have we from hence an unanswerable proof of our Saviour's being the true Messiah. For if our Lord appeared exactly at that time, which God by his Holy prophets had before appointed should be the time when the promised Messiah, the desire and expectation of nations, was to appear; and no other person did arise *near* that time, to whom that Character could possibly belong; then have we an undeniable evidence that our Saviour *was* that Person, whom the prophets did point at and describe. And this evidence is so convictive and unanswerable, that the *Jews* at this day have no other way to elude the force of it, but  
by

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IV.



by pretending that though God had indeed foretold positively by his Prophets that the Messiah should appear about that time, yet for the Sins of that nation he has deferred the *sending* of the Messiah, and the *fulfilling* of those prophecies, for above Seventeen hundred years. But there are moreover *two* peculiar circumstances, which make this argument yet more strong and concluding; the *first* is, that as our Saviour appeared exactly at the time determined by the prophets, so his *character* agreed perfectly with all the descriptions, which the prophecies had given of *That* person, whose Coming was foretold. I need not enlarge upon This particularly; the Evangelists having in their gospels, with all clearness and evidence, applied to the History of our Saviour all the several passages of the prophets, which speak of the *time* and *place* of the birth of the Messiah; the *manner* of his education; the *course* of his life; the *nature* and extent of his *doctrine*; the peculiar *circumstances* of his passion and death; and That most remarkable instance of the divine power, his Resurrection



tion from the Dead. The *Other* observable circumstance is, that as the character of our Saviour was exactly agreeable to the prophets description of the true Messiah, so it was very different *from, and almost contrary to, the character of* that imaginary Messiah whom the *Jews* expected. And This particular Circumstance, is a demonstration that our Saviour had no design of imposing upon the people. The *Jews* expected a temporal Prince, to appear in all the Splendour, glory and power of this world; to deliver them from their Subjection to the *Roman* yoke, and to restore again the kingdom to *Israel*. 'Tis manifest therefore that whatever Deceiver would have set up himself for the Messiah, and hoped to be owned as such by the people of the *Jews*, must have indeavoured to have appeared in such a Character, as the *Jews* expected; he must have blown the trumpet to sedition, and by gathering men after him, have indeavoured to make himself their Prince and King: And in Fact, this method we find those impostors did take, whose Attempts are mentioned, *Acts* v. 36.

S E R M. But *our Saviour*, directly contrary to the expectation of the *Jews*, was a man, with respect to all *worldly* grandour, of no form or comeliness ; a man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief ; a person of seemingly mean extraction, and of greater humility : So that when some of the multitude would by force have made him a King, he was content even to work a Miracle, to escape out of their hands. 'Tis manifest therefore that he had no ambition, to exalt himself among the people. Now when in such a person, whose character was entirely contrary to the humour and expectation of the people, it appeared yet manifestly, that in Him was really fulfilled every thing, that was spoken in the law and in the prophets concerning the *Messias* that was to come ; it is no less than a demonstration that this was the very person, to whom those prophecies did expressly point. *2dly*, If our Saviour, (the person sent into the world to be the Author of our Religion,) was, notwithstanding his taking upon him that humble Form, yet in reality no meaner a Person than the only begotten Son of God ;

God ; this may convince us of the divine S E R M.  
Authority of our Religion, and the indispen- IV.

nable necessity of paying Obedience to its laws. The *Natural knowledge* of the difference of Good and Evil, which even the *heathen* World was capable of attaining, was truly and properly a Discovery of the Will of God ; But because this discovery was very obscure, and very hardly sufficient to prevail over the corruptions of Mens depraved Nature ; therefore the times of that ignorance *God winked at* ; Acts xvii. 30 : But now that the *wrath of God* is clearly and expressly, and by a messenger of such Dignity as his own Son, revealed from heaven against all *ungodliness and unrighteousness of men* ; now that he hath fully and distinctly declared that *he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained* ; Now he commandeth all men absolutely, every where to repent. God hath now sent his *last* messenger to warn Men of their sin and danger ; even his own *beloved Son* ; and if they will not hear and obey *him*, they must expect to fall under so

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much a more severe punishment, as they despise a clearer Revelation of the Will of God, and trample under foot a more glorious *Messenger of his covenant*. *If the word spoken by Angels, saith the Apostle; if the Mosaick law, was stedfast; and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord; Heb. ii. 2 and 3? And ch. xii. ver. 25; See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; For if They escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth; much more shall not We escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.* And again, in the Epistle of St Jude; the danger of impenitent Christians under such clear means of Knowledge is represented by the Apostle under this severe similitude, ver. 5 and 6; *I will therefore put you in remembrance,---that the Angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he has reserved in everlasting chains under Darknes, unto the judgement of the great Day.*

3dly, IF this *Divine person*, the Au-S E R M.  
thor of our religion, notwithstanding the IV.  
exceeding dignity of his nature, yet con-  
descended to become truly and really a  
man ; subjecting himself to all the infir-  
mities of human nature, *and being in all*  
*things made like unto his brethren, sin on-*  
*ly excepted* ; This may convince us of the  
reasonableness of our Holy Religion ;  
and of the possibility of our paying obe-  
dience to its laws. Had God sent his  
Son in great *Glory*, and in the *Form of*  
*God*, to reveal his Will to us by his abso-  
lute *command* only ; such an extraordinary  
Revelation, like *the Mountain that burn-*  
*ed with Fire*, would indeed have suffici-  
ently convinced us of the necessity of Re-  
ligion and the indispensableness of obedi-  
ence. But when this great person vouch-  
safed to become, not only the Author of  
our Religion , but in our own nature  
the *pattern* also of our duty ; this demon-  
strated to us, that our Obedience was to  
be as reasonable, as it was indispensable.  
For by this means we have a perfect and  
familiar example of Holiness and Obedi-  
ence set before us ; by which we plainly

S E R M. see, that God requires nothing of us, but  
IV. what our Saviour himself, when he submitted to become Man, did think reasonable to practise. Indeed, we *cannot* be in all things perfect, as he, who is our pattern and example, was perfect : But to follow a most perfect Pattern, is, even to an imperfect Copier, a singular Advantage ; and our Duty, is not to *equal*, but to *imitate* so far, as the infirmities of our nature will permit, with Sincerity and Constancy. We shall in our proportion, be made as like him in our *happiness* as we have been in the performance of our *duty*.





# S E R M O N V.

Of the meaning of, The Name  
of G O D.

[ *Preached on Epiphany.* ]



M A L. i. II.

*For from the rising of the Sun, even unto  
the going down of the same, my Name  
shall be great among the Gentiles; and  
in every place, Incense shall be offered  
unto my Name, and a pure Offering;  
for my Name shall be Great among the  
Heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts.*



N discoursing upon these S E R M.  
words of the Prophet, I shall V.  
1<sup>st</sup> explain distinctly the prin-  
cipal acceptations, or the most  
remarkable of those several

different Senses, in which this Phrase, the

S E R M. *Name of God*, is used in Scripture ; From  
 V. whence in course will appear, what is  
 meant *in general* by its being *Great among Men*. And This being explained, I shall then in the 2<sup>d</sup> place, consider, *What That glorious Event in particular* is, which we find predicted in these sublime prophetick Expressions : *From the rising of the Sun, even unto the going down of the same, my Name shall be Great among the Gentiles ; and in every place, Incense shall be offered unto my Name, and a pure Offering, saith the Lord of Hosts.*


I. I N the 1<sup>st</sup> place, the *Name of God*, according to the nature of the *Jewish* language, signifies sometimes *God himself*. Thus, *praising* or  *blessing* the Name of God, is praising *God himself* ; and calling upon the Name of the Lord, is the very same, as calling upon the *Lord*. Something answerable to which manner of speaking, there is in many *other* instances of the *Hebrew* language, and in the *Analogy of expression* in *all* languages. Thus *Heb. viii. 1 ; The Throne of the Majesty in the heavens*, is, the *Throne of God* : And *Pf. cxlv. 5 ; I will speak of the glorious Honour*



Honour of thy Majesty, and of thy wondrous works, S E R M.  
V.

N O W when the *Name* of God, or any other phrase of the like nature, is thus made use of to signify *God himself*; it is plain that by his *Name* being Great among Men, is meant Their acknowledging or professing *him* to be the True God, and their Adhering to the Worship of *Him* only, in opposition to all Idolatry and False Religions. *Mic. iv. 5*; *All people will walk every one in the Name of His God*; and *We will walk in the Name of the Lord our God for ever and ever*: Will walk in his Name, that is, we will continue steadfast in his True Religion and Worship; *sanctifying the Lord God in our Hearts*, (as *St Peter* expresses it,) and not being afraid of Their Terrour, not fearing Their False Gods, who fill the Minds of their Worshipers with endless Dread, and vain imaginary Superstitions. According to the same Analogy of Speech; That Precept in the Law, *Thou shalt not profane the Name of thy God*, is as much as to say, Thou shalt not encourage Idolatrous Practices, by letting thy children pass

S E R M. *pass through the Fire to Moloch*; Lev. xviii.

V.  


21. And in the Psalmist's expression, forgetting *the Name of God*, means, for the same reason, *falling into Idolatry*: Ps. xlv. 20; *If we have forgotten the Name of our God, or stretched out our hands to any Strange God*. Nay, even mentioning the Name of other Gods, denotes, in Scripture-phrases, a tendency to Idolatry; *In all things that I have said unto you, be circumspect, and make no mention of the Names of Other Gods, neither let it be heard out of thy Mouth*; Exod. xxiii. 13.

T H I S is the first and most usual Signification of this phrase, *The Name of God*; 'Tis used to denote *God himself*. And because his Name, in *This* sense, is *Then Great* among Men, when they most universally acknowledge him to be the True God, and adhere to the Worship of *Him* only; hence, in a sense still more figurative, the *Name of God* is sometimes used,

2dly, To signify his *True Religion and Worship*. Thus Deut. xii. 5; *The place which the Lord your God shall chuse out of all your Tribes, to put his Name there*.

The

## The Name of G O D.

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S E R M.

V.



The Meaning is: The Place where he shall appoint his Servants, the Professors of the true Religion, to appear before him with the External Tokens of their Homage and Worship. And in *This* sense, the Name of God is *then* Great in the World; when they who profess his True Religion, and adhere to the Worship of *Him* alone, and to That *manner* of Worship which He has appointed, do Honour to this their profession, by a suitable practice in the whole course of their lives; showing forth the Effect of their Religion, in the Fruits of Righteousness and true Virtue; and *letting their Light so shine before men, that Others seeing their good Works, may glorify their Father which is in Heaven.* The Apostle St Paul, in his 2 *Thes.* i. 12, uses exactly the same manner of speaking; *We pray always for you, says he, that our God would fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of Faith with Power; That the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you: His Meaning is, that the Religion of our Lord Jesus Christ may by your Practice be re-*  
commended


S E R M.

V.



commended to the World, and the excellency of it made manifest before Men. Again, *Rom. ii. 24*; speaking of Such as, on the contrary, *discredited* their Holy Profession by an unfuitable and unworthy behaviour; *Thou (says he) that makest thy Boast of the Law, through breaking the Law dishonourest thou God? For the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, through you.* The Name of God, that is, the Religion and true *Worship* of God, is reviled and ill spoken of among Infidels, upon account of the ill lives of its unworthy Professors.

3dly, IN other places of Scripture, this phrase, *The Name of God*, is made use of to express those adorable *Perfections* or *Attributes*, which are as it were the proper *Denomination* and *Character* of the divine Nature. Thus *Exod. xxxiv. 5*; *The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood there with Moses, and proclaimed the Name of the Lord: The Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed; The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth: Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and trans-*

transgression and Sin, and that will by no S E R M.  
means clear the guilty : visiting the ini- V.  
quity of the Fathers upon the children, and   
upon the childrens children, unto the third  
and to the fourth generation. Here the  
Name of God, signifies the Character or  
Description of God, contained in a sum-  
mary recapitulation of the Divine Perfe-  
ctions in general. The Same, at other  
times, denotes more distinctly some spe-  
cial and particular Attribute, to which  
the occasion peculiarly refers. Thus Ps.  
xx. 2 ; The Name, (that is, the Power,) of  
the God of Jacob defend thee. And Ps. ix.  
10 ; They that know thy Name, (that is,  
who have a just Notion of thy Veracity  
and Goodness,) will put their Trust in  
Thee.

AND in These senses of the phrase, the  
Name of God is then truly Great among  
Men, when, having just and worthy No-  
tions of the Divine Perfections, and living  
under the continual influence of these im-  
pressions upon their Minds, they show in  
their whole Behaviour that they really and  
habitually fear his Power, admire his  
Wisdom, revere his Justice, love his Good-  
ness,

S E R M. *ness, and rely upon his Truth: In all their*  
 V. Words and Actions, acknowledging *Him*  
 to be the *only Potentate*; Him, *only Holy*;  
 Him, *only Wise*; and that, absolutely and  
 strictly speaking, *there is none Good, but*  
*One, that is God.*


4thly, T H E R E is still another sense of  
 the phrase; in which the Name of God  
 signifies in Scripture the *Authority* of God,  
 or his *divine Commission*. Thus *Exod.*  
*xxii. 20; Behold, I send an Angel before*  
*thee; Beware of him, and obey his Voice;*  
*provoke him not; For my Name* (that is,  
*my Authority,)* *is in him.* Again, *Job. v.*  
*43; I am come, says our Saviour, in my*  
*Father's Name,* that is, with his *Divine*  
*Commission*. In like manner the Apostles,  
 when they were examined before the  
 High-Priest concerning their having heal-  
 ed a lame man; *Acts iv. 7; By what Pow-*  
*er, or by what Name have ye done This?*  
 immediately they replied, *By the Name*  
*of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom Ye*  
*crucified, whom God raised from the dead;*  
*even by Him* (by *His Name and Power,*  
*by his Authority and Commission* delivered  
 to

to Us) *does this man stand here before you* S E R M.  
*Whole.* V.

AND according to *This last* sense of the phrase, the Name of God must be then understood to be *Great* among Men, when a just Regard and cheerful Obedience is paid to whatever appears vested with *His* Authority: When the Laws of *Nature* are obeyed, as being established by his Supreme Authority in the *Creation* of things; And the Precepts of the *Gospel* likewise, as being by *Revelation* authorized from the Same Supreme Power.


AND Thus having at large explained the principal Acceptations, or the most remarkable of those several different Senses, in which this phrase, *The Name of God*, is used in Scripture; and what accordingly is meant *in general* by its being *Great*: It remains in the

II. 2d place, that I proceed to consider, *what* that glorious Event *in particular* is, which we find predicted in these sublime Prophetick Expressions: *From the rising of the Sun, even unto the going down of the same, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles; And in every place,*  
*Incense*

S E R M. *Incense shall be offered unto my Name,*  
 V. *and a pure Offering ; For my Name shall*  
 *be great among the Heathen, saith the*  
*Lord of Hosts.* Now in this prediction  
 there is evidently contained, 1<sup>st</sup>, Some-  
 thing *comminatory*, or by way of *Threat-*  
*ning*, with regard to the *Jews* ; And,  
 2<sup>dly</sup>, a particular *Promise* in relation to  
 the *Gentiles* ; joined with a general Decla-  
 ration concerning the State and Condition  
 of the *Universal Church* in the future and  
 latter Ages of the World.

1<sup>st</sup>, W I T H regard to the *Jews*, there  
 is contained in the Text, Something *Com-*  
*minatory*, or in the way of *Threatning* ;  
 as is evident from the *Connexion* of the  
 words. For the *former part* of the chap-  
 ter, is a severe expostulation with That  
 people, upon account of their unworthy  
 behaviour in the Service of God : And  
 this Complaint against the *Jews*, is im-  
 mediately followed with God's declaring  
 in the Text, that his Name should be  
 Great among the *Gentiles*. The Advan-  
 tages which the *Jewish Nation* enjoyed,  
 were very extraordinary ; in that *to Them*  
*were committed the Oracles of God.* He  
 showed



*showed his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and Ordinances unto Israel; He had not dealt so with any Other Nation, neither had the Heathen Knowledge of his Laws.* SERM.  
V.  


Answerable to these high privileges, it was reasonable to expect, that their improvements in Virtue and all Holiness, should have been proportionably Great: For *to whom much is given, of Him, according to the Rule of Equity, will be much required.* But so contrary to this expectation was the Behaviour of That people, that with a just Severity God complains of them by the Prophets, ver. 6. of this chapter; *If I be a Father, where is mine Honour? If I be a Master, where is my Fear? ----- If ye offer the blind for Sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? ----- I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, neither will I accept an Offering at your hands.* And then it follows in the words of the Text, *For from the rising of the Sun, even unto the going down of the same, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles.* The Threatning contained in This

S E R M. V. expostulation, is exactly the same with that of our Saviour in the Gospel ; *The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a Nation bringing forth the Fruits thereof.* The Accomplishment of which Threatning upon the people of the *Jews*, both for the unparalleled manner of its execution, and for the unexampled length of the time of its continuance, has been so conspicuous ; that now, near seventeen hundred years after the destruction of *Jerusalem*, they remain at this very day a living and ocular demonstration of the Truth of all the antient Prophecies which concern their State. But

2dly ; T H E Text contains a particular *Promise* in relation to the *Gentiles* ; joined with a general Declaration concerning the State and Condition of the *Universal Church* in the future and latter Ages of the World : *In every place, Incense shall be offered unto my Name, and a pure Offering ; For my Name shall be Great among the Heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts.* Notwithstanding That strong and settled Prejudice among the *Jews*, of which we find great Re-  
1
mains




mains even among our Saviour's own Disciples, that That Nation was always to be the Alone peculiar people of God; yet we find in the Prophecies of the Old Testament many very clear intimations, like This in the Text, that, in the days of the Messiah, the Favour of God should be extended to the *Gentiles*, and his Knowledge spread among the Nations of the Earth; *Is. lx. 3; The Gentiles shall come to thy Light, and Kings to the brightness of thy Rising: And ch. xlix. 6; It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my Servant to raise up the Tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my Salvation unto the Ends of the Earth.* These Prophecies plainly began to be fulfilled, at the time when the Apostles were commanded to preach the Gospel to the *Gentiles* as well as to the *Jews*; and the full accomplishment of them will then take place, when the same everlasting Gospel shall either effectually prevail, or at least shall have been preached and tendered in its purity,

*Of the meaning of,*

S E R M. among all Nations. *In every place, Incense shall be offered unto my Name, and a pure Offering.* Incense, (which is the *Prayers of the Saints*; Rev. v. 8.) and this phrase, *a pure Offering*, are plainly intended to express *That spiritual Religion, That Worship of the Father in Spirit and Truth* according to the Gospel of *Christ*, which is opposed to the *carnal Ordinances and literal Sacrifices* of the *Jews*, and of which those Sacrifices and external Purifications were but *Types and Figures*. Hence the Christian Worship, the Worship of God *out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned*; is elegantly stiled a *Spiritual Sacrifice*; 1 Pet. ii. 5: *the Sacrifice of Praise to God continually*; Heb. xiii. 15: *the presenting ourselves a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable Service*; Rom. xii. 1. The Metaphor is exactly of the same sort, as *That* whereby Christians are called *The true circumcision, the circumcision made without hands*; as being *That* in reality, in the true and spiritual Effect, of which the *circumcision in the flesh*

*flesh made with hands* was but a shadow or figurative Representation. For *circumcision*, says the Apostle, Rom. ii. 28, is not *That which is outward in the flesh; but ----- circumcision is That of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.* The character therefore of the Christian Worship, set forth in the Text under the prophetick figures of *Incense* and a *Pure Offering*, is, that it consists in what St Paul calls *Lifting up Holy hands*, 1 Tim. ii. 8, *without Wrath and Doubting*; It consists in approaching God, not with the Sacrifices of *Beasts*, or Offerings of the *Fruits of the Earth*; but with the offering up of *Ourselves* to his Service, in all holiness and righteousness of Life; Approaching him with *Minds* duly sensible of the inexpressible Excellency of the Divine Majesty, with *Hands* clear from all iniquity and unjust Practices, with *Hearts* free from all Impurity and Moral Turpitude. This is the *Pure Offering*, truly acceptable unto God: And This, he foretells by the Prophet, shall in due time be

S. E. R. M. offered unto his Name in every place, from  
 V.  the rising of the Sun, even unto the going  
 down of the same; for my Name shall be  
 great among the Heathen, saith the Lord  
 of Hosts. The Promise is indeed here  
 made particularly to the Gentiles: But  
 from several other passages of Scripture,  
 parallel to This, there seems reason to ex-  
 pect that God's *Antient people* also shall  
 be converted, when once the fulness of  
 the *Gentiles* is come in; *Is.* xlix. 22; and  
 xi. 12; and lx. 10; Thus saith the Lord  
 God; Behold, I will lift up my hand to  
 the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the  
 Nations; and they shall bring thy Sons in  
 their arms, and their Daughters shall be  
 carried upon their shoulders. And he shall  
 set up an ensign for the Nations, and shall  
 assemble the Outcasts of Israel, and gather  
 together the dispersed of Judah from the  
 four Corners of the Earth. And the Sons  
 of Strangers shall build up thy Walls, and  
 their Kings shall minister unto thee; For  
 in my wrath I smote thee, but in my Fa-  
 vour have I had mercy on thee. Our Sa-  
 viour himself predicts something of the  
 same



same nature ; *Luke* xxi. 24 ; *Jerusalem* shall be troden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And *St Paul* seems to intimate the same thing ; *Rom.* xi. 25 ; *Blindness* in part is happened to *Israel*, untill the Fulness of the Gentiles be come in. After which Great Event, the Scripture is full of very Sublime Descriptions of a State of extraordinary Happiness to ensue ; *Is.* xi. 6 ; and *lx.* 18 ; *The Wolf* also shall dwell with the *Lamb*, and the *Leopard* shall lie down with the *Kid* ;-----and a little child shall lead them. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my Holy Mountain ; for the Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea : And-----thou shalt call thy Walls Salvation, and thy Gates Praise :-----Thy people also shall be All righteous, they shall inherit the Land for ever.

WHATEVER be the true Meaning of These and the like Prophecies : Whether there be a time still to come, wherein they shall be accomplished literally ; Or whether they are intended only to express

*Of the meaning of,*


S E R M. the natural and genuine *Tendency* of the  
 V. universal and sincere Practice of Chri-  
 stianity in the *present* World, and the  
*real Effect* which shall be obtained by it  
 in the World *to come*: Whatever, I say,  
 be the strict and literal Meaning of these  
 Prophecies; it becomes not *Us* to be too  
 curious and inquisitive after the particu-  
 lar *Times and Seasons which the Father has*  
*put in his own Power*; But in general,  
 the *Uses* we are to make of all these Pre-  
 dictions, are very obvious. In the

1<sup>st</sup> place, I T is *Our Duty*, in our whole  
 Behaviour and Practice, to promote, as  
 much as in *Us* lies, the Knowledge of  
 God, and the Interest of True Virtue  
 and Righteousness amongst Men. This  
 is contributing *Our Part*, towards the in-  
 troducing That happy State and Consti-  
 tution of things, which is the Accomplish-  
 ment of the fore-mentioned Prophecies.  
 And when we have thus done our *Own*  
 Duty, we are then to remember the Ad-  
 monition of our Saviour, *Luke xxi. 19*;  
*In your patience possess ye your Souls*; and  
 rely upon the Providence of God, to ac-  
 complish



compleish the Great Events which he has S E R M.  
 promised, in his own *Manner* and at his V.  
 own *Time*. In matters of *This* nature,  
 which have not a conditional dependence  
 upon the Behaviour of *single* persons, but  
 relate to the *General* Scheme of Provi-  
 dence in the Government of the World;  
 In *These* things, I say, *the Gifts and Cal-*  
*ling of God are without Repentance*; Rom.  
 xi. 29. The Promises of God will cer-  
 tainly be accomplished, and his Purpose  
 shall not fail. But because it is not for  
*Us* to know beforehand, the exact *Times*  
*and Seasons* which God has appointed; the  
 Duty therefore of every particular Chri-  
 stian, whatever be the Circumstances of  
 Time and Place in which Providence has  
 fixed him, is to take care that He himself  
 be in the Number of those, who, *in all*  
*Holy conversation and godliness, look for,*  
*and haste unto, the Coming of the day of God*;  
 2 Pet. iii. 12.

2dly; ANOTHER Inference arising from  
 the consideration of such Predictions as  
 This in the Text, is, that we may hence  
 learn to *justify* to ourselves the various  
 Methods,

S E R M. V.  Methods, in which the Wisdom of God has chosen at divers times to reveal itself to the World. With regard to *single persons*, to whom Providence has given very different *natural capacities*, or different *Means and Opportunities of Knowledge*, or different *Manners of Revelation*, the divine Justice and Equity consists in judging them finally according to their respective Abilities, accepting every one *according to what he has, and not according to what he has not*. With regard to *Whole Nations*, the justification of the Divine Wisdom, is his so doing what he pleases with his own, as, through a Succession of various and great Events, to accomplish *General Designs of Mercy and Goodness*. Of This, *St Paul* has given us an admirable Instance, in his account of God's setting up first the Nation of the *Jews*, and afterwards the Churches of the Christian *Gentiles*, to be the Standard of true Religion to the World; intending to finish the whole Dispensation, by having Mercy upon Both; *Rom. xi. 30; For as ye (Gentiles) in times past have*

have not believed God, yet have Now ob-  
tained Mercy through Their (the Jews)  
Unbelief: Even so have These also now  
not believed, that through your mercy  
They also may obtain mercy. For God  
hath concluded them All in unbelief, that  
he might have mercy upon All. O the  
depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom  
and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable  
are his Judgments, and his Ways past find-  
ing out!

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3dly and Lastly, THE Last Inference  
I shall draw from what has been said, is  
This. In the words *before* my Text, the  
reason given of God's rejecting the Jews,  
is the unworthy manner in which they  
had behaved themselves, while unto them  
were committed the Oracles of God. In  
the *Text itself*, the acceptableness of the  
*converted Gentiles* unto God, is expressed  
by their offering up unto his Name a  
*Pure Offering*. Which *Pure Offering*,  
denotes the *Holiness* and *real Purity* of  
the *Gospel-dispensation*, in opposition to  
the *external Ceremonies* of the *Jewish Law*.  
If therefore *We*, under the *greater Light*  
of

S E R M. of the *Everlasting Gospel*, still live viciously and corruptly, as the *Jews* did under those carnal Ordinances; how much more severe Judgments shall we have reason to expect, than what fell even upon That People! For (as *St Paul* excellently argues, *Rom. xi. 20*;) *Because of Unbelief They were broken off, and Thou standest by Faith: Be not high-minded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural Branches, take heed lest he also spare not Thee.*





# S E R M O N VI.

The Doctrines of Religion reasonable to be believed.

[ *A Passion-Sermon* ]




MATT. xii. 39, 40.

*An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign, and there shall no Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the prophet Jonas. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the Heart of the Earth.*



W H E N our Saviour first preached S E R M.  
ed to the Jews the Gospel of VI.  
the Kingdom, he proved to  
them his divine Commission  
and the Truth of his Doctrine, not only  
from

S E R M. from the *Prophecies* of the Old Testa-  
VI.  
 ment, from the things written in the Law,  
and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms,  
concerning him; but also by the *mighty Works* which he himself performed, as  
direct and immediate Evidences of his be-  
ing the Promised Messiah. The *Doctrine*  
he taught, being a Doctrine of Purity and  
Great Holiness, absolutely requiring a Re-  
formation of Manners, and such an ef-  
fectual Amendment of Life, as must  
show forth itself in the real and habitual  
Practice of true Virtue and Righteous-  
ness; *This Doctrine* was therefore ex-  
tremely disagreeable to the *Pharisees* and  
Chief men among the *Jews*, who were  
persons of a haughty and tyrannical Spi-  
rit, covetous and ambitious, and, in or-  
der to serve the Purposes of temporal  
Power and spiritual Pride, infinitely zealous  
of all the external Forms and Cere-  
monials of Religion. For This reason,  
they hated, above all things, the Spirit  
with which our Saviour taught; the Spi-  
rit of Meekness and Humility, the  
Spirit of Goodness and Equity, the  
Spirit

Spirit of Love and universal Charity. S E R M.


VI.

And accordingly they set themselves, upon all occasions, to revile his Doctrine and calumniate his person. In which matter, it was no great difficulty for them to meet with Success; because the prejudiced Vulgar, who could very hardly distinguish between the *Traditions of their Elders* and the *Commands of God*, must needs be prone to look upon our Lord as an Enemy to the *One*, because he preached against the *Other*. But the *Miracles* which our Saviour worked, were *harder* to withstand: For the people could not easily be persuaded, that God would give a *Deceiver* Power to perform as *mighty Works*, as those by which the Law of *Moses* had itself been at first established. Here therefore the malice of the *Pharisees*, was to exert itself in a more extraordinary manner. And when they could not deny the *miraculous Facts themselves*, they pretended that the Power which worked them was the Power of Satan: Ver. 24th of this chapter, They said, *he doth not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub*

S E R M. *Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils.* And  
 VI. whensoever he taught, *without* working  
 some immediate Miracle; *then* they presently called upon him again, to show them a Sign: Ver. 38; *Then certain of the Scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a Sign from thee.* Thus against wilful perverseness there is No remedy. If he spake to them with so much *reason* and *goodness*, as never man spake; still his Doctrines wanted to be confirmed by a *Miracle*. And if he confirmed what he taught, by undeniable *Miracles*; then the *Power* which worked them, was the *Power of Satan*. For This reason, to the *Pharisees* who called upon him to show them a Sign, he gave this severe Reply in the words of the Text; *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign, and there shall no Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth.* The declaration here made by our Lord, is of the same



same nature with That in the Prophet S E R M.  
*Isaiab*; ch. vii. 13; *Hear ye now, O house* VI.  
*of David*; *Is it a small thing for you to*  
*weary Men, but will ye weary my God al-*  
*so? Therefore the Lord himself shall give*  
*you a Sign*; *Behold, a Virgin shall con-*  
*ceive and bear a Son, and shall call his*  
*Name Immanuel.* The Jews in *Isaiab's*  
time, like the *Pharisees* in our Saviour's,  
after all the mighty works that God had  
done for them, still continued *impenitent*:  
And as often as they were called upon to  
repent, they presumptuously demanded  
*more Signs.* In way of Reproof for this  
Perverseness of theirs, and as a standing  
Declaration of God's having done, on *His*  
part, what was fit for *Him* to do; the Di-  
vine Wisdom, both in the days of *Isaiab*,  
and in the days of *Christ*, refers such per-  
sons to the *settled* and *universal* Evidence  
of Revelation; viz. *the miraculous Fulfilling*  
of the *Antient Prophecies* concerning  
the *promised Messias*. The Sign referred  
to by *Isaiab*, is the Birth of *Christ*; *Be-*  
*hold, a Virgin shall conceive.* That re-  
ferred to by our Saviour in the Text, is

S E R M. his Resurrection ; *The Son of man shall*  
 VI. *be three days and three nights in the heart*  
 *of the earth.*

T H E R E is in these words *one* Difficulty ; how our Lord is here said to have been *three days and three nights* in the heart of the Earth, when in the History of all the Gospels it appears, that having been buried the *first* day in the *evening*, and rising again the *third* day in the *morning*, he consequently remained in the Sepulchre but *two* whole nights, and *one* whole day. Now in order to understand this rightly, it is to be observed that the *Jews* in *Their* language, as *We* also frequently do in *Ours*, by the word (*day*) mean the Space of *twenty four hours*. And in *all languages* Nothing is more common, than for the Name of the *Whole* to be made use of to express a *Part*. Whatever therefore is *begun* on the *first* day, and *finished* on the *third*, may in usual and vulgar Speech (which is always the language the Scripture speaks in) be rightly said to be *three days* in doing. But *This* may perhaps seem a matter of *smaller* importance ; Though, indeed, it  
 can

can never be without its Use, to show the consistency of such Texts of Scripture, as at first sight may appear not to agree together.

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*Another Inquiry* therefore, naturally arising upon these words, is, for *what reason* our Saviour continued in the Sepulchre just such a *determinate time* before his Resurrection. Now, besides that This was necessary for the *fulfilling of the Prophecies* that went before concerning him, (which is the reason alledged in the Text;) it was moreover necessary in the *nature of the thing itself*, that he should continue so long *a time* in the grave, to show that he was *really dead*; and he was to continue there *no longer*, that (as the Scripture expresses it) *the Holy One might not see corruption*.

T H E words of the Text being thus explained; the matter of instruction therein contained, may be reduced to the following Heads.

1<sup>st</sup>, T H A T the Doctrine of religion is in itself reasonable to be believed,



## *The Doctrines of Religion*

and sufficiently evidenced by the *standing and universal Signs or Marks of Truth*. It is *supposed* in the words, that, what our Saviour here calls the *Sign of the Prophet Jonas*, was sufficient to render That generation of the *Jews* inexcusable in their Unbelief.

2dly, H E R E is a Description given of wicked men, in one particular and remarkable part of their character ; that they are apt continually to require *more and more Signs*, and to tempt God without reason and without end. *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign.*

3dly, T H E declaration our Saviour here makes, plainly implies, that there are just and good reasons, why God should not gratify the unreasonable expectations of prejudiced and corrupt Minds. *There shall no Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas.*

1<sup>st</sup>, THE Doctrine of Religion is in it- S E R M.  
self reasonable to be believed, and suffi- VI.  
ciently evidenced by the *standing* and *uni-*  
*versal Signs* or *Marks* of Truth: 'Tis  
*supposed* in the words, that what our Sa-  
viour here calls the *Sign of the Prophet*  
*Jonas*, was sufficient to render That ge-  
neration of the *Jews* inexcusable in their  
Unbelief.

*Religion* is in its Nature a Trial or  
Probation of men's Hearts ; and is there-  
fore essentially inconsistent with all com-  
pulsive Motives, with *such* Motives as  
destroy the nature of a Trial or Probation ;  
*Deut. viii. 2 ; The Lord thy God led thee*  
*these forty years in the Wilderness,-----to*  
*prove thee, to know what was in thine*  
*heart, whether thou wouldst keep his com-*  
*mandments or no.* The Meaning is, not  
that God wants any information with re-  
gard to *Himself*: But he puts men in a  
probation-state, in order to their *Own* Be-  
nefit ; that by virtuous *Actions* they may  
obtain an *habitual* Love of Virtue ; and  
by labouring in the rational *Search* after  
*Truth*, and persevering patiently in the

S E R M. *Practice of Right*, they may be *purified*  
 VI. *and made white and tried*; Dan. xii. 10.

For, as the Apostle St James expresses it, *the Trying of our Faith worketh Patience*; ch. i. 3. God could, if he pleased, *even out of the stones of the Street, raise up children unto Abraham*; or irresistibly compel the most obdurate Sinner to obey his Commandments. But This, is not dealing with *Them* as *rational Agents*; nor could such an Obedience be any more acceptable to *Him*, than the absolute Subjection of the *material World* to his Omnipotent Will, gives *irrational* Beings any Title to the Esteem and Character of Moral Goodness or Virtue. Were God by his Almighty Power to overrule and prevent all Possibility of Disobedience or Moral Evil, as some men fancy it would be glorious for him to do; it would indeed have the contrary effect, and deprive him of the Glory of all his Moral Attributes. For though he would still continue to be a Mighty Creator and All-Powerful Lord, yet he could in no sense be a *Moral Governour* or *Judge* of the World,

nor

nor have Any Exercise of his Moral Per-  
 fections. All Religion or Virtue, con-  
 sists in the Love of Truth, and in the  
 Free Choice and Practice of Right, and  
 in being influenced regularly by rational  
 and moral Motives. By *These* things  
 therefore God tries or proves men's Obe-  
 dience ; and under various Circum-  
 stances, and by various Methods of mani-  
 festing himself to them, he exercises  
 their Faith and Patience and Virtue. By  
 induing men originally with *Reason and*  
*Understanding*, with a *natural Knowledge*  
 of Good and Evil, and a *Conscience* of the  
 difference between Virtue and Vice ; By  
 the Witness that God bears to himself in  
 the Works of *Nature*, and by the various  
 Dispensations of his All-wise *Providence* ;  
 in which *Visible Effects*, the Power and  
 Government of the *Invisible God* are clear-  
 ly and continually seen, *so that they*, who  
 attend not to them, *are without excuse* :  
 By *these* things, does God perpetually call  
 men to religion ; and hold out unto them  
 an *universal Light*, in *all Places* and at *all*  
*Times*. And had men *no other* Discovery


S E R M.  
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S E R M. of the Will of God, than *This* ; yet their  
 VI. choosing to depart from the *natural* Law  
 of *everlasting Righteousness*, would justly  
 denominate them *an evil and adulterous generation* of Mankind. But *besides* this  
 Voice of *Nature* in the visible works of  
 God, and in the mind and conscience of  
 every particular person ; the divine Pro-  
 vidence has moreover, in compassion to  
 the ignorance of the Weak, and *for a Te-*  
*stimony* against the perverse and corrupt,  
 in almost every Age of the World, raised  
 up Eminent *Preachers of Righteousness* ;  
 such as was *Enoch before*, and *Noah at the*  
*time of the Flood*, and *Job and the Pa-*  
*triarchs after it* ; to excite and call men  
 to the practice of their Duty. And to  
 the Nation of the *Jews*, he gave a *stand-*  
*ing Revelation* of his Will ; inviting them  
 continually to Repentance by his Messen-  
 gers *the Prophets*, and at last by his Son  
*Jesus Christ*, their promised and long ex-  
 pected Messiah : Manifesting his manifold  
 Wisdom, *at sundry times and in diverse*  
*manners of Revelation* ; as he had before  
 done in the *various distribution* of the Na-  
 tural



tural *Talents* of men's *rational Facul-* S E R M.  
*ties, Capacities, and Abilities* ; intending VI.  
 finally to judge *All* his Servants, *according*  
*to what* every one in particular *has*, and  
*not according to what he has not* : And in  
 each of these various Dispensations, gi-  
 ving such degrees of *evidence and testi-*  
*mony* to the Truth, as might be a proper  
 Tryal of good and well-disposed Minds,  
 neither credulous *beyond* reason, nor pre-  
 judiced *against* reason, but prepared al-  
 ways to *receive* the Truth, and to *obey* it.  
 Thus, to That generation of the *Jews*  
 who lived in our Saviour's time, the pro-  
 per and sufficient evidence of our Lord's  
 being the promised *Messias*, to all such as  
 impartially searched the Scriptures, was  
 the fulfilling of the Prophecies that went  
 before concerning him, and particularly  
 That most miraculous One of his Refur-  
 rection from the Dead. Which was a  
*Sign* not possible to be resisted by Any,  
 but by a very corrupt and *adulterous ge-*  
*neration* ; by a generation of *such* men, of  
 such *perverse and incorrigible* Sinners, the  
 description of whom, (which was the

S E R M.

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2d Particular I observed in the text,) the *description* of them, in one *remarkable* part of their character, is, that they are apt continually to require *more and more* Signs, and to tempt God without reason and without end: *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign.* The wickedest of men cannot bear the Thoughts of fighting openly against God; and therefore, to give some degree of Ease to their Minds, they generally take great pains to impose upon themselves, with some slight objections either against the *Being of God*, or against the *evidence of his Laws and Commands.* The *Jews*, says St Paul, *require a Sign, and the Gentiles seek after Wisdom*; 1 Cor. i. 22. The humour of the *Gentile* World, was to value themselves upon their *Logick and Philosophy*; and therefore the corrupt part of *Them* could always reject *any* religious Truth, by drawing objections against it from the *received Maxims of their Schools.* The *Jewish* nation valued themselves upon the *miraculous* things, which God had done for their Fathers; and therefore the

the corrupt part of *Them*, could always reject *any* religious Truth, by continually requiring *more* and *greater Miracles* to be worked in confirmation of it. Of This, the behaviour of That people in the *Wilderness* is a remarkable and very marvellous Instance. By a continued series of Miracles, God had rescued them from *Egyptian* Slavery and Idolatry, and was guiding them in the *Wilderness* like a Flock, to the possession of the good land which he had promised to their Fathers. *Marvellous things* (as the Psalmist represents this matter in a most elegant and affectionate description, *Pf. lxxviii. 13*;) *Marvellous things did he in the sight of our forefathers, in the land of Egypt, even in the field of Zoan. He divided the Sea, and let them go through; he made the waters to stand on a heap. In the day-time also he led them with a cloud; and all the night through, with a light of fire. He clave the hard rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink thereof, as it had been out of the great depth. He brought waters out of the stony rock, so that it gushed out like*

S E R M.  
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S E R M.


VI.




*like the Rivers. Further, ver. 24 ; He commanded the clouds above, and opened the doors of heaven. He rained down manna also upon them for to eat, and gave them food from heaven. So man did eat Angels food, for he sent them meat enough. He caused the east wind to blow under heaven, and thro' his power he brought in the south-west wind. He rained flesh upon them as thick as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the Sea. He let it fall among their tents, even round about their habitation. And again, ver. 53 ; He led them forth like sheep, and carried them in the wilderness like a flock. He brought them out safely, that they should not fear ; and overwhelmed their enemies with the Sea. He brought them within the borders of his sanctuary, even to his mountain which he purchased with his right hand. He cast out the heathen also before them ; caused their land to be divided among them for an heritage, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents. Sufficient Signs These, any unprejudiced person would judge, to convince even the most obstinate and perverse, the most evil*  
*and*


and adulterous generation. But so fami- S E R M.  
liar were these *Marvels* become to them, VI.  
that (it appears) they had no more influ-  
ence upon *Them*, to bring them to true  
Amendment and Reformation of Man-  
ners, than the Works of *Nature*, (which  
are in Truth the continual miraculous o-  
perations of the omnipotent Power of the  
*God* of Nature,) have upon *Us*. This al-  
so is most *pathetically* set forth in the  
same lxxviiiith *Psalms*; ver. 18; *Yet for all*  
*this they sinned more against him, and pro-*  
*voked the most Highest in the Wilderuess:*  
*They tempted God in their hearts, and re-*  
*quired meat for their Lust. They spake*  
*against God also, saying, shall God prepare*  
*a Table in the Wilderuess? He smote the*  
*stony Rock indeed, that the water gushed*  
*out, and the streams flowed withal; but*  
*can he give Bread also, or provide flesh for*  
*his people?* (Their Argument was exactly  
the same, as that of the *Pharisees* to  
whom our Lord replies in my Text:  
They acknowledged that he had healed  
many diseased persons here upon *Earth*;  
But could he show them *also a Sign from*  
*Heaven?*)

S E R M. *Heaven?*) Further, ver. 32, of the same


VI. Psalm, *For all this they have sinned yet*  
 *more, and believed not his wondrous works :*  
 ver. 11; *They kept not the Covenant of*  
*God, and would not walk in his law ; But*  
*forgot what he had done, and the wonderful*  
*Works that he had showed for them ;*  
 ver. 42; *They turned back and tempted*  
*God, and moved the Holy One in Israel :*  
*They thought not of his hand, and of the*  
*day when he delivered them from the hand*  
*of the Enemy ; How he had wrought his*  
*Miracles in Egypt, and his Wonders in*  
*the field of Zoan. And again, ver. 27 ;*  
*They tempted and displeased the most High*  
*God, and kept not his Testimonies ; But*  
*turned their backs, and fell away like their*  
*forefathers, starting aside like a broken*  
*Bow. For they grieved him with their*  
*hill-altars, and provoked him to displeasure*  
*with their Images. A more lively and*  
 affectionate description of the perverseness of incorrigible Sinners, cannot possibly be given. Other Accounts of the same nature, we find in the history which the Old Testament gives us of the behaviour

viour of That people. When the *Egypt-* S E R M.  
*tians* pursued after them into the Wil- VI.  
 derness; *then*, as if he who had brought   
 them out of *Egypt* with a mighty hand  
 was not able to protect them in their  
 journey; they said, *Wherefore hast thou*  
*thus dealt with us, to carry us forth out of*  
*Egypt?* Exod. xiv. 11. When the *Egypt-*  
*tians* were all destroyed, and they had no-  
 thing to oppose their progress but the so-  
 litary Wilderuess; *then*, as if he who had  
 delivered them from the Host of *Pharaoh*,  
 was not able to feed them in the Desert,  
 they said, *Ye have brought us forth into*  
*this Wilderuess to kill this whole Assembly*  
*with hunger;* Exod. xvi. 3. When God  
 miraculously supplied them with Bread  
 from Heaven; *then*, there was *nothing*  
*at all besides this manna;* Num. xi. 6:  
 And when, by *another* miracle, he had  
 quenched their Thirst; *then*, he *smote*  
*the stony rock indeed, that the waters gush-*  
*ed out;* *but can he provide Flesh also for*  
*his people?* Ps. lxxviii. 21. And when, by  
 a *third* miracle, he fed them to the full  
 with quails; *for all This, they sinned yet*  
*more,*

S E R M. *more, and believed not his wondrous works;*


VI.  ver. 32. When *Moses tarried longer in the Mount than They expected; then, they could not live without their Leader, but must make Gods to go before them; for, as for This Moses, they knew not what was become of him; Exod. xxxii. 1: When he continued with them, and put himself constantly at the Head of them; then, ye take too much upon you; wherefore lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord? Numb. xvi. 3. When God commanded them to go up, and take possession of the good Land which he had provided for them; then, the people of the land were strong, and the Cities walled, and the children of Anak there, and we be not able to go up against the people, and the land is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof, and we saw Giants there, and would God we had died in the land of Egypt, or would God we had died in this Wilderness; and wherefore has the Lord brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword? Num. xiii. 28, &c. But when the Lord hereupon*  
commanded



commanded them not *to go up*; then, *Lo we be here, and will go up unto the place which the Lord has promised*; ch. xiv. 40. S E R M.  
VI.  


I SHOULD *proceed* to Other Instances of the unreasonable behaviour of sinful men in this respect: But the time not permitting me to finish this Subject Now, I shall at present add only a word of *application*, and so conclude.

I BELIEVE there are very few persons, who read these portions of Scripture, without censuring in their own minds the behaviour of the *Jews*, and saying within themselves, as did those whom our Saviour describes; *Matt. xxiii. 30*; *If We had been in the days of our Fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in These things.* But to every impenitent Sinner, in the *present* as well as in *former* times, the experience of the World, and the reason of things, and the judgment of conscience, and the Scripture of Truth says, *Thou art the man.* For all these things are *examples* unto *Us*, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come.

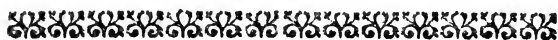
S E R M. VI.  God calls *Us* to Repentance, by the continual Witness which he gives to himself in the Works of Creation, in the Reason and Nature of Things, in the essential Differences of Good and Evil, in the voice of Conscience, in the dispensations of Providence, in his Mercies and Judgments, in the completion of Prophecies, in the Works and Preaching of Christ and his Apostles, in the Promises and Threatnings of the Gospel. And if all *These* things move men not, the Scripture declares *there shall no Sign be given to us*, but the *Sign* of the Nations who were destroyed by the *Flood*, and the Cities who perished in the Overthrow of *Sodom*. For as in the days before the *Flood*, and before the destruction of *Sodom*, men were *eating and drinking*, and *knew not* until the Waters came and *took away* the one, and the Fire the other ; *so also*, says our Lord, *shall the Coming of the Son of Man be*.



# SERMON VII.

Unreasonable Expectations not to  
be gratified in Religion.

[ *A Passion-Sermon.* ]



MATT. xii. 39.

*An evil and adulterous generation seeketh  
after a Sign, and there shall No Sign be  
given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet  
Jonas.*



OD, who is the Supreme GO- S E R M.  
vernour of the Universe, shows VII.  
forth his infinite Wisdom and  
Goodness, in creating a Va-  
riety of rational Creatures in  
different Circumstances, and expecting  
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S E R M. from them a proportionable Use of the  
 VII. Talents committed to them, according to  
 ~~~~~ their different degrees of Light and Knowledge, and according to their respective Capacities and Abilities. To *Angels*, having given Knowledge and Powers far superiour to those of Men; he expects of them accordingly an *Angelical* Obedience. To *Men*, having dispensed various Talents and various Degrees of Knowledge, at sundry times and in divers manners, according to his own good pleasure; after the similitude of the Great King in our Saviour's Parable, who, in the distribution of Employments among his Servants, without injury to any one, did what he pleased with his own: To *Men*, I say, God having dispensed various Talents and various degrees of Knowledge, he expects of them a Return proportionable to what is given them; Not over-ruling their Actions by the Force and Power of an irresistible Light; but trying their Obedience by the Willingness of their Endeavours to seek after Knowledge, and to guide themselves by That degree of Light  
 (what-

(whatsoever it be) whereby his Will is in S E R M.  
any measure made known unto them. VII.

W  
IN the State of *Nature*, God made himself known to Men by the Arguments of Reason, by the Works of Creation, and by the dispensations of Providence; *having never left himself wholly without witness, but sending men rain and fruitful Seasons, and filling their Hearts with Food and Gladness; the invisible things of God from the creation of the World being clearly seen and understood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead; Rom. i. 20. If the Nations of the World, forsaking this Universal Light, fall into the absurdest and most unreasonable Idolatries, and into consequently vicious and corrupt Practices of all kinds; they are evidently (as St Paul declares) without Excuse; and there is no injustice with God, if to such evil and adulterous generations of men there be no other Sign given, but the Signs of Nature and Reason and Conscience, and the perpetual universal Works of God.*

S E R M.

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UNDER the Gospel, God has made himself known to Men by the Revelation of his Son, confirmed by Signs and Wonders and Miracles of the Holy Ghost, by the Completion of Prophecies, and by the Analogy of the Whole Series of Events from the Beginning of the World. If under this greater and clearer light of Revelation, men still continue impenitent; not bringing forth the suitable Fruits of Righteousness, nor living worthy of their holy vocation, and as becometh the Gospel of Christ; the wrath of God is more severely revealed from Heaven, against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of Such men; and there shall no further Sign be given to such an evil and adulterous generation, but the Sign of the Son of man coming with the clouds of Heaven, in flame of fire taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel.

UNDER the Jewish state, God manifested himself to That People by the Law of Moses, by the continual Preaching of the Prophets, and finally by the accomplishment of the whole dispensation in the  
*Life*

*Life and Death and Resurrection of Christ.* S E R M.

VII.

And when they who saw *These* manifestations of God, were not thereby prevailed upon to *bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance*, and answerable to the *Light* that was then *come into the World*; but, on the contrary, *cavilled* at our Lord's Doctrine and Miracles, and continually required *More Signs*; our Lord, with just indignation, gives them the Reply in the Text; *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign, and there shall No Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the Whale's Belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the Heart of the Earth.*

IN discoursing upon which words, I have before observed, that the matter of instruction therein contained, may be reduced to the following Heads.

1<sup>st</sup>, T H A T the Doctrine of Religion is in itself reasonable to be believed, and sufficiently evidenced by the



## Unreasonable Expectations

*standing and universal Signs or Marks of Truth.* It is *supposed* in the words, that, what our Saviour here calls the *Sign of the Prophet Jonas*, was sufficient to render That generation of the *Jews* inexcusable in their Unbelief.

2dly; HERE is a description given of wicked men, in one particular and remarkable part of their Character; that they are apt continually to require *more and more* Signs, and to tempt God without reason and without End. *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign.*

3dly; THE declaration our Saviour here makes, plainly implies, that there are just and good reasons, why God should not gratify the unreasonable expectations of prejudiced and corrupt Minds. *There shall No Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas.*

THE *First* of these, I have already gone through; and have shown, that the  
 Doctrine



Doctrin of Religion is in itself reſona-  
ble to be believed, and ſufficiently evi-  
denced by the *ſtanding* and *universal Signs*  
or *Marks of Truth*. According to our  
Saviour's Suppoſition in the words of the  
Text; that, what he here calls the *Sign*  
of the Prophet *Jonas*, was ſufficient to  
render That generation of the *Jews* inex-  
cuſable in their Unbelief.

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VII.  


THE *Second* Obſervable, was, the De-  
ſcription here given of wicked men, in  
one particular and remarkable part of  
their Character; that they are apt con-  
tinually to require *more and more* Signs,  
and to tempt God without reaſon and  
without End: *An evil and adulterous ge-  
neration ſeeketh after a Sign*. And This  
Obſervation I at large illuſtrated by That  
*remarkable Inſtance* the Scripture gives us,  
of the behaviour of the *people of the Jews*  
in their paſſage through the *Wilderneſs*;  
which is ſo diſtinctly recorded in the  
Books of *Moſes*, and ſo frequently alluded  
to in the *Pſalms*, and in St *Paul's* Epistles  
to the *Corinthians* and to the *Hebrews*, as  
a ſtanding Admonition and Caution to  
perverſe

S E R M. perverse Minds, in all succeeding genera-  
 VII. tions.



I SHALL Now proceed to some *Other* Instances of the like Sort, in which the Unreasonableness of tempting God in this manner, will still further appear. In our *Saviour's time*, the *same* Spirit of Perverseness, which the Scripture calls an *evil heart of Unbelief*, (meaning always by *Unbelief*, not a *reasonable Caution* in *with-holding the Assent*, but a *captious Desire* of *evading the reasons of conviction*;) In our *Saviour's time*, I say, the *same* perverse Spirit, which appeared so remarkably in the *Jews of old* in the Wilderness, continued *still* in the corrupt part of That Nation: So that *whatever* Method the divine Wisdom thought fit to make use of, in order to bring them to Repentance; they could *Always* render it ineffectual. *John the Baptist* came unto them, *neither eating Bread, nor drinking Wine*; Luke vii. 33; that is, *he* came in the more *severe* way of *austerity and mortification*; and they said, *He hath a Devil*; that is, they charged him with being

ing *enthusiastick and mad*. On the other S E R M.  
hand, *the Son of man is come eating and* VII.  
*drinking*; ver. 34; that is, in the more  
*familiar way of a free conversation*; and  
*they said, Behold a gluttonous man and a*  
*wine-bibber, a friend of Publicans and*  
*Sinners*. The Methods of Proceeding  
were *Both* of them right, in their proper  
Time and Place; and *Wisdom is justified*  
*of all her children*; But incorrigible men  
could equally find Objections against *Both*.  
Our Saviour therefore, in a most elegant  
parable, compares them to cross and per-  
verse children, whom neither Mirth nor  
Seriousness could please: Ver. 31; *Where-*  
*unto shall I liken the men of This gene-*  
*ration? and to what are they like? They*  
*are like unto children sitting in the market-*  
*place, and calling one to another, and say-*  
*ing, We have piped unto you, and ye have*  
*not danced; we have mourned to you, and*  
*ye have not wept*. When the men of *Naza-*  
*reth* heard what mighty works our Lord  
had done at *Capernaum*, they said, *What-*  
*soever we have heard done in Capernaum,*  
*do also here in thy own country*; Luk. iv. 23.  
On

S E R M.

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On the other hand, when he did Wonders in his own country, then their Answer was, *Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy Disciples also may see the works that thou doest;-----If thou do these things, show thyself to the world; Joh. vii. 3.* When our Lord had miraculously healed many diseased persons here upon *Earth*, then the *Pharisees* said unto him, *Master, we would see of thee a Sign from Heaven:* And when there came unto him a *voice from Heaven*, Joh. xii. 28; the Evangelist tells us, ver. 37. that yet *they believed not on him.* When the Chief Priests and Elders saw our Saviour crucified, they said, *Matt. xxvii. 42; He saved others, himself he cannot save; if he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him:* But when he was risen from the Dead, to the Terror of their own Soldiers, whom they had set to watch him; then they gave them money to report, that *his Disciples had come by night, and stolen him away; ch. xxviii. 13.* Thus, of tempting God; and of continually requiring more and greater

greater Signs, and of finding Means to elude the Arguments and Motives of Religion, there is no End. The *Temper* from which all This proceeds, is of the *same* kind with That *Tempting of Providence*, which the Gospel emphatically represents to us in the history of our *Saviour's temptation*; Where *Satan* placing him upon a *pinnacle of the temple*, argues with him, that, if he was the *Son of God*, he might safely venture to *cast himself down* from thence: For if God owned and declared him to be his *Son*, and had so peculiar a Favour for him; *why* should not he preserve him from being hurt in his Fall; *Matt. iv. 6.* The Ground upon which incorrigible Sinners reject all the Arguments and Motives of Religion. is generally of *the like* Nature. If it be the *Will* of God, that men should *believe* and *act* in such or such a particular manner; *why* does not he *compel* them so to do? *why* does not he perpetually *give them Signs from Heaven*? *why* does he not *turn their Hearts*, which way soever he pleases? for *Who has resisted his Will*?

The

S E R M.

VII.



The Answer is very plain ; that God does not absolutely *will* such and such things to be done, but his Will is that men should *chuse* to do them upon reasonable Motives : In which alone consists the essence of all *Virtue*, and of all *Religion*. God does not therefore by irresistible Motives *compel* men to *obey* him ; because, if he did, it would for That very Reason be in *Them* No Act of *Obedience*. But he *tries* their Obedience, by the *proper* Instruments of *Persuasion* ; and by Motives suited to the nature of *rational* and *free* Agents. Of These, *Some* love the knowledge of *Truth* ; and are always ready, according to the degree of the Light afforded them, to do what is *Right* : And these our Saviour, in his parable of the Sower, very significantly compares to *Good Ground*. *Others* love *Darkness* rather than *Light*, and Arguments of Reason make no Impression upon them, and their *Hearts* are as *hard as the Nether-milstone*. To *These*, the exquisite *Works of Nature* prove not the *Being of God* ; the *Revelation of the Gospel*,

*spel*, discovers not to them his *Will*: S E R M.  
And should God vouchsafe them still VII.  
*Other Calls* to Repentance, they would  
prove equally ineffectual; *neither would*  
*they be perswaded*, even *though one rose*  
*from the Dead*. Of This we have a re-  
markable Instance; *Job. xii. 9, 10; Much*  
*people-----came, not for Jesus sake only,*  
*but that they might see Lazarus also, whom*  
*he had raised from the Dead: But the*  
*chief Priests consulted, that they might*  
*put Lazarus also to Death*. These were,  
in the strongest Sense of the words in my  
Text, *an evil and adulterous generation*;  
altogether unworthy of having any fur-  
ther Signs given them; and whose beha-  
viour abundantly justifies our Lord's de-  
claration in the following part of the  
Text, (which was the


*Third and Last* thing I proposed to  
speak to; *viz. the Declaration* our Sa-  
viour here makes,) plainly implying that  
there are *just and good reasons*, why God  
should not gratify the unreasonable ex-  
pectations of prejudiced and corrupt  
minds: *There shall No Sign be given to*  
*this*

S E R M. *this generation, but the Sign of the Prophet*  
VII. *Jonas.* Now the reasonableness of this Proceeding, is very evident from what has been already said. Eternal Life, is the Gift of God: And the Design of God, (his *just* and *reasonable* Design,) is to bestow this *free Gift*, upon those who by an habitual *Practice of Virtue*, shall have their Minds qualified for That Happy State. The *Practice of Virtue* consists, in the *willing Choice* of what is good, and *avoiding* what is evil: And the *Time* of this Choice, is the *present state of Probation*. God could, if he had pleased, by giving *no free Will* to his Creatures, have prevented *all possibility* of *Moral Evil*. But then the whole *Creation of God*, would have been only a great *Machine*; in which the *Omnipotence* indeed of the Maker, would have appeared; but he would have been no *King*, no *Judge*, no *Moral Governour*; nor could have displayed *any* of those *more excellent Perfections*, of *Justice*, *Mercy*, and the like, in which the *Glory* of the Almighty principally consists. These have *no place*, but where there



there are *Subjects* capable of *obeying* or *disobeying*. The *proper Tryal* of which obedience, is That *Freedom of Will*, which, according as it is determined in different Circumstances by the *reasonableness of what is good* or the *intiments of what is evil*, renders the *Agent* morally *good or evil*. God therefore, according to his own good pleasure, places men in all variety of Circumstances in this probation-state; And the Justice, and Wisdom, and Goodness of his Government consists in finally judging them All with Equity, according to their respective degrees of Light and Knowledge. The first *Root and Foundation* of Virtue, is the sincere Desire of *knowing* the Will of God, and impartially *searching* after the Truth: And, as a proper Tryal of This disposition, the Wisdom of God has been pleased so to order the *Notices* given of himself to Mankind both by *Nature* and *Revelation*, that if any man will do his Will, he shall know of the doctrine; and, if he desires not to practise it, even the knowledge of it shall be hid from him: To Him that hath,

V O L. V.                      L                      shall

S E R M. *shall be given; and from Him that hath*  
 VII. *not, shall be taken away even That which*  
 *he hath. By the Light of Nature, God*  
*manifests himself to men in the works of*  
*Creation; Visibly enough, to those who,*  
*as St Paul expresses it, seek the Lord, if*  
*haply they may feel after him, and find*  
*him: But yet at the same time in such a*  
*manner, as that vicious and ill-disposed*  
*men, seeing, may still not see; and hear-*  
*ing, may still not hear; but may go on to*  
*ascribe the most perfect works of infinite*  
*Wisdom, to Fate, to Chance, to Nothing.*  
*By Revelation, God has declared his Mer-*  
*cy towards Sinners: Signifying unto them,*  
*that as a Great King over numerous Na-*  
*tions, consistently with the Laws of his*  
*universal Kingdom, pardons, in some re-*  
*bellious City, by the interposition of his*  
*beloved Son, as many as, by his Son's in-*  
*invitation and perswasion, return to their*  
*Duty; so also will God, the Supreme*  
*Governour of the Universe, accept all*  
*those, whom the Spirit of Christ, (in-*  
*viting them either under the state of Na-*  
*ture, by such Preachers of righteousness*

as

as was *Noah* and the *Patriarchs*; or under S E R M.  
the *Law*, by *Moses* and the *Prophets*; or VII.  
under the *Gospel*, by our *Lord himself* and  
his *Apostles*,) whom (I say) by *Any* of  
these means, the Spirit of Christ shall  
bring to Repentance. And the *Evidences*  
of this *Revelation*, (in the same manner,  
and for the same reason, as the *Evidences*  
of God in the *Works of Creation*,) are  
fitted to satisfy an unprejudiced Mind,  
and yet are not such as cannot be resisted.  
When the *Jews* demanded of our Saviour  
such a Sign, as was given to their Fathers  
when the *Heavens* rained down *Manna*  
for them to eat, *Job. vi. 6*; he would not  
gratify them with a *new* miracle, but  
gave them the true interpretation of the  
antient one: *I am*, says he, *the Bread of*  
*Life*; *the Bread of God is He which com-*  
*eth down from Heaven, and giveth Life*  
*unto the World*. Again, When the Pha-  
risees asked of him a *Sign from Heaven*; Matt. xvi.  
his Answer was; *Luk. xii. 56*; *Ye hypo-*  
*crites, ye can discern the face of the sky*  
*and of the earth; but how is it, that ye*  
*do not discern this Time?* referring them

S E R M. to the *Prophecies*, which much more  
 VII. plainly pointed out the *Time* of his Co-  
 ming, than ever the *face of the Sky* fore-  
 signified the *Weather*. These *Prophecies*  
 he fulfilled, in his *Life* and by his *Death*;  
 by many miraculous *Actions*, and miracu-  
 lous *Sufferings*. And when he was *raised*  
*up the third day*, God *shewed him openly*;  
*not to all the people*, Acts x. 41; but unto  
*Witnesses chosen before of God*, and com-  
 manded to *preach unto the people*: God here  
 likewise doing, not every thing that *could*  
*be done*, not every thing that unreasonable  
 men might expect *should be done*,  
 but what he himself saw *fit and proper*  
 to be done. According to that affection-  
 ate observation of our Saviour, *Luk. iv.*  
*25*; *I tell you of a truth, many widows*  
*were in Israel in the days of Elias, but*  
*-----unto none of them was he sent, save*  
*unto-----a widow of Sarepta*: And many  
*Lepers were in Israel in the time of Eli-*  
*seus the Prophet, and none of them was*  
*cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian*. God  
 has given us *Faculties*, to enable us to  
 search after and to find the *Truth*; and  
 he

he expects we should *attend* with an im-  
partial and unprejudiced mind (which is  
the proper Duty of Rational Creatures,) S E R M.  
VII.

to the *Light* he thinks fit to afford us.  
*Why, even of yourselves,* says our Saviour,  
*judge ye not what is right?* Luk. xii. 57.  
They who *do* thus judge; who, with a  
mind desirous to do the Will of God,  
receive and embrace the doctrine of Truth;  
not carelessly, credulously, and implicitly;  
but with reason, with examination, with  
attention, with such impartial considera-  
tion and inquiry, as enables men to find  
(by observation and care) what Others are  
blind to, and to *be ready always to give*  
*a reason of the Hope that is in them;*  
These are the persons, whom the Scrip-  
ture commends for their *Faith*; for ha-  
ving the Virtue of *Faith*; in opposition  
to the Vice of *Infidelity*, and to the Folly  
of *Credulity*. For, *we walk by Faith, not*  
*by Sight*; 2 Cor. v. 7: by a *rational per-*  
*swasion*, not by *Necessity*: *Seeing* (as St Paul  
elegantly describes it; *Seeing*) through a  
*glass* (through a *descrying-glass*) *darkly*; ἡσυχαστικῶς.  
1 Cor. xiii. 12; not *beholding*, as in a *glass*

S E R M. (as in \* a *looking-glass*,) with open face ;

VII. 2 Cor. iii. 18. And This is That which



\* κατωπίζου

makes *Faith* and *Hope* to be *Virtues* :  
For *Hope* that is seen, is not *Hope* ; for,  
what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope  
for ? But if we hope for That we see not,  
then do we with patience wait for it ; Rom.  
viii. 25. The God of Nature, in whom  
we live and move and have our Being, and  
who is not far from every one of us, is  
not visible to mortal eyes : But the Light  
of Nature affords reasonable men, very  
great Arguments to believe and trust in  
him ; And This, is a commendable and  
well-grounded Faith. For *Faith* is the  
*Substance of things hoped for, the evidence  
of things not seen* : And the commenda-  
tion of *Moses's* patience in *Egypt*, before  
God's revealing them himself to him,  
was, that he endured, as seeing him who is  
invisible ; Heb. xi. 27. The Evidences of  
natural reason and of the most demon-  
strable Truths, do not force themselves  
upon All men ; But to the *impartial* and  
*attentive*, to the *unprejudiced* and *confide-*  
*rate*, they appear in their full Strength ;  
and,

and, for That reason, 'tis an Act of *Vir-* S E R M.  
*tue* to be guided by them. For the *same* VII.  
reason, in matters of Revelation likewise;

*Blessed*, says our Saviour, *are they that have not seen, and yet have believed*; Joh. xx. 29. That is: Not, they who are *credulous*, and believe *without reason*; but they who, like the *Bereans*, are convinced of the Truth by *Searching* into the grounds of it. *The Trial of whose Faith, faith St Peter, will be found unto Praise and Honour and Glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though Now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory*; 1 Pet. i. 7. This is the *character* the Scripture gives us of the Virtue of *Faith*, and the *commendation* of those who are eminent for having it. On the contrary, they who by prejudices and vicious inclinations are prevented from searching after the Truth, and, instead of attending to and examining what is Right, seek rather for Cavils industriously to evade the evidence and conviction of it; *these* are the persons  
L 4 whom

S E R M. whom the Scripture with the greatest se-  
 VII. verity condemns for their *infidelity*, as be-  
 ~~~~~ ing an *evil and adulterous generation*. The  
*uncircumcision which is by nature*, saith  
 St Paul, *if it fulfil the Law, shall it not*  
*judge thee, who by the letter and circum-*  
*cision dost transgress the Law?* Rom. ii. 27.  
 Matt. xii. And our Saviour; *The men of Nineveh,*  
 31. *says he, shall rise in judgement with this*  
*generation, and shall condemn it; be-*  
*cause they repented at the preaching of Jo-*  
*nas, and behold a greater than Jonas is*  
*here.* Persons thus *resisting the Truth,*  
 our Lord, after the first and second ad-  
 monition, rejected; and refused to give  
 them any further *Signs*: and commanded  
 his *Disciples* in like manner, to *shake off*  
*the dust of their feet for a testimony against*  
*them,* and not continue to *cast their pearls*  
*before swine.* God had dealt with the  
*Jews of old,* after the same manner;  
*Pf. lxxxix. 12; My people would not hear my*  
*voice, and Israel would not obey me; So*  
*I gave them up unto their own hearts lusts,*  
*and let them follow their own Imaginations.*  
 And to men in *future Ages,* who shall  
 be



be found of the same temper, the Scrip- S E R M.  
ture threatens that God, in just anger, VII.  
shall even send *them strong delusion, that*  
*they may believe a Lye; 2 Th. ii, 11.* The  
*Effect* of mens being in this manner given  
up for their Abusing the divine patience,  
is thus expressed by the Psalmist: *Pf.*  
*lxxviii. 60; When God heard this, he was*  
*wroth, and took sore displeasure at Israel:*  
*So that he forsook the tabernacle in Shilo,*  
*even the Tent that he had pitched among*  
*men: He delivered their power into cap-*  
*tivity, and their beauty into the enemy's*  
*hand: He gave his people also over unto*  
*the sword, and was wroth with his inhe-*  
*ritance.* And by our Saviour in his af-  
fectionate lamentation over *Jerusalem;*  
*Matt. xxiii. 37; O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,*  
*thou that killest the prophets, and stonest*  
*them which are sent unto thee! How of-*  
*ten would I have gathered thy children to-*  
*gether, even as a hen gathereth her chick-*  
*ens under her wings, and ye would not!*  
*Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.*





# SERMON VIII.

How the Law is said to be the  
Strength of Sin.

[ *A Passion-Sermon.* ]



I COR. XV. 56 and 57.

*The sting of Death is sin, and the  
strength of sin is the law; but thanks  
be to God which giveth us the victory,  
through our Lord Jesus Christ.*



THE Apostle having in the SERMON,  
former part of this Chapter, VIII.  
proved at large the truth of  
the resurrection of Christ,  
and the certainty of the fu-  
ture resurrection of Christians; and ha-  
ving from thence taken occasion to give a  
full

S E R M. full and particular account of the order  
 VIII. and manner of the resurrection of the  
 body; he concludes his whole discourse  
 with this triumphal exclamation; *So then  
 when this corruptible shall have put on in-  
 corruption, and this mortal shall have put  
 on immortality, then shall be brought to  
 pass the saying that is written, Death is  
 swallowed up in victory, i. e. utterly and  
 for ever; O death where is thy sting? O  
 grave, where is thy victory? The sting of  
 death is sin, and the strength of sin is the  
 law; but thanks be to God which giveth us  
 the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*


I shall endeavour 1<sup>st</sup>, To explain the  
 words briefly, and shew in what Sense Sin  
 is said to be *the sting of death, and the law  
 the strength of sin.* 2<sup>dly</sup>, I shall indea-  
 vour to shew how and by what means  
 Christ gives us the victory, over the law  
*which is the strength of sin*, over Sin which  
*is the sting of death*, and finally over  
 Death it self; And lastly, I shall draw  
 some practical Inferences from the whole.

*First*, I shall endeavour to shew in what  
 Sense Sin is said to be *the sting of death*,  
 and

and the law the strength of sin. That by S E R M.  
 Sin's being the *sting of death*, is meant V I I I.  
 that Sin is the *cause of Death*, and that  
 'tis Sin only that makes Death terrible, is  
 evident. *The first mention* we find of  
 death's being in the World, is upon *Adam's*  
 committing the first transgression; *In the*  
*day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely*  
*die*; Gen. ii. 17. And the cause of the  
 continuance of its dominion ever since in  
 the World, is the conformity of the rest  
 of mankind to that of their Forefather;  
*As by one man sin first entred into the*  
*world, and death by sin*; and *so death has*  
*since passed upon all men, for that all have*  
*sinned*; Rom. v. 12. The Apostle lays it  
 down as a maxim, that the cause of the  
 dominion of death, is sin; and because it  
 might be objected that since Sin is not  
 imputed where there is no law, there-  
 fore those who lived between *Adam* and  
*Moses*, without any exprefs revealed Law,  
 should seem not to be concluded under  
 the sentence of death; he adds, that even  
 in *that* time, men *had* some discovery of  
 the Will of God; So that before the de-  
 livery

S E R M. livery of *Moses's* law Sin *was* in the  
 VIII. World ; and therefore death *did* reign  
 ~~~~~ from *Adam* to *Moses*, even over them that  
 had not sinned after the similitude of *Adam's* transgression ; that is, who had not  
 indeed like *Adam* sinned against a positive  
 and immediate Revelation of the Will of  
 God, with an express threatening of death  
 annexed ; but yet had sinned against such  
 a law, as they had sufficient reason to be  
 assured was a discovery of the Will of  
 God. The Scripture is very exceeding  
 full in this point ; inculcating every  
 where, that as the knowledge of God  
 and Obedience to his commands *is life*,  
 so the immediate and necessary conse-  
 quence of Sin is *death*. *When lust has*  
*conceived, it bringeth forth Sin, and Sin*  
*when it is finished, bringeth forth death ;*  
*St James i. 15. What fruit had ye then*  
*in those things, whereof ye are now asha-*  
*med ? for the end of those things is death ;*  
*Rom. vi. 21 : and ver. 23 ; the wages of*  
*sin is death.* Moreover, as Sin is the *cause*  
 of death, so also is it *That* only which  
 makes Death it self terrible. 'Tis not  
 barely

barely the separation of Soul and Body, S E R M.  
which is the terrour of death ; but that VIII.  
separation, as inflicted *by*, and accompa-  
nied *with*, the wrath of God. Death  
may possibly be otherwise so far from ter-  
rible, that it may be and often *is* expected  
by good men with joy and comfort, as  
an enterance into life and happiness. 'Tis  
Sin only which is the horror of death,  
and which gives it that sting, which  
makes it really insupportable even to the  
most distant thought. When the death  
of the Body is the forerunner of that  
death of the Soul, from which there is  
no hopes of release, but the wrath of  
God must abide on it for ever ; then is it  
that death appears truly dreadful and  
terrible. This is that which makes  
wicked men, conscious of their own guilt,  
and sensible of the wrath of God hang-  
ing over their heads, so amazed at the  
approach and even the thoughts of death :  
They cannot bear to think on so affright-  
ing a prospect, but are even overwhelmed  
and swallowed up with astonishment and  
despair : Not that they so dread death  
barely

S E R M. barely and in it self, (*for they could call on*  
 VIII. *the hills to fall on them, and to the moun-*  
 *tains to cover them; they could seek death*  
*when they cannot find it, and desire to die*  
*when death shall flee from them; Rev.*  
*ix. 6.) but it is the consequences of death,*  
*That sting which Sin gives it, that they*  
*are so terribly and so justly afraid of.*

But to proceed: *The strength of Sin,*  
*saith the Apostle, is the law; The*  
*strength of Sin, viz. that which gives it*  
*its power and efficacy. 'Tis evident that*  
*Sin is the transgression of the law, and*  
*that where there is no law there is no trans-*  
*gression; Rom. iv. 15: By the law there-*  
*fore is the knowledge of sin; Rom. iii. 20:*  
*or as the Apostle more fully expresses*  
*himself; ch. vii. ver. 7 and 8; I had not*  
*known sin but by the law; for I had not*  
*known lust except the law had said, Thou*  
*shalt not covet; But sin taking occasion by*  
*the commandment, wrought in me all man-*  
*ner of concupiscence; For without the law*  
*sin is dead: that is, the knowledge of Sin*  
*must needs be, by the knowledge and pro-*  
*mulgation of the law that forbids it. But*  
 this



this is not all ; For in this sense, by every S E R M. VIII.  
 declaration of the Will of God, by  
 every command and prohibition, is the  
 knowledge of Sin ; and so the Gospel it  
 self might as properly be stiled the strength  
 of sin, as the law. Since therefore by  
 the *Law*, the Apostle plainly means That  
 discovery of the Will of God which was  
 made to mankind before the Coming of  
 Christ ; and particularly that which was  
 given to the *Jews* ; in opposition to the  
 Christian or Gospel-dispensation : it is cer-  
 tain that by its being the *strength of sin*,  
 must be understood Something more,  
 than barely its being the occasion of the  
 knowledge of Sin. It remains therefore,  
 that it must signify the making *such* a  
 discovery of the heinous nature and guilt  
 of Sin, as yet either not to afford a possi-  
 bility of avoiding it, or not to discover  
 any sufficient means of recovering from  
 it. Now in what sense, and how far this  
 may be truly applicable to the *Jewish*  
 Law, is of some difficulty to determine :  
 (For if the *Jews under the law* had nei-  
 ther any possibility of avoiding Sin, nor

S E R M. yet any sufficient means of recovering  
 VIII. from the guilt of it, it would follow that  
 people were in much harder circumstances  
 than the representations which the Scrip-  
 ture makes to us of God's dispensations  
 and dealings with them allows us to sup-  
 pose: I shall therefore for the clearing  
 this whole matter, and to show both in  
 what sense the Law is called the Strength  
 of Sin, and how our Saviour has given us  
 the victory over it, (which was the first  
 thing I proposed to speak to,) endeavour  
 briefly to prove these following Propo-  
 sitions. 1<sup>st</sup>, That the Original Law of  
 God requires exact, perfect, and unfin-  
 ning obedience; which since Man through  
 the weakness and corruption of his nature  
 is not capable of performing, men are all  
 thereby necessarily concluded under Sin.  
 2<sup>dly</sup>, That that Law, under which the  
*Jews* were, so far as it is distinguished  
 from, and opposed to, the Grace or Go-  
 spel of Christ; is the same with the Ori-  
 ginal Law of God, in its full force and  
 severity. 3<sup>dly</sup>, That yet God never dealt  
 with men according to the strictness and  
 rigour

rigour of that Law, but always anticipated the favour of the Gospel, and dealt with men according to the Gracious Terms of the New Covenant. 4<sup>thly</sup>, That Our Saviour at his appearance, openly promulged and declared to all the World the less severe Terms of this Covenant of Grace, and by that means totally freed men from the fear and bondage of that rigorous Law, which was really in force until the time of his appearing; excepting only as God was pleased to anticipate the Grace and Favour of the New Covenant, at first by the secret dispensations of his Mercy, and the obscure promises of a Redeemer to come; and afterwards, as the time of the promise drew near, by the more open and plain declarations of the prophets. 1<sup>st</sup>, The Original Law of God requires exact, perfect, and unfinning Obedience; which since man through the weakness and corruption of his nature, is not capable of performing, men are thereby necessarily concluded under Sin. This is evident from the consideration of the Nature of

S E R M.  
VIII.  


S E R M. *God*, and of the true and Original notion  
VIII. of a *Law*. The Authority of *God* being  
supreme, and the condition of his creatures absolutely dependant ; Obedience entire and constant, universal and perpetual, is plainly and naturally due to his commands : The nature also of a *Law* being to require obedience ; and provision for reconciliation after a violation of it, not being originally in the condition of a *Law*, but only an after-provision of Favour and Mercy : it is plain that originally to the *Laws* of *God*, there is due a perfect and unfinning Obedience. That therefore which the original law of *God* declares, is this ; that as *God* is himself a Being of infinite purity and holiness, so he cannot be pleased with any creature, that imitates not that purity according to the utmost capacity of its nature ; that as there are eternal measures of Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, which are as unchangeable as the nature of *God* and the constitution of things, so *God* cannot possibly delight in any creature that observes not these essential and fundamental laws  
of

of his Kingdom ; that therefore men who are made capable of knowing God, are bound to worship him *as* God, without giving any part of that honour to another which is due only to *him*, or paying *him* that honour which is due to him, in a way not becoming the excellency of his nature ; And in brief that knowing the eternal rules of justice and equity ; honesty and fidelity, temperance and sobriety, to be the laws of his Kingdom, they are bound to be true and just in all their dealings one with another with all simplicity and sincerity of mind, and to live in Sobriety, Temperance and Chastity, with all Purity and Holiness : And this they are bound to do, constantly and at all times ; the original law of God assuring indeed those that obey it in all points of a reward and the favour of God ; but not providing any expiation, nor pointing with any certainty at the means of reconciliation, for those who shall at any time have transgressed and incurred God's displeasure. It is true the World always had great and reasonable hopes, that God

S E R M. would be merciful to returning Sinners,  
 VIII. and accept repentance instead of perfect  
 innocence ; But then these hopes were not  
 founded on the Original condition of the  
 law of God ; but either on men's natural  
 notion of the mercifulness and placability  
 of the Divine nature (such as the Hea-  
 then World has always depended upon ;)  
 and these were only probable and hopeful  
 presumptions ; or else on the obscure pro-  
 mises made to *Adam* and the Patriarchs of  
 a *Messias* to come, (such as the holy and  
 devout men before the giving of the Law  
 of *Moses* grounded their expectations of  
 mercy upon ;) and these were the first be-  
 ginnings of the declaration of the Cove-  
 nant of Grace. The Original law of  
 God therefore, required perfect unfinning  
 obedience ; and thereby, since no man  
 was able to perform it, necessarily con-  
 cluded all men under Sin. 2dly, That  
 Law, under which the *Jews* lived, so far  
 as it is distinguished from, and opposed  
 to, the Grace or Gospel of Christ ; is the  
 same with the original Law of God in its  
 full Force and Severity. This is evident  
 from




from its retaining and confirming all the moral precepts of Nature, with express promise indeed *that the man which doth these things shall live by them*; Rom. x. 5; but with most rigorous threatnings also, *that Cursed should be every one that continued not in all things which were written in the book of the Law to do them*; Gal. iii. 10; not affording any expiation for great and wilful sins past, but denouncing death without mercy against them; nor indeed allowing any atonement even for smaller Sins, but such as plainly owed all their efficacy, to their being types of the mercy of the Covenant of grace. The same also is clear from the Apostles attributing all those severities to the *Jewish Law*, which are properly true only of the Original law of God; and his opposing it directly to the grace and mercy of the Gospel-Covenant. *The law, saith he, is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good*; Rom. vii. 12; it was such as if it were exactly obeyed, would certainly justify a man,

S E R M. *i. e.* make him appear righteous in the  
 VIII. Sight of God, and entitle him to the re-  
 ward of obedience ; *the doers of the law shall be justified* ; Rom. ii. 13. But the corrupt estate of humane nature being such, that no man can obey this law in all points without sinning, but that in *many things we offend all, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God* ; Rom. iii. 23 : hence the law which was ordained to the end that men obeying it might attain life and happiness, served only to their Condemnation, by working in their Consciences a Conviction of their duty which they ought to have performed, and of the Wrath of God hanging over their heads for not performing it : *The commandment, saith he, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death* Rom. vii. 10. And upon this account (I suppose) are those so frequent expressions of the Apostle ; *that the law worketh wrath*, Rom. iv. 15 ; *that by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God* ; Rom. iii. 20 : *that as many as are*  
 of



*of the works of the law are under the curse; Gal. iii. 10. And that the law entered that the offence might abound; Rom. v. 20: that is to say, not that it was designed to that end, but that in fact and by consequence it did become a means of aggravating sin and rendering it more exceedingly criminal; It is true the Law did indeed appoint certain sacrifices of expiation for sin; but such as had not in themselves Any efficacy to expiate sin, any otherwise than as they typified that great sacrifice which was once to be offered for the Sins of the whole World: The Tabernacle was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect; Heb. x. 1. Hence though those good men who lived before the coming of Christ, were indeed justified; yet*

S E R M.  
VIII.  


S E R M. yet they are said to be justified, how? not  
VIII. by the works of the law, but by faith; as  
 St *Paul* reasoneth in his whole fourth Chapter to the *Romans*; His meaning is; They trusted not to ritual and ceremonious performances, but looked through the types and shadows of the law to the promised Messiah, being fully perswaded that what God had promised he would assuredly perform; and this was counted unto them for righteousness. Thus of *Abraham* particularly it is said by the Apostle, *that he was not justified by the works of the law, so as to have wherewith to glory before God; but that he was justified by Faith*: and in like manner all the holy men, who lived under the law, did not expect to be justified in the sight of God by the works of the law, but by their faith in God, and trust in his promises. So the law was their Schoolmaster to bring them unto Christ; and though they knew that nothing in the law could of it self avail effectually to the forgiveness of sins, yet they continued with patience walking in the Commandments of God, and waiting for

for the consolation and redemption of *Israel*; and accordingly when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made *[of a Woman, made]* under the law, that he might redeem those that were under the law. The Jewish Law therefore, so far as it was distinguished from, and opposed to, the grace or gospel of Christ, was the same with the original law of God in its full force and severity; and no flesh could be justified thereby.

3dly, YET God never dealt with men according to the strictness and severity of that Law, but always anticipated the favour of the gospel, and dealt with men according to the gracious terms of the new Covenant. Thus though no flesh could be justified by the law, yet both the Patriarchs who lived *before* the law (as I have already observed,) and all Holy men who lived *under* the Law, were justified; and this their justification *was by Faith*, i. e. by the terms of that new Covenant, *which in the fulness of time* was to be promulged openly and plainly to the whole world. Wherefore, though the Law appointed no

S E R M. expiation for great and presumptuous Sins,  
 VIII. yet God always pardoned Sinners upon  
 their true repentance, (as appears in the  
 case of *David* and others;) and as the  
 times of the gospel grew nearer and nearer,  
 began by degrees to *declare* by his Prophets,  
 that he would do so. *David*, when he had  
 committed those crying Sins of Adultery and  
 Murder, acknowledges that the severity of the  
 law allowed no Sacrifice of expiation for him;  
*Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it thee,  
 but thou delightest not in burnt-offerings;*  
 Ps. li. 16: Yet he hoped that upon his hearty  
 repentance, forgiveness would not be impossible  
 to be obtained at the Hands of God; *A broken  
 and contrite heart, O God, saith he, thou wilt  
 not despise;* ver. 17: and the event discovered  
 that he did indeed obtain it. And God afterward  
 by the Prophet *Ezekiel* declared publicly to the  
 whole people of the *Jews*, that *when a wicked  
 man turneth away from his wickedness, and  
 doeth that which is lawful and right, he should  
 save his soul alive.* Thus though the Law, strictly  
 speaking, was in

force with its full severity until the appearing of our Saviour, yet God never dealt with men according to that severity, but always anticipated the Favour of the Gospel, and judged men by the terms of the Covenant of grace. The *Law* was by *Moses, Grace and Truth by Christ.*

S E R M.  
VIII.  


4thly, THIS new Covenant of grace, which, before the coming of our Saviour, lay hid in the secret dispensations of God's mercy, and began in part and by degrees to be discovered, first by the obscure promises of a Messiah to come, and afterwards by the more plain declarations of the Prophets; was at our Saviour's Appearance openly established, and the terms of it publicly promulged to the whole World; so as to deliver men entirely from all fear of that rigour of the Law, which the Apostle styles *the strength of Sin.* This deliverance of men by the Gospel from the burden and severity of the Law, the Apostle in the Text calls a Victory; and This Victory our Saviour obtained for us, principally by these two things: 1st, By giving himself a sacrifice  
and

S E R M. and propitiation for sins past, from which  
 VIII. men could not be justified by the Law;  
 ~~~~~ and 2dly, By proposing openly the gracious terms of Faith and Repentance to those who believed and were desirous to obey him. 1st, He gave himself a sacrifice and propitiation for sins past, from which men could not be justified by the law, viz. When it was not consistent with the wisdom of God in his government of the world, to let sin go unpunished, and yet he would have mercy upon sinful man, *he sent his own Son into the world in the likeness of sinful flesh, to bear our punishment, and so for sin (or as the words may most properly be rendered, by being a sacrifice for sin) condemned sin in the flesh*; Rom. viii. 3. Hence Christ is said to have *obtained redemption for us*, Heb. ix. 12: *to have put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*, Heb. ix. 26: *to have given his life a ransom for many*, St Mat. xx. 28. for many: that is, *for all those that should believe and obey him*; as it is explained by St Paul, 1 Tim. ii. 6: *to have bought us with a price*, 1 Cor. vi.

20: *to be the propitiation for our sins*, S E R M. VIII.  
Joh. ii. 2: *and to have purchased a church*  
*with his blood*, Acts xx. 28: with many  
the like expressions, which do all plainly  
signify, that Christ by his death and the  
shedding of his most precious blood, has  
made full and sufficient satisfaction to the  
justice of God for the sins of the whole  
world, that is, for as many as shall out of  
the world flee unto him, and submit them-  
selves to the terms of the new covenant,  
whereof he is made the mediatur. *For*  
*if the blood of bulls and of goats, and*  
*the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the un-*  
*clean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the*  
*flesh; How much more shall the blood of*  
*Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offer-*  
*ed himself without spot to God, purge your*  
*Conscience from dead works to serve the liv-*  
*ing God; Heb. ix. 13, 14.* 2dly, Our  
Saviour has openiy proposed to all the  
world, the gracious terms of Faith and  
Repentance; of Faith, that men believe  
on him as the Saviour of the world and  
the Messiah that was to come, professing  
themselves subjects of his Kingdom; and  
of

S E R M. of Repentance, that men turn from the  
 VIII. evil of their ways, and conform their  
 ~~~~~ lives to the laws of that Kingdom, whose  
 subjects they profess themselves to be :  
 That they believe on him whom God  
 hath sent ; and that they live suitably to  
 that belief, with sincere endeavours to  
 obey the whole gospel, and hearty sorrow  
 and perpetually labouring after amend-  
 ment, for all their failures in that obedi-  
 ence. These are now the gracious terms  
 of the Gospel, which in the *New Testa-*  
*ment* are every where preached as the con-  
 ditions of Salvation. This was the Sum  
 of *John Baptist's* preaching, who was sent  
 to prepare the way before Christ ; *Repent*  
*ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand ;*  
*St Mat. iii. 2 :* with this our Saviour him-  
 self began his ministry ; *The time is ful-*  
*filled, and the kingdom of God is at hand,*  
*Repent ye and believe the Gospel ; Mar. i. 15 :*  
 with This he concluded his charge to his  
 Disciples after his resurrection ; *Go ye into*  
*all the world, and preach the gospel to*  
*every creature ; He that believeth and is*  
*baptized, i. e. he that believeth and enters*  
 into



into an obligation to live suitably to that belief, shall be saved ; Mar. xvi. 15 and 16. This his Disciples after his ascension published to all the world, *preaching repentance and remission of sins in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem* ; Luk. xxiv. 47. Lastly, this is the Sum of all their exhortations, contained in their epistles to the several churches which had before believed through their preaching. And because this Repentance or turning from a life of sin unto a life of righteousness, is the summ of Religion under the gospel-dispensation, therefore is it in Scripture expressed by great variety of phrases, to the different capacities and understandings of men. Sometimes it is called *turning to the Lord*, that those who by a course of sin had been enemies to God, might by forsaking their sins and following after righteousness, be reconciled to him : Sometimes it is called *Conversion*, a word of the same import with that of *turning to the Lord* : Sometimes it is called *the renewing of our mind* ; Sometimes *putting on the new man*,

S E R M.  
VIII.  


S E R M. elsewhere *the new Creature*, to signify an  
 VIII. entire change and reformation of life:  
 ~~~~~ and most frequently it is stiled *Regeneration, the new birth, newness of life*, and the like; All which phrases are made use of to imply this one thing, that *those who have been dead in trespasses and Sins*, those who by any means have been engaged in a wicked course of life, must as it were by a new birth, by a thorough and entire reformation of life and manners, enter into a new course of life, and begin a life of righteousness and holiness. So careful has the Spirit of God been, that no one should be ignorant of that which is so much his necessary and indispensable Duty. Nothing is now required of us but that λογικὴ λατρεία, that reasonable service, of forsaking our Sins, and obeying in our lives and actions those commands of God, which are so reasonable in themselves, and so evidently perfective of our nature, so necessarily, approved by the minds of men, and the reason of their obligation so immediately acknowledged by the conscience, *that they may truly be said*

*said to be written in our hearts ;* Heb. viii. S E R M.

VIII.



10 ; Yet to incourage our practice, they are moreover most fully explained, most earnestly inculcated, and most strongly enforced by the most powerful motives in the New Testament. We are not now obliged to those ' numberless ritual performances, which in the Scripture are called *weak and beggarly elements, and a burden which neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear* : Our religion consists not now in such outward Ceremonies, whose observance was difficult, and their signification oftimes obscure : *But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into Heaven to bring Christ down from above ? Or who shall descend into the deep to bring up Christ again from the dead ? But what saith it ? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart ;* Rom. x. 6, 7 and 8 ; that is ; the Gospel-Covenant consists not of such strict, difficult terms, as are above the reach of our knowledge or our strength ; but such as may easily be understood by us, and performed also by

S E R M. the assistance of Christ that strengtheneth  
 VIII. us. A sincere endeavour to perform our  
 whole duty, is the condition of the Gospel; and he that so desires to do the Will of God, can neither want knowledge to understand his duty, nor power to perform it: He shall know of Christ's doctrine, whether it be of God; and when he comes to practise it, shall find *his yoke easy and his burden light*. In a word, the Terms that Christ by his death has purchased for us, are plainly these; that whereas by the transgression of the Original law of God, which required perfect and unfinning Obedience, all men were become guilty before God; and whereas by the addition of the Ceremonial rites and sacrifices of the *Jewish* law, which in their own nature could not avail to expiate Sin, men could not be justified from the transgressions they had committed; it is now declared by the Gospel-Covenant that whosoever believing in the name of Christ shall repent him heartily of his former Sins, and for the future endeavour with all his might to obey

obey sincerely, tho' not without infirmities, all the Commandments of God; shall through the redemption purchased by the Blood of Christ have his sincerity accepted instead of perfect obedience, and thereby be justified from all things from which he could not be justified by the law; And this is that *justification by faith only*, which St Paul in his Epistle to the Romans so often opposes to *being justified by the works of the law*. Having thus endeavoured briefly to explain what is meant by the *Law being the Strength of Sin*; and by what means our Saviour has delivered us from it, or given us the victory over it; I should proceed now in the 2<sup>d</sup> place to consider how he *gives us the Victory over Sin which is the Sting of Death*: And this he does, by delivering us 1<sup>st</sup> from the dominion, and 2<sup>dly</sup> from the guilt and punishment of Sin. First, he frees men from that bondage and thralldom, into which Sin has reduced them; and then those who are so freed he delivers from that punishment, which must have been the necessary consequence of their being inthralled to Sin.

S E R M. But the time not permitting me to enter  
 VIII. upon this, I shall only draw an inference  
 or two from what has been already said,  
 and so conclude. And 1<sup>st</sup> from what has  
 been said, we may understand why St Paul  
 in his writings concerning the Jewish  
 Law, always describes it as of such severity  
 by which *no flesh could possibly be justified* :  
 when yet it is plain God never dealt with  
 men according to *that severity* : and why he  
 so exceedingly magnifies the grace and mercy  
 of the Gospel, notwithstanding it be evident  
 that God always dealt with men according to  
*that indulgence*. Now the plain solution of this  
 difficulty is this. The Apostle speaking of  
 the Law, is not to be understood complexly  
 of God's whole dispensation and dealing  
 with the *Jews*, but of the Law properly  
 and strictly, as it is distinguished from  
 and opposed to the Gospel; *viz.* such as it  
 was in itself, and such as it really would  
 have been, if the Gospel-Covenant had never  
 been established. For though there *was* indeed  
 indulgence *under* the Law, yet that indulgence  
 was not *from*


*from* the Law, but an anticipation, as I S E R M. have said, of the mercy of the Gospel. VIII.


The Law itself was not therefore the less severe, because the indulgence of the Gospel extended itself backward even under the times of the Law ; neither is the mercy of the Gospel to be therefore the less magnified, because it is no other than what had in effect before been indulged under the Law. For since the one was in itself really as severe as it is described, and had no indulgence but what was borrowed from and founded upon the other, there is no reason at all why this should be considered when the one is spoken of in opposition to the other ; which is the state of the Apostle's argument ; and therefore he most reasonably aggravates the severity of the Law , and upon the comparison most justly magnifies the mercy and favour of the Gospel : Gal. ii. 21 ; *If righteousness came by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.*

2dly, F R O M what has been said, we may learn, that the whole design and effect of the Gospel, *was not to destroy, but*

S E R M. *to fulfil the Law.* The whole design of  
 VIII. all God's dispensations with mankind, is to  
 prevent or destroy Sin. This the Law  
 was to do originally, by requiring perfect  
 and unfinning obedience : But when in-  
 stead of this, it only concluded all men  
 under Sin ; the design of the Gospel was  
 to effect the same, by requiring and by  
 accepting Repentance ; which being no  
 other than renewed obedience, it is plain  
 the Gospel does not destroy, but establish  
 the Law. The severity indeed of the  
 Law was so far to be qualified by the in-  
 dulgence of the Gospel, that it might not  
 be any longer the *Strength of Sin* : But  
 the Gospel did not take away the obliga-  
 tion of the Law, so as to be itself  
 the cause and the occasion of sinning.  
 The moral Law denounced a Curse a-  
 gainst every one that continued not in all  
 the works thereof to do them ; and the  
 Gospel delivers all those from this Curse,  
 who by true Repentance renew their Obe-  
 dience : The Ceremonial Law was an in-  
 supportable burden of rites, insufficient of  
 themselves to make any expiation for sin ;  
 and




and the Gospel, by exhibiting the true S E R M.  
and sufficient expiation, has delivered all VIII.  
men from the burden of this yoke. As   
therefore those persons [Judaizing Chri-  
stians] in the primitive times were very  
unreasonable, who contended that any of  
these ritual observations were of necessity  
to be kept up after the coming of Christ;  
so those Perverters of Christianity in later  
ages are on the other side much more un-  
reasonable, who contend that the moral  
Law has been abolished by Christ. The  
Gospel accepts indeed the terms, of *Faith*  
and *Repentance*; but 'tis only for the sake  
of the *Fruit and Effect* of them, which is  
*renewed obedience*. So that nothing can  
be more absurd, than for Christians to  
think themselves excused from holiness of  
Life and those duties of religion, which as  
the unchangeable Nature of God and of  
the things themselves had made the neces-  
sary requisites, so the Gospel also has made  
the express condition of their being accept-  
able to God. Our Saviour himself tells us,  
that *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord,*  
*Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven,*  
*but*

S E R M. *but he that doth the Will of my Father which*  
 VIII. *is in Heaven.* The Gospel itself speaks  
 aloud, and tells us, that *we must deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* The Apostle St Paul, That great vindicator of the liberties of Christians, warns and persuades us, and repeats it with great earnestness over and over again; *Be not deceived; and let no man deceive you with vain words; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, and so on; i. e. no one that allows himself and continues in any one known vice; shall according to the terms of the Gospel of Christ, inherit the Kingdom of God. For, Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, saith our Saviour, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven.*

*Lastly,*

*Lastly*, F R O M what has been said, we may learn to reconcile the *Severity* and the *Compassion* of God ; the *Severity*, in giving a Law, which required sinless Obedience ; and the *Compassion* in mitigating it, by the Grace and Mercy of the Gospel ; Which Grace extended itself backwards to good men under the Law ; and the Severity will reach forward to the impenitent under the Gospel. *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out !* To conclude therefore, Let us then heartily set about the reformation of our lives, and by obedience to God's commands endeavour to walk worthy of that religion we profess, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. Let us consider and admire the infinite wisdom and mercy of God, in restoring men to a capacity of attaining that happiness by the obedience of the second Covenant, which they utterly forfeited by the transgression of the first ; and let us not frustrate the grace of God by the disobedience of our lives, least there remain

S E R M. main no more Sacrifice for our Sin : For  
VIII. *if the word spoken by Angels was sted-*  
 *fast, and every transgression and disobe-*  
*dience received a just recompence of re-*  
*ward ; how shall we escape if we neglect*  
*so great Salvation, which at the first be-*  
*gan to be spoken by the Lord, and was*  
*confirmed unto us by them that heard*  
*him ? For if we sin wilfully after we have*  
*received the Knowledge of the Truth ; that*  
*is, if Christians live as those who know*  
*not God, in the Practice of any vice or de-*  
*bauchery whatsoever ; there remains no*  
*more Sacrifice for Sin, no new Dispen-*  
*sations ; but a certain fearful looking for of*  
*judgement, and fiery indignation, which shall*  
*devour the adversaries.*



# S E R M O N IX.

How C H R I S T has enabled us to  
conquer Sin.

[*Preached on Easter-Day.*]



I C O R. xv. 56 and 57.

*The sting of Death is sin, and the  
strength of sin is the law; but thanks  
be to God which giveth us the victory,  
through our Lord Jesus Christ.*



W H E N he who was the desire S E R M.  
and expectation of Nations IX.  
appeared first in the World,  
it highly concerned all those  
who looked for redemption  
in *Israel*, rightly to understand the end  
and

S E R M. and design of his coming: And if we  
IX. who live at this distance of time after  
his appearing in the flesh, expect yet to  
be partakers of the common Salvation  
which he has purchased for us; it highly  
concerns *Us* also to understand wherein  
that Salvation consists, and how and on  
what conditions he has purchased it for  
us. The *Jews* who lived about the time  
of his coming, misled by a partial appli-  
cation and wrong interpretation of the  
prophecies that went before concerning  
him, expected *a temporal prince to appear  
in the power and splendour of this world,  
who should deliver their nation from that  
slavery into which the Romans had subdued  
them, and restore again the kingdom to  
Israel; They expected that Jerusalem  
should have become once again the Head  
of the nations, and the glory of the whole  
Earth; They expected that Messiah the  
prince should have come to sit upon the  
throne of David for ever, and to have  
established a kingdom among them which  
should have had no end.* And so indeed  
he did; though in a sense far different  
from

from what they expected. Nay, his Disciples themselves were for a great while so blinded with the splendour of this opinion, that they understood none of those prophecies that related to his Humiliation, Sufferings, and Death; As appears from St *Peter's* undertaking to rebuke him when he began to foretel *how many things he should suffer of the Jews*; and from his Disciples asking him even *after* his resurrection if he would at this time restore again the kingdom to *Israel*. But as he himself a little before his death witnessed before *Pontius Pilate* that good confession, *that his kingdom was not of this world*; so his Disciples, after his resurrection and ascension, began to have their eyes opened, and to understand that the design of his coming into the World was wholly Spiritual. And as at the descending of the Holy Ghost they were more perfectly instructed in the nature and end of That his Spiritual kingdom, so did they afterward in their inspired writings deliver to *us*, what they then received from that unerring instructor:  
Namely,

S E R M.  
IX.  


S E R M. Namely, that the true end and design of

IX. Christ's coming into the World, was to  
 deliver men, not from their Temporal  
 Enemies, but to save them from their  
 Sins. Now This he does, by delivering  
 us *1st*, from the power and dominion of  
 Sin ; and *2dly*, from the guilt and pu-  
 nishment thereof. First he delivers men  
 from that Bondage and Slavery into  
 which the practice of Sin has reduced  
 them ; and then those who are so freed,  
 he delivers from that *punishment* which  
 must have been the necessary consequence  
 of their being enslaved to Sin. These are  
 the two great designs which exhaust the  
 whole history of our Saviour ; there be-  
 ing nothing that he either said or did,  
 which was not directed to one of these  
 great ends. *1st* then, We are to show,  
 how Christ delivers us from the *dominion*  
 or *practice* of Sin. That the service of  
 Sin is an intolerable thralldom, All who  
 are so unhappy as to be engaged in any  
 habit of Vice, do sadly experience ; and  
 it may also easily be observed by others.  
 This deplorable state, it fitly described by




Solomon under the person of a foolish young man, drawn away with the enticements of a Strange woman ; *Prov. vii. 22.*

S E R M.  
IX.

*He goeth after her straightway as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike through his liver, as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.* This is the case of all, who are under the dominion and habit of *any Sin* ; they know not whither they are going, but are hurried away blindfold with every temptation, being intangled in the snare of the Devil, and taken captive by him at his will. Hence such a state of Sin is stiled in Scripture a *yoke, burden, captivity, bondage, thraldom*, and the like ; and habitual Sinners are described to be *dead in Sin*, to let Sin *reign* in their mortal bodies, to be *sold* under Sin, to be in *captivity* to the law of Sin and Death, to be *hardned* through the deceitfulness of Sin, to be such as *cannot cease* from Sin, and, by a phrase which includes all these, to be *Servants* of Sin ; being constrained to obey it in the lusts thereof, even against

S E R M. the dictates of their reason and consci-

IX.  *ence ; for to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, Rom. vi. 16.* Now That which Christ has actually done for us in order to the delivering us from the dominion of Sin, may briefly be expressed in these two propositions ; 1<sup>st</sup>, that he has made a most clear discovery of the Will of God to mankind ; and 2<sup>dly</sup>, that he has enabled them to obey the Will of God according to that discovery. 1<sup>st</sup>, He has made a most clear discovery of the Will of God to Mankind. He has plainly and fully made known to us, the heinousness of Sin, and the necessity of Repentance ; he has most exactly defined the bounds of our duty, and given us an example of the practice of it in his own life ; he has more clearly revealed the great motives of religion, and urged them upon men with much stronger advantage. To show these things at large, would be to repeat the whole history of our Saviour ; and no man can read the New Testament wherein That history is contained, without

out observing that all his discourses and S E R M.  
all the actions of his life, were directed IX.  
principally to These ends: To convince  
men that Sin is so hateful to God, and  
so inconsistent with the honour of his  
laws, that he would not pardon it even  
in those whom he designed to have mercy  
upon, without first inflicting the punish-  
ment that was due to it, upon his only  
Son. To assure men, that a life of Vir-  
tue and true Righteousness, is the only  
and indispensable condition of *That Co-*  
*venant*, wherein God has promised to save  
them from everlasting destruction. That  
therefore *unless we repent, we must perish*,  
Luke xiii. 5. That *without Holiness, no*  
*man shall see the Lord*, Heb. xii. 14. That  
no man who continues in the practice of  
any known Sin, *shall in any wise enter in-*  
*to the kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. vi. 9; and  
that, however vain men may deceive  
themselves, no pretence whatsoever, no  
not of having *preached or worked miracles*  
*in the name of Christ*, shall be accepted  
instead thereof, *Matt. vii. 21*. Further;  
is it not a very Advantagious stating of

S E R M. the bounds of our duty, to have given us  
IX. such a compleat and perfect rule of Life  
and manners, as the Holy Scriptures cannot but be acknowledged to be? Is it not a sufficient Security against ignorance and mistake in our duty, to have such a Rule given us as contains in the plainest words all things needful for our information in all necessary truth, and for the confuting of all pernicious error; for correcting and reclaiming us from all Sin, and for our instruction and encouragement in all Righteousness? to have such a Rule, wherein our duty is set down both in general and in particulars; with great variety of expression, repeated, urged, and inculcated upon the meanest capacities, and exemplified in the lives of holy men, as patterns proposed to our imitation? The History of our Saviour's life, is a compleat example of all virtues; but more especially of Patience, Charity, and Contempt of the World: His Sermons contain such excellent and perfect rules of Morality, as have raised the admiration even of the most implacable enemies of his Religion;

Religion ; and his Parables are Declarations of the nature and design of the Gospel-dispensation by such plain and easy similitudes, as the vulgar were able to bear, and those who were well-disposed were capable of understanding. The Sermons of the Apostles contain such proofs of the truth and certainty of the Christian Religion, as were necessary to the conversion of Infidels ; and their Epistles are filled with the inforcements of such Christian Duties, as are necessary to the Salvation of believers ; containing also Exhortations to the practice of special duties, upon particular and emergent occasions. So that every man that sincerely desires to know the will of God and to obey it, without being prejudiced with Partiality and Disputes, with Passions and Interest, may here find his duty written in such legible characters, *that he that runs may read it* : Lastly, Men's duty being thus made known, is it not a most clear and advantagious revelation of the powerful Motives and Inforcements of that duty ; to be assured that there is a future

S E R M.  
IX.  
~

S E R M. state of Rewards and Punishments, where-  
 IX. in God will judge the world in righteousness, and render to every man according to what he has done in the body, whether it be good or evil; and to be assured of the certainty of that state, not by the uncertain and disagreeing conjectures of such men, as undertook to prove it probable by difficult and abstruse reasonings, but by the testimony of one, who by that convincing proof of his Resurrection from the Dead, did undeniably demonstrate that he had himself been in that invisible state?

BUT 2dly, As Christ has thus made a most clear Discovery of the Will of God to Mankind, so hath he also enabled them to obey the Will of God according to that discovery. As he has provided a sufficient remedy against Ignorance of our duty, so he has likewise made a sufficient provision against our Inability to perform it. Now this he has done, 1st, By requiring easier conditions of us, than could without his mediation have been accepted. And 2dly, By graciously affording us his assistance,

assistance, to perform what he so requires. S E R M.

1<sup>st</sup>, He requires easier conditions of us, than could without his mediation have been accepted. It is the great and peculiar privilege of the Gospel-dispensation, that whereas the original law of God required perfect unfinning obedience, and consequently men in this corrupt estate were thereby of necessity concluded all under Sin; the covenant of mercy established by the Death of Christ, has relaxed that rigour which the Apostle calls the *strength of Sin*, and reduced the condition of Salvation to such terms, as are not impracticable, nay nor indeed *grievous* to human nature, even in this present state; He has reduced it to the gracious terms of Faith, and unfeigned Repentance; a Repentance, and sincere Endeavours to obey his Commandments to the best of our Ability for the time to come. But if Christians will still continue in the practice, and under the dominion of Sin, notwithstanding this way which Christ has opened for them to Salvation; it is their own fault and their extreme

IX.



S E R M. folly here, and will be their condemnation  
 IX. and misery hereafter. It is true, such is  
 ~~~~~ the corruption of our nature and the  
 weakness of our faculties, that we are  
 not indeed *sufficient of ourselves to do or  
 think any thing as of ourselves*, 2 Cor. iii.  
 5. But then it is true also, that we have  
 a much greater Sufficiency, even that Sufficiency which is from God, as the Apostle immediately adds: which is the second thing whereby I said our Saviour enables us to obey the will of God, according to that discovery of it which he has made to us in the Gospel; he enables us, by graciously affording us his assistance, to perform what he requires of us. Though we have indeed contracted much Weakness and Impotency by our wilful degeneracy from Goodness, yet That Grace which the Gospel offers us for our assistance, is sufficient for us; *I can do all things*, saith St Paul, *through Christ that strengtheneth me*, Phil. iv. 13. Though we are indeed encompassed with many and potent enemies, whose business it is to tempt us and to deter us from our  
 duty;



duty; yet are we indued with a power, S E R M.  
IX.  
by which we are enabled to resist and to

conquer all these temptations; *For greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world*; 1 Joh. iv. 4: *So that in all these things we are more than conquerours through him that loved us*; Rom. viii. 37. God knoweth the frailty of our nature, and considereth how many temptations we are continually liable to; he *remembereth whereof we are made, and considereth that we are but Dust*; He knoweth our enemy's strength and our own weakness, and therefore he affords us the *continual assistance of his Holy Spirit, to supply our natural want of power*. He has promised to succour all those who sincerely desire to obey his will; and, if we be not wanting in our own endeavours, we may rely upon him, that he will be faithful to his promise, and not *suffer us to be tempted above what we are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it*; 1 Cor. x.

Saviour


S E R M.

IX.




Saviour by making a most clear Discovery of the Will of God to Mankind, and by enabling them to obey the Will of God according to that Discovery, has put us in our own power, if *we* for our part will but accept this deliverance, and, by the way which he has opened for us, retreat out of the bondage of Sin and Satan into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Christ has compleatly performed *his* office for us ; *he has paid the price ; he has redeemed us out of captivity :* It is our part to take care that we continue not wilfully in the service of Sin, *lest we be found to do despite unto the Spirit of Grace, crucifying to ourselves the Son of God afresh, and putting him to an open shame.* Now this is what Christ has done for All *those* in general, to whom the Gospel is *preach-*  
*ed :* But then *2dly,* Those who *accept* of this deliverance from the dominion of Sin, that is, who by Repentance and true Amendment of life embrace the terms of the Gospel ; those, and those only, he further delivers from the guilt and punishment of Sin : And in order to this  
 1<sup>st</sup>,

1<sup>st</sup>, He hath vindicated the honour of S E R M.  
God's laws by taking upon himself the IX.  
punishment of their Sins; and 2<sup>dly</sup>, He  
*sits at the right hand of God*, ready to come  
*in the glory of his Father with his holy*  
*Angels*, actually to deliver them from  
That punishment of Sin, which *shall* fi-  
nally be inflicted on them that would not  
be delivered from the dominion of it; even  
on those *who know not God and obey*  
*not the Gospel*; i. e. who either embraced  
not the Gospel at all, when it was preach-  
ed to them; or pretending to embrace it,  
yet obeyed it not. 1<sup>st</sup>, He has vindica-  
ted the honour of God's laws, by taking  
upon himself the punishment of *their*  
Sins, who repent and embrace the terms  
of the Gospel. He condescended to *be*  
*made Sin for us, who himself knew no Sin,*  
*that we might be made the righteousness of*  
*God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21: *to be made Sin*  
*for us*, i. e: to be made a *Sacrifice* for  
our Sins, that we through that expiation  
might become subjects *capable of the mercy*  
of God. He took upon him our Na-  
ture, and was clothed in flesh, partly in-  
deed

S E R M. <sup>IX.</sup>  deed that he might preach the Will of God to mankind in a nearer and more condescending conversation with them; but principally, that he who in the form of God could not suffer, might become capable of suffering by being made in the likeness to man. He lived a most innocent and spotless life, that he might indeed set us an example that we should follow his steps; but chiefly, because as it was required that the typical Sacrifices under the law should be whole and without blemish; so it was necessary that he, who was to be the real expiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of others, should have none that needed expiation of his own; *For such an High priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Heb. vii. 26.* He suffered a shameful and ignominious Death upon the Cross, that he might indeed give us an example of patience and readiness to suffer; but the principal design of it was, that he might put away Sin by the sacrifice of himself, and obtain eternal redemption for us  
*through*

through Faith in his Blood. His Resur-  
 rection, was the demonstration of this  
 Sacrifice's being accepted by God; and  
 his Ascension into Heaven, was in order  
 to plead the merits of his Sufferings be-  
 fore God, and interceed for those, who  
 according to the terms of the Gospel-  
 Covenant should be capable of receiving  
 the gracious benefits purchased by his  
 Death: Wherefore 2dly, He now sits at  
 the right hand of God, ready to appear  
 in the glory of his Father with the Holy  
 Angels, actually to deliver all those from  
 the punishment of Sin, who have before  
 been delivered by him from the dominion  
 thereof. This sitting at the right hand  
 of God, signifies his having subdued all  
 his enemies, and his being fully instated  
 in his Regal power; *All things being  
 actually made subject unto him, always ex-  
 cepting him, as St Paul directs, who did  
 put all things under him. All power both  
 in heaven and earth is now committed un-  
 to him; being exalted far above all prin-  
 cipality, and power, and might, and do-  
 minion, and every name that is named not  
 only*

S E R M.  
 IX.  


S E R M. *only in this world, but also in that which*  
 IX. *is to come; God having put all things un-*  
 *der his feet, and given him to be the head*  
*over all things to the Church. When*  
*therefore this his Mediatorial kingdom*  
*shall be finished, and the number of his*  
*Elect accomplished, then unto them that*  
*look for him shall he appear the second time*  
*without Sin unto Salvation, Heb. ix. 28.*  
*Then shall he redeem his Elect from*  
*death, and ransom them from the power*  
*of the grave: Then shall the Sea give up*  
*the dead that are in it, and Death and*  
*Hell shall deliver up the Dead that are*  
*in them, and death shall be swallowed up*  
*in victory; O Death, where is thy sting!*  
*O Grave, where is thy victory! But this*  
*deliverance from the first and natural*  
*Death, shall be common both to the Just*  
*and Unjust. It is the Second death that*  
*shall be properly and finally the punish-*  
*ment of Sin; and from This, the Just*  
*only shall be delivered. Whosoever be-*  
*lieveth on me, shall never die, Joh. xi. 26:*  
*that is, (as the words may more properly*  
*be rendered,) shall not die for ever. On*  
 the

the Just the Second death shall have no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ; they shall be made completely happy both in Body and Soul, and shall reign with him for ever and ever.

S E R M.  
IX.  


THE application I shall make of what hath been said, shall be only in these two brief inferences: 1<sup>st</sup>, If Christ delivers no man from the punishment of Sin, who is not first delivered from the service and dominion of it; then no man who continues in the service and dominion of Sin, can expect to be delivered from the punishment thereof. Christ *has* indeed given himself a propitiatory Sacrifice, a full, perfect, and sufficient Oblation for the Sins of the whole World; but it is not that the whole World, or that any particular persons should absolutely and unconditionally be thereby excused from the punishment of Sin; but that all those who by true Repentance turn from Sin and become righteous, should obtain Remission and Reconciliation with God: For he did not die, that he might indulge men *in* Sin, but that he might save them  
*from*

S E R M. *from it.* Christ *has* indeed brought Life and Immortality to light, and opened an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God; but it is not that any unreformed and unrenewed nature should be made partaker of that Spiritual Happiness, or be admitted to have a share in those pure and undefiled Rewards; but that those who have broken off their Sins by Repentance, and their Iniquities by Righteousness and shewing mercy to the poor, (which is the Wedding-garment required by our Lord in the Parable,) should be entertained at the eternal Supper of the Lamb: For as impossible as it is for God to cease to be holy, or for the purity of the Divine Nature to be reconciled to Sin, so impossible is it for a wicked man to obtain remission whilst he continues wicked, or for a Sinner to be admitted into the kingdom of Heaven. *Be not deceived, saith St Paul, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, that is, no unrighteous person*



son that continues in the practice of any known Sin, *shall inherit the kingdom of God*; 1 Cor. vi. 9: Again, Gal. 21; having reckoned up the like catalogue of Sins, he adds, *of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* And Ephes. v. 6; *Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.* 2dly, If Christ delivers no man from the dominion of Sin any otherwise than by giving him a clear knowledge of his duty, and a sufficient power to perform it, then no man who makes not use of that knowledge and power to an actual performance of his duty, can be delivered from the dominion of Sin. Christ hath completely performed *his* office for us; but if *We* will not also perform what remains for *us* to do for ourselves; if we will yet chuse rather to continue in the service of Sin, than to come forth into the glorious liberty to which we are called; we must, notwith-

S E R M. standing all that Christ has done for us,  
 IX. continue still under the dominion of Sin,  
 and shall at last fall into the *punishment thereof*. The Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ, (which some have vainly depended upon, while they themselves continue to live in open contempt of his righteous laws,) is a false and groundless imagination: 'Tis the unalterable Nature of Things, and the Will of God; that if we expect to be made happy for ourselves, we *must* also become righteous for ourselves. Righteousness is not an outward imaginary quality, but an inward and real disposition of the heart and soul, which must show forth itself in real and substantial acts of Holiness and Piety. *Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness, is righteous; 1 Joh. iii. 7: And St James, ch. i. 27; Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.* Let no man therefore deceive himself with vain imaginations, in hopes of being  
 accounted

accounted righteous any other way, than S E R M.  
IX.  
by that which God has proposed to us in his holy Scriptures: Let us consider how great things Christ has done in order to our Salvation ; and let us shew forth our thankfulness for what *he* has done for us, by heartily setting about what he has absolutely required that *we* should do for *ourselves* : Let us sincerely endeavour to obey the Will of God as discovered to us in the Gospel ; and then we may firmly hope for (and shall certainly obtain) remission, not through the merits of that our Righteousness which is imperfect, but through the redemption purchased by the Blood of Christ, wherein we are by that sincere, though imperfect Righteousness, made capable of having a share.





# S E R M O N X.

How C H R I S T has given us the  
Victory over Death.

[ *Preached on Easter-Day.* ]




I C O R. XV. 56 and 57.

*The sting of Death is sin, and the  
strength of sin is the law; but thanks  
be to God which giveth us the victory,  
through our Lord Jesus Christ.*



Proceed now to the third and S E R M.  
last Thing I proposed, which X.  
was to shew how Christ gives  
*us the Victory over Death,*  
*which is the last enemy to be de-*  
*stroyed; 1 Cor. xv. 26; Death is either nat-*  
P 3 tural

S E R M. tural and temporal, which is the Death  
 X. of the body ; or eternal, which is the  
 Death and the Destruction of the Soul.  
 In the Old Testament, Death generally signifies that *temporal* Death, which is the dissolution of the body ; tho' when it is threatened as the punishment of Sin, it præfigures and includes in it *eternal* Death. Which is also sometimes expressly threatened even in the *Old Testament* ; thus Ezek. xviii. 26 ; *When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquities, and dieth in them, for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die* ; the manner of expression is very observable : If he repent not of his iniquity but *dieth* in it, *then* for the iniquity that he hath done shall he die. In the *New Testament*, Death, when 'tis threatened to Sinners, signifies almost always *eternal* Death ; the Gospel containing, as a more clear discovery of life and immortality, so also a more express revelation of the wrath of God from Heaven, against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men. Now over *both* these kinds of Death, Death  
 tem-


temporal and eternal, Christ gives us the victory, or delivers us from the power of them: The power of *temporal* Death is universal, as the punishment threatened to *Adam's* transgression was extensive; and the deliverance from it shall be also universal; *For as in Adam all die*, all are become subject to mortality; *even so in Christ shall all be made alive*; 1 Cor. xv. 22. *Eternal* Death is the punishment of unrepented Sin, and from This all those who repent and obey the Gospel, shall be delivered by Christ.

I SHALL consider 1<sup>st</sup> the victory that Christ gives us over *temporal* Death; and for the clearer explaining the nature of this victory, shall endeavour to show 1<sup>st</sup>, That there shall be a resurrection of the body, and 2<sup>dly</sup>, in what manner the body shall be raised.

1<sup>st</sup>, THAT there shall be a resurrection of the body. That the soul should survive the dissolution of the body, and be capable of receiving in a future State the rewards or punishments due to the good or evil it had done in *this* life, was clearly enough deducible from the light of nature, and


S E R M. proved by undeniable reasonings : But that  
 X. the body should be again formed out of  
 ~~~~~ the dust, and reunited to the Soul, from  
 which it was separated by Death, was a  
 Doctrine, which as it could not be proved  
 merely by reason and argument, so the  
 Philosophers, who pretended to be the  
 great masters of reason, looked upon it as  
 the most impossible thing in nature. Some  
 of them reckoned it among those things,  
 which they thought were not in the pow-  
 er even of their Gods themselves to effect ;  
 and we read of certain Philosophers, *Act.*  
*xvii. 18 ;* who incountered St *Paul*, and  
 when they heard of the resurrection, they  
 mocked him, saying, *that he seemed to be*  
*a setter forth of strange Gods, because he*  
*preached unto them Jesus and the Resur-*  
*rection.* Yet is there nothing in any wise  
 impossible, or contrary to reason, in this  
 great Mystery : *For why should it be thought*  
*a thing impossible that God should raise*  
*the dead ?* Why should it be more impos-  
 sible for God to gather together the dis-  
 persed parts of a corrupted body, and re-  
 unite them to their former Soul, than to  
 create




create matter at first out of nothing, and S E R M.  
then form it into a humane body, *and* X.  
*breathe into it the breath of life?* Why   
should any man be so weak as to imagine,  
that he, who at the creation separated the  
confused mass of matter into so many dif-  
ferent sorts of bodies, cannot with the  
same ease at the general Resurrection se-  
parate again the same confused matter,  
and assign to each particular body its  
own parts? If it is not difficult for him  
*to number the Stars of Heaven and call*  
*them all by their names*; it can be no diffi-  
culty to him to keep an exact account of  
all our scattered parts; and to recollect  
and reunite them when he pleases. 'Twas  
not therefore because the thing is in itself  
at all impossible, but only because the  
manner of it is a mystery not discover-  
able barely by the light of nature, that the  
Heathen World was utterly ignorant of  
the Resurrection from the dead. The  
proof therefore of this great truth must  
be founded in Revelation, and sought for  
only in the Holy Scriptures. And here it  
must be confessed, that the *Jews* had not  
a clear

S E R M. a clear and exprefs revelation of this matter : Yet were they by no means *wholly* ignorant of it ; there being feveral paſſages in the Old Teſtament, from whence the hope of a Reſurrection might very reaſonably be collected. The tranſlation of *Enoch* and *Elijah* into Heaven with their bodies, was an earneſt of what might finally be expected, by thoſe who ſhould follow their example in pleaſing God ; and the ſtrict command that *Jacob* and *Joſeph* gave, not to be buried in *Egypt*, but to have *their bones carried up into the land of Canaan and laid in the Sepulchres of their Fathers* ; was to many of the antient *Jews* an argument or type of their hope of a Reſurrection. That the thing was not in itſelf impoſſible, the inſtances of ſuch as were actually raiſed from the dead by the Prophets, was a ſignal proof. And *Iſaiab* xxvi. 19 ; *Thy dead men ſhall live, together with my dead body ſhall they ariſe : awake and ſing, ye that dwell in duſt : for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth ſhall caſt out the dead.* And the viſion of *Ezekiel*, ſet down  
in


in the 37th Chapter of his Prophecy, tho' S E R M.  
X.  
it signified indeed primarily the Restauration of *Israel* to their own land, yet in all probability, considering the peculiar Emphasis and particularity of the description, it was intended remotely to point at a greater and more general Restauration; *Behold a valley full of dry bones, and there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above, and their breath came into them, and they lived and stood upon their feet, and behold a great multitude.* But that passage in the Prophet *Daniel*, tho' by some it be, with great violence to the Words, otherwise interpreted; is most express, and by the ancient *Jews* understood of the Resurrection; *Dan. xii. 2 and 3; Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt; and they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness,*  
as

S E R M. *as the stars for ever and ever, and thou*  
 X. *shall rest and stand in thy lot at the end*  
 *of the days ; Dan. xii. 13. Lastly, that so-*  
*lemn Prophecy of Job ; ch. xix. ver. 23 ;*  
*Oh that my Words were now written !*  
*Oh that they were printed in a book !*  
*That they were graven with an iron pen*  
*and lead, in the rock for ever ! For I*  
*know that my Redeemer liveth, and that*  
*he shall stand at the latter Day upon the*  
*earth : And tho' after my skin worms de-*  
*stroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see*  
*God : These words, I say, tho' by many*  
*of the ancient Jews they were interpreted*  
*concerning a future State without respect*  
*in particular to the Resurrection of the*  
*body, and by some later Interpreters are*  
*understood only of his restitution to his*  
*temporal greatness ; yet because of their*  
*being introduced with so very solemn and*  
*weighty a preface, as containing some-*  
*what of the highest moment and impor-*  
*tance ; they are by others not without*  
*great reason thought to be spoken con-*  
*cerning the Resurrection of the body.*  
*And that the Jews did believe, that the*  
*bodies,*

bodies, at least of such remarkably pious S E R M.  
men, should rise again, appears plainly X.  
from the translation of the last Verse of   
the book of *Job* according to the Seventy,  
which in their Version runs thus ; *So Job*  
*died, being old and full of days ; But 'tis*  
*written that he shall rise again with those*  
*whom the Lord raises up.* The *Jews*  
therefore had at least an obscure and inde-  
terminate expectation of the Resurrection  
of the body ; Nay, the later *Jews* more  
certain : For so one of the seven Brethren,  
*2 Macc. vii. 9, 11 ;* when his hands were  
to be cut off ; *These, says he, I had from*  
*Heaven, and for his laws I despise them,*  
*and from him I hope to receive them a-*  
*gain : For the King of the World shall*  
*raise us up, who have died for his Laws,*  
*to everlasting Life.* But now in the *New*  
*Testament* this Doctrine is so clearly re-  
vealed , that it may justly be wondered  
how it was possible for any one that be-  
lieved the Gospel at all, to doubt of the  
certainty of it. Yet we read that there  
were, even so very early as in the days of  
the Apostles themselves, *who concerning*  
*this*

S E R M. *this truth, did err, saying that the re-*  
 X. *surrection is past already, and overthrow*  
 ~~~~~ *the faith of some; 2 Tim. ii. 18. But as*  
 their opinion was so absurd as to need  
 no confutation, so in a little time it en-  
 tirely vanished of itself. I shall not  
 therefore insist on any other argument  
 for the proof of this doctrine, than that  
 which the Apostle makes use of in this  
 Chapter; which is the Resurrection of  
 Christ: *For, saith he, if there be no re-*  
*surrection of the dead, then is Christ not*  
*risen; And if Christ be not risen, then is*  
*our preaching vain, and your faith also is*  
*vain; But now Christ is risen from the dead,*  
*and become the first-fruits of them that slept;*  
 ver. 13, 14. The force of which argu-  
 ment is plainly this: If there be no re-  
 surrection of the dead, then is that doc-  
 trine, which the Apostles preached con-  
 cerning it, erroneous and false; and if  
 that doctrine be false, then the resurrec-  
 tion of Christ, which is the proof of that  
 doctrine, must likewise be false: If there-  
 fore the resurrection of Christ be true, as  
 he had before proved *by a cloud of Wit-*  
*nesses*


nesses at the beginning of the Chapter, S E R M.  
then the Apostles doctrine, of which that X.  
his resurrection was the evidence, must  
also be true ; and if the Apostles preach-  
ing, and the promises of God made  
known by the Gospel, be true, then *shall*  
*the dead certainly rise again.* That is : As  
certain as the resurrection of Christ is true,  
as certain as the Christian Religion is a  
revelation credibly attested to be from  
God ; so certain is it, that there shall be  
a resurrection of the dead : *If Christ, who*  
*is our Head, be risen ; then shall we also*  
*rise with him unto glory.* *I am the resur-*  
*rection and the life,* saith our Blessed Sa-  
viour ; Joh. xi. 25 ; *and this is the Will of*  
*him that sent me, that every one which*  
*seeth the Son and believeth on him, may*  
*have everlasting Life, and I will raise him*  
*up at the last day ;* Joh. vi. 40 ; which last  
words, that there might be no room for  
doubt concerning them, are repeated *no*  
*less than four times* in that Chapter. Now  
that this promise shall certainly be fullfil-  
led, God hath given us assurance by rai-  
sing up *him* before-hand to be the *first-*  
*fruits*

S E R M. *fruits from the dead: He hath appointed*  
 X. *a day, in the which he will judge the*  
 *world in righteousness, by that man whom*  
*he hath ordained; whereof he hath given*  
*assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised*  
*him from the dead; Acts xvii. 31. The*  
*Resurrection of Christ is such an earnest*  
*and pledge of our resurrection, as not*  
*only demonstrates the possibility of the*  
*thing, but gives assurance also of the cer-*  
*tainty of it: For, that the same power*  
*that raised up him, can also raise up us,*  
*is evident; and that it will do so, we are*  
*assured by his promise, who raised up*  
*Christ to that very end, that he might*  
*give us assurance that he would also raise*  
*up us. But here some man will say, How*  
*are the dead raised up, and with what*  
*body do they come? Which is the*

2d Thing I proposed to speak to, name-  
 ly, *the manner how the dead shall be raised;*  
 and to *this question* we may answer in the  
 Words of St Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 36; *Thou fool,*  
*that which thou sowest is not quickened except*  
*it die; And that which thou sowest, thou*  
*sowest not that body that shall be, but bare*  
*grain,*



*grain, suppose of wheat or of some other grain; But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.* From which similitude of the Apostle, we may safely collect these two things; *1st*, That in the whole the same body which died, shall be raised again; *2dly*, That yet it shall rise with very great alterations. *1st*, That in the whole, the same body which died, shall be raised again, appears in general from the Apostle's using the similitude of Corn: *For as Corn groweth not indifferently out of any ground, but there must be seed sown out of which it may spring, and therefore every sort of grain produceth Corn of its own likeness and peculiar form;* So at the resurrection, the bodies of them that arise, shall not be formed indifferently out of any matter, but the bodies that die, those mortal and corruptible bodies, shall be in a figurative sense as it were the seed and material principle of those immortal and incorruptible ones, into which we shall then be quickened. Indeed whether in equity, and in order to a just retribution, it be necessary

S E R M.  
X.  


S E R M. absolutely in the nature of the thing, that  
 X. the same Body should be raised again, we  
 cannot certainly tell; because we know  
 not distinctly how far the same body is  
 necessary to constitute the same person.  
 But though it cannot be proved that God  
 is absolutely bound in justice to unite the  
 Soul to the same body from which it was  
 separated by death, yet that in fact he  
*will* do so, the expressions of Scripture  
 concerning this matter do sufficiently in-  
 timates: When the Apostle assures us, *that*  
*the body shall rise again, and that He that*  
*raised up Christ from the dead shall also*  
*quicken our mortal bodies*, he does not say  
 only that the Soul shall be again united  
 to matter, but also that the *body* which  
 died shall be quickened or made to live  
 again; *For this corruptible must put on*  
*incorruption*, and *This mortal must put on*  
*immortality*; which is not saying only  
 that the Soul, which was before united  
 to a *mortal and corruptible body*, shall at  
 the resurrection be clothed with an *im-*  
*mortal and incorruptible one*; but that *This*  
*same body*, which is now mortal and cor-  
 ruptible,

ruptible, *shall then put on immortality and incorruption.* To which purpose it is affirmed in Scripture, *that the sea shall give up the dead that are in it, and death and the grave shall deliver up the dead that are in them, and they that sleep in the dust of the earth shall bear the voice of Christ and rise:* And indeed, having one example of it in the resurrection of Christ, and knowing that in all cases it is as easy for God to raise the same Body as to frame a new one, no reason can be imagined why it should not be so. But it is true, the *parts* of one body may possibly be so scattered and perhaps incorporated among the parts of another body, that it shall not be possible for every particular body to arise with just the same parts, of which it consisted at the time of its dissolution: Neither is there any necessity at all either in nature or Scripture that it should do so. How far therefore each body shall consist exactly of the same matter, or what change of parts may be admitted, is a vain, empty and needless speculation; a nicety, which as it is not

S E R M.  
X.  


S E R M.

X.



possible for us to determine, *so* neither is it necessary for us to know : *Sufficient* it is to all wise and good purposes, that we believe and affirm with St *Paul*, *that as out of a grain of corn sown in the earth there springs an ear of the same kind ; so from a mortal and corruptible body buried in the ground, there shall be raised an immortal and incorruptible one.* For 2dly ; Though in the whole the same body that died shall be raised again, yet shall it rise with very great alterations : *As thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, suppose of wheat or of some other grain, but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him ; so also is the resurrection of the dead.* What these alterations shall be, the Apostle tells us in the 42, 43 and 44th Verses of this xvth Chapter of 1 Cor. *It is sown in corruption it is raised in incorruption ; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory ; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power ; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.* 1st. *It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption ; i. e.* The body which has now in it such manifest principles

ciples of mortality and corruption ; which consists now of such brittle and tender parts, that every the least violence disturbs and unfits them for their operations ; which is now subject to so many casualties, and has its continuance depending upon the fit disposition of so many little and easily disordered parts, that it is a greater wonder how we continue to live a day than why we die after so few years space ; *this* body shall at the resurrection be perfectly refined and purged from all the seeds of mortality and corruption ; shall be made up of such parts and so constituted, as shall neither in themselves have any tendency to dissolution, nor be capable of being any way disordered and unfitted for their proper functions ; in a word, shall spring up into an incorruptible and immortal substance, which shall be fitted to endure as long as the Soul to which it is to be united, even to all eternity. Again, *it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory* ; i. e. That body, which at death seems so base and abject, so vile and contemptible, shall at the resurrection be transformed *into a*

S E R M.  
X.  


S E R M. bright and beautiful and glorious body.

X.



Neither ought it at all to seem strange to us, that it should be capable of receiving so great a change; For if even in this mortal life the motions of the Soul, joy and hope, innocence and an assurance of the favour of God, can shew forth themselves with so remarkable a Vigour, and as it were with a lustre, in the countenances of men; if St. *Stephen's* innocence and joyful assurance, could *make his face to appear as it had been the face of an Angel*; and *Moses's* conversing with God upon the Mount, could make his face so shine, that the Children of Israel were not able to look upon him for the brightness and glory of it; how much greater change must the strong and powerful operations of a glorified Soul, ravished with the beatifick vision of God, make in a subtle, immortal and incorruptible body? But besides this, we are moreover assured, that Our Saviour shall also by his immediate power, even by that mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself, change this our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body; Phil.

iii. 21. And what sort of body his glorious body is, may in some measure be gathered from the History of his transfiguration, where his face is described *to have shined like the Sun, and his raiment to have become shining, exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth could white them*; St Matt. xvii. 2: compared with *Mar. ix. 3*: and from the description of his appearance to St John; Rev. i. 14: *His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace.* Such therefore shall be the glorified bodies of the Saints at the resurrection; namely, made like unto the glorified body of Christ. And this perhaps is what is intimated by our Saviour in that promise; St Matt. xiii. 43: *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*; and in that Prophecy of Daniel; ch. xii. v. 3: *They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the Stars for ever and ever*; and by the Author of the Book of Wisdom;

S E R M. ch. iii. 6, 7: *As gold in the furnace has he*

X. *tried them, and received them as a burnt-offering: They shall shine, and run to and fro like sparks among the stubble: They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people; and their Lord shall reign for ever. Further, it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; i. e. that body, which is now so weak and feeble, so subject to diseases and indispositions, so slow, heavy and unactive, that it clogs the soul, and retards its spiritual flights and operations; shall then become so strong and powerful, so active and vigorous, as even to be assisting to the most spiritual motions of the Soul, to become every way a fit Organ and Instrument of its most exalted operations, and shall continue in that perfect health, strength and vigour for ever: For God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away; Rev. xxi. 4. Lastly, it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body; i. e. That body, which is now fitted only for this animal life;*



life ; which consists of such gross substance, and that in continual change, as needs perpetually to be repaired with the suitable nourishment of meats and drinks, to be sustained and kept in order with labour and exercise, and to be refreshed with such pleasures as are suitable indeed to this animal life, but are far beneath the excellent nature of the soul, and prove oft-times hurtful and injurious to it ; *This body*, I say, shall at the resurrection become of a more refined and spiritual nature, shall be wholly delivered from all those wants and incumbrances which are now so necessary to the preservation of the animal life ; and shall be entirely freed from all appetites to such pleasures, as are now the *snare*s and temptations of the Soul. All which, our Saviour seems plainly to intimate, in that answer of his to a captious question proposed by the *Sadducees* ; St. *Luc.* xx. 35 : *They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain That world and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage ; neither can they die any more,*

S E R M.  
X.  


S E R M. *more, for they are equal or like unto the*  
 X. *Angels.* Having thus explained the nature  
 of the victory that Christ gives us over  
 temporal death,

2dly; I proceed now in the 2d place  
 to consider the Victory which Christ shall  
 give to all his faithful Servants over  
 that death which is *eternal*: And of this,  
 very briefly. The victory over tempo-  
 ral death shall be in some measure (as  
 has been already observed) universal;  
 For all shall rise again from the dead,  
 and all both just and unjust shall be  
 clothed with immortal and incorruptible  
*bodies* which shall never be dissolved any  
 more: But though there shall be no more  
 dissolution of the body, nor separation of  
 the soul, yet is there a greater destruction  
 into which they who *believe not God and*  
*obey not his Gospel shall at last fall*; and  
 that is, the second death; Rev. xxi. 8: *The*  
*fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable,*  
*and murderers, and whoremongers, and for-*  
*cerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall*  
*have their part in the lake that burneth*  
*with fire and brimstone, which is the second*  
*death.*

*death.* Now from *this* death, those and S E R M.  
those only shall be delivered by Christ, X.  
*who bear the Word of God and keep it ;*  
*who hearken unto the commands of God,*  
*and in their lives obey them ; They that*  
*overcome, shall not be hurt of the second*  
*death, for on them the second death hath no*  
*power, but they shall be Priests of God and*  
*of Christ, and shall regn with him for ever ;*  
Rev. ii. 11 : compared with Ch. xx. ver. 6.  
And of this we must understand that pro-  
mise of our Saviour ; St. *Joh.* xi. 26 : *who-*  
*soever liveth and believeth in me, shall never*  
*die,* or (as the words may more properly  
be rendered) *shall not die for ever ; i. e.*  
*shall never fall into eternal death.* That  
which Christ hath already done towards  
delivering his Servants from the power of  
this death, is his making provision for  
their deliverance from the dominion and  
from the guilt of Sin, of which this  
death is the consequence and punishment.  
That which still remains, and which he  
will yet do for them, is to acquit them  
publickly at the great day of judgement,  
and then in pursuance of that sentence of  
abso-

S E R M. absolution, actually *to* instate them in his  
 X. Kingdom of Glory. The resurrection of  
 the dead is only in order to that final  
 judgement, which shall pass upon all man-  
 kind; *for God hath appointed a day in the*  
*which he will judge the World in righteous-*  
*ness, by that man whom he hath ordained,*  
*even our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose ap-*  
*pearance all that are in the graves shall*  
*bear his voice, and live, and stand before*  
*his judgement-seat, and he shall judge them*  
*according to their works:* The solemnity of  
 which great day, cannot be more lively  
 expressed, than in those prophetick words  
 of *Daniel*; Chap. vii. ver. 9: *I beheld*  
*till the thrones were cast down and*  
*the antient of days did sit, whose gar-*  
*ment was white as the snow, and the*  
*hair of his head like the pure wool; his*  
*throne was like the fiery flame, and his*  
*wheels as burning fire; A fiery stream is-*  
*sued and came forth from before him,*  
*thousand thousands ministred unto him, and*  
*ten thousand times ten thousand stood be-*  
*fore him; the judgement was set, and the*  
*books were opened:* From which place most  
 of


of the expressions which are made use of in the New Testament to signify the Second coming of Christ, are plainly borrowed. At this great Solemnity, all those who have embraced the gracious terms of the Gospel, and through the mercy of God have by Repentance and Obedience delivered themselves from the Power and Dominion of Sin, shall by their Saviour and Judge be publicly acquitted before Men and Angels, and pronounced free from the Guilt and from the Punishment of Sin: *For whosoever shall confess me before men, saith our Saviour, i. e. whosoever shall not be ashamed of the Religion of Christ, but notwithstanding all the Discouragements he may meet with in the World, shall persist in it and obey it, him shall the Son of man confess before his Father which is in heaven, and before the angels of God, i. e. he shall acknowledge him for his true and faithful Disciple, and shall pronounce that blessed Sentence upon him, Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* The Servants of Christ being thus publicly

S E R M.  
X.  


S E R M. lickly acquitted at the general Judgment,  
 X. shall in pursuance of this Sentence enter  
 with him into Heaven, and be actually  
 instated in his Kingdom of *glory*; and so  
 shall they ever be with the Lord. *This*  
*is the consummation of the Gospel-æco-*  
*nomy, and the accomplishment of the*  
*Kingdom of Christ: Thus Christ, having*  
*totally subdued all his Enemies, shall for*  
*ever be glorified with his saints; and they*  
*shall be before the throne of God, and shall*  
*serve him day and night in his temple;*  
*and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell*  
*among them: they shall hunger no more,*  
*neither thirst any more, neither shall the*  
*sun light on them nor any heat: for the*  
*lamb which is in the midst of the throne*  
*shall feed them, and shall lead them unto*  
*living fountains of water, and God shall*  
*wipe away all tears from their eyes; and*  
*they shall for ever sing that joyful song of*  
*praise; Rev. i. 5: Unto him that loved us*  
*and washed us from our sins in his own*  
*blood, and hath made us kings and priests*  
*to God and his Father, to him be glory and*  
*dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*


H A V I N G

HAVING thus at large explained how S E R M.  
Christ gives his Servants the Victory over X.  
their last enemy, which is Death, I shall  
only draw an inference *or two* from what  
has been said, and so conclude. And *1st*,  
If these things be so, then let us, as the  
Apostle infers in the words immediately fol-  
lowing the Text, *be stedfast, unmoveable,*  
*always abounding in the work of the Lord,*  
*forasmuch as we know that our labour shall*  
*not be in vain in the Lord.* Our Saviour  
has assured us that if we be stedfast in  
our Religion, and persevere in our Obe-  
dience to it, nothing shall by any means  
hurt us, but *we shall be more than con-*  
*querours over all our enemies, even over*  
*Death itself.* I am, saith he, *the resur-*  
*rection and the life; he that believeth on*  
*me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;*  
Joh. xi. 25. Now what greater encourage-  
ment can any man desire than to be assured  
that his *labour shall not only not be in vain,*  
but that it shall also meet with a great  
and inexpressible reward? And what greater  
reward can possibly be proposed, than  
deliverance from death and an entrance  
into

S E R M. into life eternal? If then we in earnest  
 X. believe these things, as by our Religion  
 we profess and pretend to do, let us also  
 consider them and urge them upon our  
 selves; let us by frequent meditation,  
 convince our selves of the truth and im-  
 portance of them; and let us always so  
*live*, as being under the power of these  
 convictions. Let not the terrour of short  
 and temporary evils drive *us* into Sin,  
 who are convinced that the consequence  
 of that sin, will be misery and death  
 eternal; *and let not* the allurements of  
 short and transitory pleasures withdraw  
*us* from our duty, who are convinced  
 that the performance of that duty, will  
 be life and happiness for ever. The re-  
 ligion of Christ requires nothing of us  
 but what is extremely reasonable and ma-  
 nifestly for our advantage, namely, *to live*  
*soberly, righteously, and godly in this present*  
*World*; yet does it promise to obedience  
 such an infinite reward, as life from the  
 dead, even life eternal; and he that will  
 not by such a motive be perswaded to  
 be stedfast in such a religion, must have  
 lost



lost all sense, I do not say only of vir- S E R M.  
tue and goodness, but also of his own X.

interest and happiness. 2dly, If Christ   
has taken away the *sting of death*, and  
gives us the victory over it; then good  
Christians ought not to be afraid and ter-  
rified at death, any more than at an ene-  
my that is already conquered, and can  
do them no hurt. *Christ hath both died  
for us and is risen again*, and one great  
reason why he did so, was to assure us  
that as it was not possible for *him to be  
holden of death*, so neither should we be  
detained by it; *for he took part of flesh  
and blood, that through death he might  
destroy him that had the power of death,*  
i. e. *the Devil*, and deliver them who  
*through fear of death were all their life-  
time subject to bondage*; Heb. ii. 14 and  
15. Christ has made death to be nothing  
else but a passage unto life eternal, to  
all those who shall obey his command-  
ments; Let us then sincerely indea-  
vour to obey the commands of God, and  
death shall have no sting, nothing that  
is terrible in it. He that has either from

S E R M. the beginning, or after true Repentance,  
 X. made it the principal business of his life,  
 to live soberly, righteously, and godly ;  
 may without fear expect the approach  
 of *death*, nay even with joy and comfort  
 hope for it. And this the generality of  
 mankind are so sensible of, that tho' they  
 desire not to *be like the Servants of God*  
*in their lives*, yet they cannot but wish  
 with *Balaam* to be like them in their  
 deaths ; Num. xxiii. 10 ; *Let me die the*  
*death of the righteous, and let my last*  
*end be like his.* 3dly and lastly, If Christ  
 will give all his Servants victory over  
 death, then we ought not to grieve im-  
 moderately at the death of our friends  
 who die in the Lord. *I would not have*  
*you ignorant, saith St Paul, concerning them*  
*that are asleep, that ye sorrow not even*  
*as others that have no hope ; For if we*  
*believe that Jesus died, and rose again,*  
*even so them also which sleep in Jesus,*  
*will God bring with him ;* 1 Theff. iv.  
 13. If we believe that there shall be a  
 resurrection from the dead, we ought  
 not to sorrow immoderately for the de-

departure of those, who have left this S E R M.  
wicked and miserable world, and are X.  
gone to rest from their labours? For so  
saith the Spirit of God, *Rev. xiv. 13 ;*  
*Blessed are the dead that die in the*  
*Lord, from henceforth yea saith the Spi-*  
*rit, that they may rest from their la-*  
*bours, and their works do follow them.*







# S E R M O N XI.

The Inexcusableness of rejecting  
the Gospel.

[ *Preached on Whitsunday.* ]



H E B. ii. 3 and 4.

*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him ; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will ?*



THESE words contain an Account, how utterly inexcusable all men are, who neglect the Salvation of the Gospel ; either by rejecting it through Unbelief, when offered


S E R M. fered unto them ; or by living unworthily  
 XI. of it, after they have pretended to embrace it. Many considerations there are, which highly aggravate the fault of such persons as contemptuously neglect the proposal of a Favour, which 'tis both their duty and their greatest interest to accept ; and many circumstances make them more and more inexcusable, and justly to deserve the severest punishment, for their ingratitude and contempt. The intrinsic *Goodness* and *Excellency* of the *Thing itself*, which they despise and neglect ; the great *value*, the *necessity* and singular *importance* of it ; the exceeding great *benefit*, which, by being duly received, it would bring along with it ; and the *Extreme Evils* which are consequent upon the neglect of it : The *Power* and *Authority*, the *Greatness* and *Goodness* of the Person, whose Favour we make light of ; our Subjection to him and Dependance upon him, as our absolute *Governour* ; or our Obligations to him, as our greatest *Benefactor* : The *Dignity* and *Excellency* of the *Person*, by whose *interposition* the  
 Benefit

Benefit is procured, and by whom it is conveyed or sent to us: The great *Difficulties* that were necessary to be underwent in order to obtain it, or the great Cost that was requisite to purchase it: The Strength and Clearness of the *Evidence*, and the Number and Greatness of the *Proofs*, made use of to assure us of the *Certainty* of it: All these are Circumstances which greatly increase our Obligation, to accept with Thankfulness the Advantage proposed, to make that due Use of it for which it was conferred, and be influenced by it in all the Actions of our Lives. And if we neglect or despise it, or behave ourselves ill and unworthily under it; all the same circumstances do highly aggravate our guilt, render us very inexcusable, and make us justly to deserve the severest of punishments for our ingratitude and contempt. To reject That, which in the nature of the *thing itself* is of the highest *Excellency and intrinsic Goodness*, is a Mark of the greatest Depravity and Corruption of Manners. To despise That, which is of the last and

S E R M.  
XI.  


S E R M. utmost *importance* to us ; on the due receiving , or on the neglecting whereof ,  
 XI. depends the greatest Happiness or the extreme Misery our Nature is capable of ; is the greatest Folly and Stupidity imaginable. To disobey the Commands of our Supreme *Governour*, whose Power is absolute , and his Authority uncontrollable ; is the highest Insolence ; and to oppose the Will of our greatest *Benefactor*, is the basest Ingratitude : To slight and reject a gracious Proposal of Mercy, procured for us by the interposition, and conveyed to us by the hands, of a Person of the greatest Dignity and Excellency ; and who was likewise in order thereunto, necessarily to condescend and submit to undergo great Sufferings and Indignities ; is the highest degree of *Perverseness* possible. And to withstand and not be convinced by such Proofs, as both in Number, Strength, and Clearness, are the best and greatest Evidence that can be expected or in reason desired ; is the utmost Obstinacy, and most inexcusably wilful Opposition to Truth. Now all  
 these



these aggravating Circumstances attend the S E R M.  
rejecting, or (which is the very same XI.  
thing) the disobeying the Gospel; and   
they are most of them contained in these  
words of the Apostle; *How shall we e-  
scape, if we neglect so great salvation,  
which at the first began to be spoken by  
the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by  
them that heard him; God also bearing  
them witness, both with signs and wonders,  
and with divers miracles and gifts of the  
Holy Ghost, according to his own will?* In  
the words,

1<sup>st</sup>, H E R E is the intrinsick Goodness  
and Excellency of the Thing itself, which  
wicked men reject; intimated as a just  
ground why they should not escape unpun-  
ished. It is in itself or in its own Na-  
ture a *great Salvation*; a Salvation from  
Sin and Misery, from the Power and  
Tyranny of the Devil, and from the pu-  
nishment of Death.

2<sup>dly</sup>, H E R E is a great Aggravation of  
the Sin of rejecting the Gospel; in that it is  
a Salvation not only *great in itself*, but al-  
so

S E R M. so offered unto us by exprefs revelation  
 XI. from *God himself*.



3dly, H E R E is the Dignity and Excellency of the Person, *by and through* whom this Salvation is proposed to us ; mentioned as a further Aggravation of the Sin of rejecting it. It was *at the first begun to be spoken by the Lord*.

4thly and *Lastly*, T H E Strength and Clearness of the Evidence, and the Number and Greatness of the Proofs, made use of to assure us of the Truth and Certainty of the Gospel ; is of all others the *highest* Aggravation, of the Guilt of those who neglect or disobey it ; and that which of all other circumstances renders them the most utterly inexcusable : *God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will*. The principal and most remarkable of all which Signs and Wonder, being that plentiful Effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, which we *this day* commemorate ; I shall therefore  
 be

be very brief upon all the former Heads. S E R M.


*Ist*, H E R E is the *intrinsic Goodness and Excellency of the Thing itself*, which wicked men reject ; intimated as a just ground why they should not escape unpunished. It is *in itself*, a *great Salvation* ; a Salvation from Sin and Misery, from the Power and Tyranny of the Devil, and from the punishment of Death. Sin, in its own Nature, even separate from the consideration of its being an obstinate disobeying the revealed Will of God, is in itself utterly unreasonable and inexcusable : 'Tis acting in opposition to the known reason and proportion of things ; contrary to that eternal Order and Equity, which God has established in the original constitution of Nature ; opposite to the Light of Reason, the dictates of Conscience, the unprejudiced Judgement of our own Minds, the agreeing Opinion of all wise and good men, nay and even of bad men themselves too ; contrary to all our natural Notions and Apprehensions, of the Attributes and Will of God ; destructive to the publick Welfare and

Happi-

S E R M. Happiness of Mankind, the Health of  
 XI. our own Bodies, the Peace of our Minds,  
 ~~~~~ and the Support of our good Name and  
 Reputation amongst wise and reasonable  
 men: 'Tis a subjecting our reason to vile  
 affections, to inordinate and brutish ap-  
 petites, to disorderly and ungoverned Pas-  
 sions ; Which is the greatest and the worst  
 slavery in the world ; to see and approve  
 what is good, and yet not be able to  
 prevail with ourselves to practise it ; to be  
 sensible of the destructive consequences of  
 Sin, and yet, through the Strength of evil  
 Habits, continue under the power and  
 dominion of it ; To feel ourselves de-  
 prived of our present Happiness, and of  
 our best hopes of all that is to come ;  
 and yet continue in the practice of such  
 Vices, as are the only Causes of all this  
 Misery : This is evidently the greatest  
 Misery, and most slavish Bondage that  
 can be. Now to have a way proposed  
 to us, of being delivered from this Body  
 of Sin, into the glorious Liberty of the  
 Children of God ; to have a method laid  
 before us, of being rescued from this Mi-  
 sery,

fery, and put into a way of securing both S E R M.  
our present Happiness and that which is XI.  
to come : This is the Offer of a *great Sal-*  
*vation* ; This whoever shall neglect, is  
absolutely inexcusable, and justly deserves  
to fall into that Misery, from which he  
would not accept a deliverance. The  
Light of Nature itself directs us thus far,  
and that which all true Philosophy pre-  
tended to, was to convince men of the  
reasonableness and necessity of *endeavour-*  
*ing*, by all the helps of Reason and natu-  
ral Religion, to deliver themselves from  
this bondage and slavery of Sin. The  
Gospel proposes to us an infinitely more  
effectual way of obtaining this end, than  
any Philosophy under the Light of Na-  
ture was ever able to do ; showing us  
most clearly the heinous Nature of Sin,  
and the dreadful Consequences of it ; all  
the Obligations of our Duty in a more  
clear and particular manner, and the in-  
finite Advantage of complying with them ;  
the true expiation of Sin, and the cer-  
tainty of our Repentance being acceptable  
in the sight of God, and effectual to obtain  
Pardon ;

S E R M. Pardon ; and affording us sufficient Helps

XI.  and Assistances, to enable us to perform what it requires of us, in order to our future and eternal Happiness. This is, in the Nature of the Thing itself, a *great Salvation*; and the neglecting of which, (even separate from the Consideration of the particular Dishonour done to God by rejecting an immediate Revelation of his Will,) is intrinsically in itself a most inexcusable Neglect, and justly deserving the severest of Punishments.

B U T then 2dly, This further Consideration, that the Gospel is an *express and positive revelation of the Will of God*, is a very high Aggravation of the Sin of neglecting *so great a Salvation*. He that desires not to be delivered from the *Dominion* of Sin, and has no thirst after a Life of *Righteousness*; for *That very reason* deserves not to be saved from the punishment of Sin, and is in his Nature unqualified for the Rewards of Holiness. But when to this choice of Wickedness, there is added moreover a direct Con-  
tempt

tempt of God ; when God has de- S E R M.  
clared to men his Will by an immediate XI.  
Revelation, and confirmed the Obligations of Nature by his positive Command ;  
when he has offered us Pardon upon our sincere Repentance, and vouchsafed us the Assistance of his Spirit to enable us to perform it, and promised us eternal Life upon our performance of it, and has obliged us to accept this Salvation under pain of the severest penalties ; the wrath of God being now most expressly revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men ; After *all* this, to continue still to despise so great Salvation, is adding Rebellion to our Sin, and with a high hand exalting ourselves against God ; it is an avowed despising and contemning his Authority, and expressly declaring that we *will not have Him to reign over us*. If therefore Sinning barely against the *Law of Nature*, was sufficient to consign men to unavoidable Destruction ; how shall *We* escape, if we continue to Sin both against Nature and Revelation ? If the Servant that *knew not* his Lord's

S E R M. Lord's Will, was yet to be beaten with  
 XI. stripes, because he did things in themselves worthy of stripes ; how much more severely must They expect to be punished, who do the same things in direct opposition to the express Will and known Command of their Master ? This was the Reason why God punished the Sins of his own people the *Jews*, with greater Severity than those of the Heathen : And so *Now* in like manner, whereas *the times of ignorance God winked at*, as the Apostle expresses it, *Acts* xvii. 30 ; that is, he was less strict and severe with men before the Revelation of the Gospel ; *Now*, on the contrary, under pain of his severest displeasure, he peremptorily commands all men every where to repent ; There being no excuse left, nothing that can alleviate their condemnation, if men, *after* that the clearest Light is come into the World, will still obstinately continue in their works of Darkness.

3dly, T H E *Dignity and Excellency of the Person*, by and through whom this great Salvation is proposed to us, is a  
 further



further Aggravation of the Sin of rejecting it. It was at first begun to be spoken by the Lord; that is, as the same Apostle expresses it in the foregoing chapter, *God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.* The Dignity of the Person, by whose interposition any Favour is procured, and by whom it is transmitted, shows both the Greatness and Importance of the Thing itself, and the Love and Condescension of the Original Author of it; And the neglecting it in this case, implies not only Folly, Insolence, and Rebellion, but moreover, the greatest Obstinacy also, which no Authority can prevail over; and the basest Ingratitude, which no Kindness or Condescension can overcome: Which therefore whosoever is guilty of, must be confessed most justly to deserve the severest of Punishments. This (the Ingratitude of rejecting a Mercy, offered with so much Love and Condescension, by the hands of a Person of so great Dignity,) is what

S E R M. Our Saviour compelled the Jews to acknowledge, and made them condemn themselves for it with their own mouths, in the Parable of the Householder ; St *Matt.* xxi. 33 ; *who having planted a vineyard, and let it out to husbandmen, first sent his servants to receive the fruits of it ; and when the husbandmen had resisted and slain the servants, he afterwards sent his own Son to them, saying, Surely they will reverence my Son ; But him also they resisted and slew : Whereupon when our Saviour appealed to the Pharisees themselves, to judge what it was fit for the Lord of the vineyard to do unto those husbandmen ; They immediately replied, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons : Unwarily passing a just sentence against Themselves ; that for rejecting the Gospel preached by Christ himself, they deserved a severer condemnation, than their Fathers who had before rejected the preaching and admonitions of the Prophets. The same Argument is used by*  
the

the Apostle, in the words immediately S E R M.  
 preceeding the Text ; *If the word, saith* XI.  
*he, spoken by Angels was stedfast, and*  
*every transgression and disobedience received*  
*a just recompence of reward ; how shall*  
*we escape, if we neglect so great salvation,*  
*which at the first began to be spoken by*  
*the Lord ? And ch. x. ver. 28 ; He that*  
*despised Moses's law, died without mercy :*  
*Of how much sorer punishment, suppose*  
*ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath*  
*trod under foot the Son of God ? and*  
*ch. xii. 25. See that ye refuse not Him that*  
*speaketh : For if They escaped not, who*  
*refused him that spake on Earth, much*  
*more shall not we escape, if we turn away*  
*from him that speaketh from Heaven.*

4thly and Lastly, T H E Strength and  
 Clearness of the Evidence, and the Num-  
 ber and Greatness of the Proofs, made use  
 of to assure us of the Truth and Cer-  
 tainty of the Gospel ; is the highest Ag-  
 gravation of the guilt of those, who ne-  
 glect or disobey it ; and that which of  
 all other things renders them the most  
 absolutely inexcusable. The Gospel was

*The Inexcusableness of*

*SEPT. XI.* *at first begun to be spoken by the Lord, and was afterwards confirmed to us by them that heard him ; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost ; whereof that which we This day commemorate, was both the Foundation of all the rest ; and in itself also of the greatest Efficacy and of the largest Extent.*

THE stronger the Evidence of any Truth be, the more inexcusable is the making opposition to it. And the highest Aggravation of this crime, is, to continue to oppose a Truth, after the best and greatest Evidence has been given of it, that the Nature of the Thing was capable of. Opposition in this case, against the greatest Evidence that is reasonably to be expected, can proceed from nothing but either incurable Obstinacy and Perverseness ; or a Love of some things, and a resolution not to part with them, the keeping of which is inconsistent with the acknowledgement of the Truth. And this is plainly the Case of those

those who reject the Gospel, after the undeniable Evidences that have been given of the Truth of it by the *Testimony of the Spirit*. Their rejecting it, cannot proceed from want of sufficient Conviction, but only from a love of Vice, and a resolution not to be reformed; which is a degree of incorrigibleness, in which there is no *hope* of excuse, and for which there remains no remedy; and which there is no hopes of amending. When clear Light is come into the World, and men still continue their works of Darkeness; then it becomes evident that their wickedness proceeds not from Ignorance and want of Instruction, but from Will and Choice; they love Darkeness rather than Light, and stand in open defiance to God and his supreme Authority. This is what our Saviour says of the *Jews*; St *Joh*, xv. 22; *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had Sin; but now they have no cloak for their Sin: If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had Sin; but now they have both seen and hated both me and my*

S E R M.  
XI.  



S E R M. *Father.* This is the reason of his declaring to the cities of *Judæa*, *that it should be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of Judgement than for Them*; because if the mighty works that were done in Them, had been done in Sodom, it would have repented in sackcloth and ashes. This is the reason of his declaring to those Pharisees, who blasphemed the Holy Spirit, that *they should never have forgiveness neither in this World, nor in that which is to come*; because they resisted the last and greatest means, that God would ever make use of to bring them to repentance; and not resisted it only, but reviled it also: They saw with their own eyes the clearest and strongest proofs of the Truth of the Gospel, that could possibly be given; and yet they not only withstood the Evidence of those mighty works, but also blasphemed the Holy Spirit by which they were worked. Their Crime was singular and unexampled; and their Condemnation, was likewise singular. But all others also, who reject the Gospel,  
are,

are, in proportion to the greatness of the S E R M.  
 Evidence they resist, and according to the XI.  
 degree of their Obstinacy and Wickedness  
 in so doing, inexcusable in like manner,  
 and Despisers of the *Testimony of the*  
*Spirit.*

THE *Testimony* which the Spirit of God has given to the Truth of the Gospel, contains a great Variety of undeniable Proofs, which St Paul calls *the Power and Demonstration of the Spirit*. The many large and particular Prophecies, which from the beginning of the World were dictated by the *Spirit*, concerning the Person of our Saviour, and the Nature, Success, and Effects of his Doctrine: The Conception of our Lord by the Miraculous Operation of the *Spirit*, and the manifold Wonders which attended his Birth: The Visible Descent of the *Spirit* upon him at his Baptism, accompanied with a Voice from Heaven, declaring him to be the beloved Son of God: The Miracles which he worked during the course of his Ministry, by the *Spirit of God*; as the Scripture frequently

S E R M. expresses it : His Resurrection from the  
 XI. Dead, which likewise the Scripture as-  
 cribes to the Power of the same Spirit ;  
*Rom. viii. 11 ; and 1 Pet. iii. 18.* But above all, that most plentiful Effusion of the *Spirit* upon the Apostles at *Pentecost* ; whereby they were indued with Power from on high, to preach the Gospel with Authority and Efficacy ; being enabled particularly to speak with tongues, and to do even greater Works than our Saviour himself had worked upon Earth, according to his Promise which he made to them before his departure ; These *Testimonies* (I say) of the *Spirit of God*, contain such demonstrative Proof of the Truth of the Gospel, as leaves *Them* who reject it, capable of no excuse ; since they despise the *last* and *greatest* means, that *shall* be, or indeed *could* be made use of for their conviction and reformation. This last Miracle in particular, the *Gift of Tongues* to the Apostles, was of all others the strangest, and in its nature and circumstances the greatest and most affecting that could be conceived. The Apo-  
 stles,




bles, on whom this Gift was bestowed, S E R M.  
were men, whose Parentage and Educa- XI.  
tion were well known to all that dwelt   
in *Jerusalem* ; They were known to be  
illiterate and mean persons ; persons whose  
Employment had been laborious, and their  
manner of life from the beginning, such  
as afforded them neither Time nor Op-  
portunities, of being skilled in the Learn-  
ing and Customs of their *own* Country,  
much less of having studied the languages  
of other Nations. Had they been men  
of a polite and learned education, brought  
up in the study of their own Law, and  
in the schools of the Scribes and Phari-  
sees ; it might have been imagined that  
this their skill in foreign languages might  
be the Effect of Study and Industry, of  
Art and Design, in order to gain Applause  
from the people, and set themselves up as  
Heads of new Sects, and Teachers of po-  
pular Doctrines. But so far from This  
was their case, that on the contrary they  
were despised and contemned by their own  
countrymen for that very reason, because  
being well acquainted with their Educa-  
tion

S E R M. tion and manner of Life, they did not think  
 XI. it possible that any Wisdom could be found  
 in *Them*, or any Knowledge proceed from  
 their lips. Exactly as they had formerly  
 said of their Master, when he went up  
 into the Temple and taught: St *Joh.* vii.  
 14; *How knoweth this man letters, having  
 never learned?* And St *Mar.* vi. 2; *From  
 whence has this man these things? and  
 what wisdom is this which is given unto  
 him? Is not this the carpenter the Son of  
 Mary, the Brother of James and Joses,  
 and of Juda and Simon? and are not his  
 sisters here with us?* Herein therefore  
 consisted the Greatness of the Miracle,  
 that men of no Education spake different  
 languages *perfectly*; and that they did it  
*immediately and at once*, without any  
 Time, Instruction, or Study. Neither  
 was there any room for any Fallacy or  
 Deceit in this matter: For this thing was  
 not done in a Corner, but publickly in  
 the midst of *Jerusalem*, and in the pre-  
 sence of innumerable witnesses; and that  
 not *once* only, but with a continued and  
 permanent Effect. The Witnesses also  
 that

that were present, were the best and most competent Judges that could be ; being persons of different Nations, gathered together at *Jerusalem* upon account of the Feast, to whom all the languages which the Apostles spoke, were severally natural ; so that they could not be deceived, or imposed upon in this whole proceeding. The Natives of *Jerusalem*, who understood not the tongues which were spoken, nor knew whether they were really any languages at all ; might indeed mock, and say that *these men were full of new wine*, Acts ii. 13 ; but the foreigners, who heard each his own proper language, could not but be justly filled with wonder and amazement. The Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, were witnesses that the Apostles were illiterate men, and understood no language but their Mother-tongue, nor were capable of using any Art or Fraud in this matter ; and the *Strangers* were witnesses, that what they uttered were true and real languages, and therefore could not be the effect of wine or madness. The Testimony therefore of Both together, made

S E R M.  
XI.  
~~~~~

S E R M. the miracle certain, unquestionable and  
 XI. manifest; and accordingly the Effect of  
 it, was proportionably great. For so we  
 read; *Acts ii. ver. 41*; that *the same day,*  
*there were converted about three thousand*  
*Souls.* This was the *immediate Effect* of  
 the gift of Tongues at that very Time;  
 and the *Usefulness* of it *afterwards*, was  
 peculiar and more remarkable, than of all  
 other Miracles whatsoever. For this en-  
 abled the Apostles to preach the Gospel to  
 all Nations, with such speed and incre-  
 dible success, that though men of other  
 Religions endeavoured to make Con-  
 verts as well as they, and some Sects of  
 the *Jews* particularly were infinitely  
 industrious and would compass Sea and  
 Land to gain a Profelyte; yet the  
 Preaching of the Apostles, *like the day*  
*spring from on high, like the morning-light,*  
*which in a moment dispels the darkness from*  
*under one end of Heaven to the other,* pro-  
 pagated the Gospel in a very few years to  
 a vastly larger extent, than ever any other  
 religion was propagated in the compass  
 of many Ages. This gift of Tongues  
 ceased

ceased indeed after some time, as other S E R M. Miracles did ; because all these sort of XI. gifts were bestowed not for their own sake or intrinsic worth, but only in order to the propagation of the Gospel, and to convince men of the Truth of that Religion, whose principal end and design consisted in those gifts and graces of the Spirit which were to continue for ever. Which end being once obtained, and the Gospel established in the World, these miraculous gifts ceased ; having been given, as St Paul expresses it, *not for them that believe, but for them that believe not.* But those gifts of the Spirit, in which consists the renewal of the mind of man, and which are the Springs of all virtues which make us like unto God ; these are to continue through all Ages ; and are so much more excellent and more desirable than the former, as the End is better and more excellent than the Means. In our Saviour's and in the Apostle's time, it was very natural to the Weakness of Men, to be most ambitious of such gifts, as made the greatest appearance, and could not but gain

S E R M. gain the greatest esteem and applause in  
 XI. the eyes of the World : But our Saviour  
 himself cautioned his Disciples, *not to rejoice so much at their being indued with a power of working Miracles, as at their Names being written in Heaven* : And St Paul afterwards took great pains to convince his hearers, *that though it was indeed lawful to covet miraculous gifts, yet he could still show unto them a more excellent way* ; that it was a greater and far more desirable thing, to instruct men in their plain and necessary duty, than to work the most stupendous miracle ; *and that Love and Goodness, Righteousness and Holiness, Meekness and Charity, were things more excellent and valuable in themselves, than to be able to speak with all the Tongues, either of Men or Angels*. The reason is plain, because the one is beneficial only to *Others*, but the other to *ourselves* likewise ; He that works a Miracle or speaks with Tongues to convince another, may yet possibly himself have no title to the rewards of the Gospel ; but He that is indued with those gifts which  
 are

are the end and design of the Gospel, and for the sake only of which all the rest were given, does thereby secure his own Salvation, as well as promote the Salvation of others. Let us then by Charity and Goodness and the practice of all virtues secure to ourselves that which is most excellent; and then though the gifts of Miracles, be not continued to us, yet we shall obtain the End for which alone those gifts have ever been given to Others. For, he that speaks with Tongues for the conversion of others, may (without the *Virtues* of Meekness and Humility, Love and Charity,) himself possibly become a Cast-away: But he whose Mind is indued with those *inward* Virtues, which are the *more* excellent gifts and fruits of the Spirit, has attained that *End*, for the promoting of which, the other *outwardly brighter* and more resplendent Gifts, were all intended but as *Means*.

S E R M.  
XI.  








# S E R M O N XII.

Different Tempers judge differently of Religion.

[ *Preached on Easter-Day.* ]




I COR. i. 22, 23, 24.

*For the Jews require a Sign, and the Greeks seek after Wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness: But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.*




IN the following Discourse S E R M.  
upon these Words, I shall XII. 1<sup>st</sup>  
explain distinctly the several  
Expressions contained in the  
Text; and 2<sup>dly</sup>, I shall de-  
duce some useful Inferences therefrom.

S E R M. I. IN order to Explain distinctly the  
 XII. several Expressions made use of in the  
 ~~~~~ Text, it is to be observed that the Doctrines therein contained, consists plainly of the *three* following Heads. 1<sup>st</sup>, That the Great and general Difference, between the Humours or Tempers of the Nation of the *Jews* on *one* hand, and the *Greeks* (who were Then the principal and most polite part of the *beaten* World) on the *other* hand, was This; That the *Jews*, in *Their* examination into the Truth of any Doctrine proposed to them, were always apt to insist presently upon some *Miracle*, upon some *Token* to be shown them, in proof of the Doctrine's coming from *God*; Whereas the Temper of the *Gentiles* was, to expect conviction by *Disputation and Argument*, according to the *Philosophy* of the Times they lived in, which was esteemed the *Wisdom* of the Age then present: The *Jews require a Sign, and the Greeks seek after Wisdom.* 2<sup>dly</sup>; That Persons of *Both* these Tempers, and that pretended to make use of each of these ways of judging, were


generally extremely prejudiced against the S E R M.  
 Doctrine of the Gospel: Infomuch that the XII.  
 coming of Christ into the World, in the   
 manner he did, in a mean, humble and  
 lowly appearance, teaching a Doctrine of  
 Morality, Plainness and Simplicity; was  
 both a great Disappointment to the *Jews*,  
 who expected one that should in a mi-  
 raculous and pompous manner deliver  
 them from their Enemies; and at the  
 same time was no less disagreeable to the  
 then prevailing fashion and method of  
 the *Gentiles*, who judged of Doctrines by  
 the Eloquence, and Oratory, and Artful-  
 ness in Disputing, of Those who taught and  
 maintained them: *We preach Christ cruci-  
 fied, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and  
 unto the Greeks Foolishness.* 3dly, That  
 nevertheless, in Truth and Reality, setting  
 aside Prejudices and Corrupt Notions, the  
 Doctrine of Christ was accompanied with  
 the *highest and most compleat Evidence*, ac-  
 cording to *Both* these *Methods* of judging:  
 It was attended with the fullest Demon-  
 strations of Divine *Power*, in the *Miracles*  
 God worked by him; And it had all real

S E R M. marks of *Wisdom*, in its perfect agreeableness to the Dictates of True and Impartial Reason: But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.

1<sup>st</sup>, T H E Great and general Difference, between the Humours or Tempers of the Nation of the *Jews* on *one* hand, and the *Greeks* (who were Then the principal and most polite part of the *Heathen* World) on the *other* hand, the Apostle observes, was This; That the *Jews*, in *Their* examination into the Truth of any Doctrine proposed to them, were always apt to insist presently upon some *Miracle*, upon some *Token* to be shown them, in proof of the Doctrine's coming from *God*; Whereas the Temper of the *Gentiles* was, to expect conviction by *Disputation and Argument*, in Methods answering to the *Philosophy* of the Times they lived in, which was the Standard of *Wisdom* of the Age then present: *The Jews require a Sign, and the Greeks seek after Wisdom.* As to the Temper of the *Greeks* in this matter; nothing is more

notorious in History, than that about the S E R M.  
 Times of our Saviour and his Apostles, XII.  
 the things principally esteemed among   
 them were *Oratory* and the *Art of Disputing*: *Oratory*, by which Things were  
 set forth in a beautiful Light, adorned  
 with proper figures, made pleasing and  
 acceptable to the Hearers by a Variety  
 of agreeable expressions; And the *Art of*  
*Disputing*, by which every thing could  
 be *supported* with *some* plausible *Argu-*  
*ments*, every thing could be *opposed* with  
*Some* seeming *Difficulties*, and every *Diffi-*  
*culty* could by men of Parts and Ingenui-  
 ty have *Something* offered in *Reply* to it.  
 These Instances of Skill, in themselves,  
 and when applied to good Purposes, were  
*Both of them* really useful and valuable.  
 By *Oratory*, Truth and Right represented  
 in a good View, and clothed in proper  
 and agreeable expressions, appeared with  
 a Greater Lustre, and made more Advan-  
 tagious Impressions: And by *Skill in ar-*  
*guing*, *Reason* was taught to exert itself  
 in its full *Strength*, and *Truth* to shine  
 forth in its peculiar and inimitable *Clear-*

S E R M. *ness.* But *more frequently*, among vicious  
 XII. and corrupt Men, these Instruments and  
 ~~~~~ Ornaments of Reason were perverted to  
 very wrong and contrary Purposes. By  
*Oratory*, the *Deformity* of *unrighteous*  
*Practices* was covered with the deceitful  
 Appearance, and painted over with the  
 beautiful Colours of *Just and Right* : And  
 by *Skill in disputing*, the plainest *Truths*  
 were *perplexed* with such *Intricacies*, and  
 the grossest *Errours* concealed under such  
*Forms of Arguing*, as altogether con-  
 founded, to common Understandings, the  
 Difference between Truth and Errour.  
 This was what the corrupt Part of the  
*Greeks* called *Wisdom*. As to the Tem-  
 per of the *Jews* ; They, having received  
 their Law by Revelation from *God*, were  
 never much accustomed either to value  
 in *themselves*, or to regard in *Others*, That  
 . nice and abstract Reasoning, which was  
 all that the *Gentile* Philosophers had to  
 depend upon ; The *Jews*, I say, never  
 much attended to This sort of Learning ;  
 But, whenever any Doctrine was proposed  
 to them which appeared to be New, im-  
 mediately

mediately they insisted, that the Author S E R M.  
 of it should, by working some *Miracle*, XII.  
 give evidence of his being sent from God. 

Thus *Job. iv. 48: Except ye see Signs and Wonders, ye will not believe: And Matt. xvi. 1: The Pharisees desired him, that he would show them a Sign from Heaven.* Nor were they to blame in so doing, when the Doctrine to which their Assent was expected, was proposed to them as of *Divine Revelation*; and when their demanding such evidence, did not proceed from any unreasonableness or perverseness of Temper, but from a sincere Desire of having such Satisfaction, without which a reasonable Person could not justify his Assent from being credulous and weak. But *more frequently*, under pretence of expecting Further Satisfaction, an obstinate and malicious Temper persisted continually in requiring more and more Signs, for no other reason but because they resolved *not to be convinced*, being like the *Deaf Adder* which stoppeth her ears, which refuseth to hear the Voice of the Charmer, charm he never

S E R M. *so wisely.* Which Sort of persons, our Saviour reproves therefore with a very just and proper Severity; *Matt. xii. 39: An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign, and there shall no Sign be given it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the Whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth: The men of Nineveh shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; because They repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas is here: The Queen of the South shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the Earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here.* The Meaning is: God had given them Signs abundantly sufficient, to convince any reasonable and unprejudiced persons; wherewith if they would not be satisfied, he would leave them to themselves. And This may suffice for explication of the *first* part of the  
Text,



Text, the *General Observation* concerning S E R M.  
the *different Temper* or *Humour* of the XII.  
*Jewish* and *Gentile Nations*: *The Jews*  
*require a Sign, and the Greeks seek after*  
*Wisdom.*

2dly, THE *Second Particular* in the  
Text, is the *Observation*, that *Persons* of  
*Both* these *Tempers*, and that pretended  
to make use of *Each* of these ways of  
judging, were generally extremely preju-  
diced against the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel*:  
Insomuch that the coming of *Christ* into  
the *World*, in the *Manner* he did, in a  
mean, humble, and lowly appearance,  
teaching a *Doctrine* of *Morality*, plain-  
ness and simplicity; was both a great  
Disappointment to the *Jews*, who expect-  
ed one that should in a miraculous and  
pompous manner deliver them from their  
*Enemies*; and at the same time was no  
less disagreeable to the then prevailing  
*Fashion* and *Method* of the *Gentiles*, who  
judged of *Doctrines* by the *Eloquence*,  
and *Oratory*, and *Artfulness* in *Disputing*,  
of *Those* who taught and maintained  
them: *We preach Christ crucified, unto*  
*the*

S E R M. *the Jews a Stumbling-Block, and unto the*  
 XII. *Greeks Foolishness.* The Jews thought that no other Sign was a Mark of the true Messiah, but *Delivering them from their Temporal Enemies*; and that the *Power of God* could no otherwise be manifested in him, than by establishing him a *Kingdom in this World*. When therefore our Lord came in *Another* manner, preaching *humility and meekness, patience and charity*; calling them to *virtue and goodness*, instead of *Earthly Power and Dominion*: Though they were astonished at the Excellency of his Doctrine, and at the Greatness of his Works; and wondered, *whence has This man this wisdom, and those mighty works*; yet presently they say, *Is not this the Carpenter's Son? Is not his Mother called Mary? and his Brethren, James and Joses and Simon and Judas? and his Sisters, are they not all with us? whence then has this man all these things? and they were offended in him*, Matt. xiii. 15. Nay, even his *Own Disciples*; whenever he began to speak to them of his *Sufferings and Death*, immediately

mediately they rebuked him, saying, *Be it far from thee, Lord; This shall not be unto thee.* And when he had actually suffered, they said with a desponding heart, *We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel; Luke xxiv. 21.* And even after they were satisfied of the Truth of his *Resurrection*, yet still their antient Prejudices put them upon seeking after the same Sign or Token as before; *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel? Acts i. 6.* So that, considering how great a *Stumbling-block* This Circumstance was to the whole Nation of the *Jews*, it was with very good reason that our Lord pronounces; *Matt. xi. 6: Blessed is he who-so-ever shall not be offended in me.* As to the *Gentiles*; They, as I now observed, being used to judge of Doctrines by the *Eloquence*, and *Oratory*, and *Artfulness in Disputing*, of those who taught and maintained them; it is no wonder that the Plainness and Simplicity of the Gospel, which took no care to please and entertain them with artificial compositions,

SERM. nor to try their Parts and gratify their  
 XII. Vanity with nice and subtle Disputations,  
 but aimed wholly at reforming their Manners, and withdrawing them from idolatrous Imaginations to the Service of the One Living and True God, in Holiness, Righteousness and Charity; it is no wonder, I say, that this Plainness and Simplicity of Doctrine was offensive to *Them*, as it is *Now* to *All* sorts of men who place religion in Forms and Ceremonies, and in certain Systems of Opinions of which they understand little; Nor ought it at all to seem strange, that the *Epicureans* and the *Stoicks*, Acts xvii. 18, should encounter St *Paul* with That contemptuous question, *What will this Babler say?* This therefore is the *Second* Observation contained in the Text; that Persons of such different *Tempers*, and that made use of such different *ways of judging*, as the *Jews* and *Gentiles* did, were yet both of them under very *Great Prejudices* against the Doctrine of the Gospel: *We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a Stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks Foolishness.*


3dly,

3dly, THE *Third* and Last Observa- S E R M.

XII.




tion contained in the Text, is ; that notwithstanding these pretended Objections, yet, in Truth and Reality, setting aside Prejudices and corrupt Notions, the Doctrine of Christ was accompanied with the *highest* and *most compleat evidence*, according to *Both* the fore-mentioned *Methods* of judging : It was attended with the fullest Demonstrations of Divine Power, in the *Miracles* God worked by him ; And it had all real Marks of *Wisdom*, in its perfect Agreeableness to the Dictates of True and impartial *Reason* : *But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.* As to the *Jews* ; (who, in judging of the Truth of any Doctrine, always insisted principally upon *Proofs* or *Tokens* of the Teacher's *Authority*, upon *Signs* or *Evidences* of his being *sent from God*;) To the *Jews*, I say, The numerous particular and distinct *Prophecies* which were fulfilled in the Person of our Saviour, and in Him Only ; besides all such as were typical, and had any Ambiguity

S E R M. XII.  biguity in them : And the *Miracles* which he worked during the Course of his Ministry, nothing inferiour nor less conspicuous than those by which *Moses* of old proved the Truth of his Commission ; These were *abundant Evidence*, in their *Own way* ; Evidence, to Them, who *required a Sign*, than which no greater Sign could possibly be given, of the immediate interposition of the *Power of God*. For whereas our Lord's coming in a *mean Estate*, was so great a *Stumbling-block* to them ; and the principal *Sign* they expected, was his setting up a *temporal Kingdom* with Great *Power and Glory* : This, in Truth and Reality, would have been but a *small* manifestation of the Power of God, in comparison of that which has and will be shown forth by the *spiritual Kingdom* he has established. For how *poorly* would the great Promises of God made to *Abraham*, and the *Patriarchs*, and to good men in all Ages ; how *poorly*, and in how *low* a sense, would those Promises have been fulfilled to *Them*, barely by giving their *Posterity*,  
Many

Many Ages after *Their* Decease, a *tempo-* S E R M.  
*rary* Kingdom ; in comparison of That XII.  
 glorious accomplishment of them in  
 Christ's *spiritual* Kingdom, wherein *A-*  
*brahim*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and all the  
 faithful Servants of God who have lived  
 in all Ages, shall *themselves literally* and  
*personally* inherit the Promises. Upon  
 which account, the Apostle to the *He-*  
*brews* elegantly observes ; *Heb. xi. 16 :*  
*Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called*  
*Their God ; For he hath prepared for Them,*  
 (not for their *Posterity* only, when they  
 themselves were to be no more ; but) *for*  
*Them hath he prepared a City.* On the  
 Other hand, as to the *Gentiles*, who af-  
 fected to depend entirely on *Reason and*  
*Arguments* ; the Gospel, though it despi-  
 sed the Vanity of *Oratory*, and chose not  
 to recommend itself in the set Forms of  
 artificial and perplexing *Disputation* ; (for  
 which cause it seemed *Foolishness* to con-  
 ceited Philosophers ; ) yet in point of *True*  
*Reason, Wisdom and Goodness*, it approved  
 itself to be a Doctrine in all Respects  
 Excellent, and truly worthy of God :  
 Christ,

S E R M. *Christ, the Wisdom, as well as the Power,*  
 XII. of God. By the *Gospel*, All the Great  
 ~~~~~ Truths of Natural Religion, discoverable  
 by Reason and Argumentation ; the Being  
 and Attributes, the Government and Pro-  
 vidence of God, the Unalterableness of  
 Moral Obligations, the Immortality of the  
 Soul, and the Expectation of future Re-  
 wards and Punishments ; all these Great  
 Truths (I say) discoverable in good mea-  
 sure by Argumentation and Reason, were  
 by the *Gospel* more plainly and expressly  
 revealed, more distinctly and clearly ex-  
 plained, more strongly and powerfully  
 enforced. And the *additional* Revelation,  
 of *Christ's* being appointed an *Intercessour*  
 for penitent Sinners, and the *Judge* of  
 the World ; was an advantageous confir-  
 mation of all the same Truths, and a  
 most wise and proper encouragement to  
 the practice of Virtue. By This means,  
 a well-attested Interposition of Divine  
*Authority*, became unto All men a just  
 ground of Assent to those Truths, which  
 to make out by the Help of Reason only,  
 was a Work of Difficulty, Time, and  
 Study.



Study. By This means, Instruction in S E R M.  
matters of Religion became very *short* XII.  
and *easy*, even to the Meanest Capacities. 

And whereas the *Best and Greatest Philosophers* were in continual Disputes, and in many degrees of Uncertainty, concerning the very fundamental and most important Doctrines of Truth and Reason; Among those, on the contrary, who have embraced the Gospel of *Christ*, there never was the least room for Dispute about Any *Fundamental*; All Christians, at all Times, and in all Places, having ever been baptized into the Profession of the Same *Faith*, and into an Obligation to obey the Same *Commandments*. And it being notorious, that all the Contentions that ever arose in the Christian World, have been merely about the several *Additions*, which every Sect or Party, in direct contradiction to the express Command of their Master, have endeavoured presumptuously to annex, by their *Own* Authority, to *His* Doctrines, and to *His* Laws. How *much* therefore, and how *just* ground soever, has been given

S E R M. by those who Call *themselves Christians*,  
 XII. to the Reproach of *Them which are with-*  
 out ; yet *Christ himself*, that is, the Go-  
 spel in its native Simplicity as delivered  
 by *Him*, has abundantly, to all *Reasonable*  
 persons among the *Gentiles*, manifested  
 itself to be the *Wisdom* of God ; as well  
 as it appeared to be the *Power* of God,  
 in Signs and Wonders unto the *Jews*.  
*Unto them which are called, both Jews*  
*and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and*  
*the Wisdom of God.*

II. T H E Words and Doctrine of the  
 Text being thus largely explained, it re-  
 mains that I conclude with drawing two  
 or three useful Inferences from what has  
 been said.

A N D 1<sup>st</sup>, From hence it appears, how  
 Foolish it is to endeavour, as some have  
 done, to oppose *Reason* and *Revelation* to  
 each other. For *both* of them, are the  
 glorious Gifts of God ; and *Each* of them  
 establishes and confirms the Other. The  
 Quibbling indeed, and vain Methods of  
 Disputing, among the greater part of the  
 Heathen Philosophers ; were only *Sha-*  
*dows*



*dows of Reasoning*, falsely so called. But *True Reason*, is the Great Glory of Humane Nature : And upon account of the *Gospel's* Agreeableness to *This*, it is, that the Apostle in the Text gives it that High Character, of being the *Wisdom* as well as the *Power* of God. To imagine *Reason* and *Revelation* at variance with each other, is the like absurdity, as supposing the *Eye* to see contrary to what the *Ear* hears, or that God should make *One* Sense, or Faculty, to contradict *another*. Vain men may poorly and weakly fancy, that they can sometimes promote *One* Truth at the Expence of *Another* : But the Works of *God*, are uniform and consistent, of a piece from *One* end to the other : And what our Saviour says concerning *Persons*, acting wisely and usefully in *different* ways ; that *Wisdom* is justified of *All* her Children ; may equally be applied to *Things* likewise, that *Wisdom* is justified in *All* her Dispensations.

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2dly, I F the *Power and Authority*, as well as the *Wisdom* of God ; that is, if *Divine Revelation*, as well as *argumentative Proof* ; be a just Ground of Assent, or Evidence of Truth : Then ought we always to take great heed, least at any time we *weaken* the Strength of that Authority, by blending things of *Humane* invention with those whose Institution is *Divine*. For whereas weak men think, by means of such confusion, to *strengthen* their *Own* Authority with the mixture of *Divine* ; the Real Effect, on the contrary, always is, that the things of *Divine Authority* are insensibly *weakned*, by being made less distinguishable from what is merely *Humane*.

3dly and lastly, F R O M the manner in which *Christ* is here called *The Wisdom* and *The Power* of God, we may learn rightly to understand *Other* the like figurative expressions frequently found in Scripture. For as *Christ* is here stiled the *Wisdom* of God, because his Gospel is agreeable to *True Reason* ; and the *Power* of  
of

of God, because his Doctrine was confirmed by mighty *Works and Miracles*: So, in Other places, he is stiled The *Word of God*, because he is the *Revealer* of his Will to Men; and he is the *Way*, the *Door*, the *Truth* and the *Life*, because he has distinctly made known to us the Terms and Means of Salvation. And by the like figure of speech, the Sacramental Bread and Wine is stiled the *Body and Blood of Christ*, because it is a Solemn commemoration of his Death. And *Christians* are by the Apostle said to be the *Circumcision made without hands*, because they *spiritually* are, what the *Jews* were *typically* by *Circumcision* which was *literal*. And *Praise* or *Thanksgiving* has the name of *Sacrifice* given to it, because it is a Signification of the same Temper and Disposition of Mind, which *Sacrifices* were intended to express, and which alone made those *Sacrifices* acceptable before God. With many other the like Instances: In which, a careful consideration of the

S E R M.  
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S E R M. ground and reason of the Manner of  
XII. Expression, may easily prevent Great  
Misunderstandings of Many Passages in  
Scripture.





# SERMON XIII.

Of the Resurrection of CHRIST.

[*Preached on Easter-Day.*]



I C O R. XV. 14.

*And if Christ be not risen, then is our  
Preaching vain, and your Faith also is  
vain.*



THE great Foundation of our S E R M.  
Hope of Immortality, is the XIII.  
Revelation of the Gospel ;  
and the great Evidence of  
the Truth of that Revelati-  
on, is the Resurrection of Christ. With-  
out the Revelation of the Gospel, our  
Hope of Immortality, according to mens

U 4 different

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different Abilities in philosophical Speculations, had continued disputable; and, without the Resurrection of Christ, the Proofs of the Truth of the Gospel-Revelation had been finally frustrated. As therefore the Truth of the Christian Revelation, is of the greatest importance to mens Souls, *in the whole*; so the Proof of the Resurrection of Christ, is of the greatest importance towards securing the Certainty of that Revelation, *in particular*. By the Light of *Nature*, the Being and Attributes of God, were certain and demonstrable; the Probability of a Future State, was great and undeniable; the Expectation of God's dealing mercifully with penitent Sinners, was reasonable and hopeful. But by the Revelation of the *Gospel* only, was this great Hope *secured* to us; the Pardon of Sin declared *authentickly*, by the Authority of God; Life and Immortality brought to light by *Testimony*, as well as by rational Arguments; the Rewards and Punishments of Eternity, *distinctly* set forth; and the particular Method



Method of the final Judgement, *affectionately* represented to us. S E R M.  
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IN like manner, as to the *Evidence* of the *Truth* of This Revelation; By the Prophecies of the Old Testament, it was long before predicted; By the reasonableness of the Doctrine itself, it was made very credible; By the Witness of our Lord and his Apostles, it was strongly attested; By the conviction and silencing of its Adversaries, it was confirmed and established; By many Signs and Wonders and mighty Works done by Christ in his Life, it was *for the present* proved beyond contradiction; But by this *last* Evidence only, by the *Resurrection of our Lord from the Dead*, was it for ever ascertained to all generations. For had this *last* Proof failed, all the rest must in course have fallen with it. The Prophecies would have appeared wonderful, but never fulfilled; The Doctrine would have continued reasonable, but its Author perished; The Miracles of his Life would have remained astonishing, but still confuted by his Death; His *Enemies* would have continued

S E R M. tinued to insult him, as did the *Jews* ;  
 XIII. *he saved others, himself he could not save :*

And his *Friends*, that loved his Doctrine, and hoped for the Salvation of God, could *but* have joined with his desponding Disciples ; *we* trusted it *had been he* which should have redeemed *Israel*. In a word, as St Paul expresses it in the Text, had *not Christ risen* again, then had *our whole Preaching been vain, and your Faith also in vain.*

T H E Resurrection of Christ therefore, being a Fact of so great importance, on which the Evidence of the Truth of the *whole* Revelation finally depended ; it was necessary, in the Wisdom of Providence, and in the Reason of Things, that the Proof of this great Fact should be made unanswerably strong. In the following Discourse therefore, I shall 1<sup>st</sup> endeavour to set before you briefly, and in one view, the particulars of that great and singular Care, which was taken to make the *Proof* of the Fact undeniable, that our Saviour *did really rise* from the Dead. 2<sup>dly</sup>, I shall consider what were the *Effects* of This his Resur-

Resurrection, with respect to *Christ himself*; and 3dly, what were the Effects of it with regard to *Us*. SERM.  
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First, As to the extraordinary Care that was taken, to make the *Proof* of the Fact itself undeniable, that our Saviour *did really* rise from the Dead; there was (1st,) in the *first* place Notice given of it *antecedently*, by the Prophecies of the Old Testament delivered long before. *Pf. xvi. 10; Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell*, that is, in the State of the Dead; *neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see Corruption*. That This was an exprefs Prediction of our Saviour's Resurrection; the Apostles, in their application of it in the Book of the *Acts*, show by the following Argument. The words thus spoken by *David*, must of necessity be meant, either of *Himself*, or of some *Other Person*. Of *Himself*, they could not literally be meant, because it was not *true* that *He* was raised before he saw corruption. And if they were meant of any *other Person*, the *Jews themselves* (notwithstanding all their Prejudices) would readily acknowledge

S E R M. knowledge, that That *other Person* so  
 XIII. mentioned by way of Eminence, could,  
 according to the Analogy of the Prophe-  
 tick writings, be *no other* than the Messiah.  
 This Argument is strongly urged by St.  
*Peter* ; Acts ii, 29 ; *Men and Brethren, let  
 me freely speak unto you of the Patriarch  
 David, that he is both dead and buried,  
 and his Sepulchre is with us unto this day ;  
 That is, He did certainly see corruption :  
 But being a Prophet, and knowing that  
 God had sworn with an Oath to him, that  
 of the fruit of his Loins according to the  
 Flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his  
 throne ; He, seeing This before, spake of  
 the Resurrection of Christ, that his Soul  
 was not left in Hell, nor his flesh did see  
 corruption. And by St Paul in the same  
 book ; ch. xiii. 36 ; David (says he,) after  
 he had served his own generation by the will  
 of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his  
 Fathers, and saw corruption : But he  
 whom God raised again, saw no corrup-  
 tion : Therefore these words of the  
 Psalmist, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy  
 One to see corruption, were spoken, not  
 of*

of *David* himself, but of the Resurrec-  
tion of Christ. After This, and other  
antient Prophecies ; there were, (*2dly*,) in  
the *next* place plain Notifications given  
by our *Lord himself*, to his Disciples be-  
fore his Suffering ; that they should *ex-*  
*pect* his Rising from the Dead. And be-  
cause it was a matter of the *greatest Im-*  
*portance*, he therefore *repeated* This Ad-  
monition to them several times. First,  
*before* his Transfiguration ; (Matt. xvi. 21 ;) *From that time forth* began *Jesus* to show  
unto his Disciples, *how that he must-----*  
*suffer many things,-----and be killed,*  
*and be raised again the third day.* Then  
again, *after* his Transfiguration ; (ch. xvii.  
9 ;) *As they came down from the Mountain,*  
*Jesus charged them to tell no man the vision,*  
*till the Son of man be risen again from the*  
*dead.* Again, at his *last* going up to Je-  
rusalem ; (ch. xx. 17 ;) *he took the twelve*  
*disciples apart in the way, and said unto*  
*them.----The Son of man shall be betrayed*  
*unto the chief Priests,----and they shall con-*  
*demn him to death,----and the third day he*  
*shall rise again.* Besides which plain ad-  
monitions

S E R M. monitions to his *Disciples*, he gave some  
 XIII. obscure Hints of it to the *whole People*  
 also ; when, upon the *Jews* requiring of him a Sign, at one time he said unto them, (Joh. ii. 19 ;) *Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up* : and at another time ; (Matt. xii. 39 ;) *To an evil and adulterous generation, there shall no Sign be given, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas* : For as *Jonas* was three days and three nights in the *Whale's belly*, so shall the *Son of Man* be three days and three nights in the *Heart of the Earth*. The Design and Use of which Predictions, though not at all understood at the time they were spoken, is declared to us by the Evangelist ; Joh. ii. 22 ; *When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them ; and they believed the Scripture, and the word that Jesus had said*. And, Luke xxiv. 6 ; *Remember*, said the Angel to the persons which came first to the Sepulchre, *Remember how he spake unto you,---saying, the Son of Man must be delivered into the Hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and*  
 the

*the third day rise again ; And they remembered his words. Further ; (3dly,) in order to make the Proof of his Resurrection still more evident, the Place and Manner and Circumstances of his Burial, were by Providence directed to be particularly remarkable. Mark xv. 42 ; Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable Counsellor, begged his Body, and wrapped it in fine linnen, and laid it in his own Sepulchre ; And this in the presence of several of Jesus's Followers ; who thereupon resolving to come and embalm him, were providentially directed to become Witnesses of many Circumstances attending his Resurrection. Lastly, The Method which his Adversaries themselves took, to find evidence (as they thought) of the Imposture ; making the Sepulchre sure, sealing the Stone, and setting a Watch ; (Matt. xxvii. 66 ; ) was by Providence designed on the contrary, to become a strong Proof of the Truth of his Resurrection ; taking away all pretence or possibility of that plausible Objection, that his Disciples came by Night and stole him away.*

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SERM. THESE are the principal Instances, of  
 XIII. the Care that was taken in the Circum-  
 ~~~~~ stances *going before* our Lord's Resurrection, to render the Proof of the Fact certain and undeniable. *After* his Rising again, the accumulative Evidence of the Truth of his being risen, is much greater, not only than what Unbelievers, but even than Believers themselves, without putting *together* the numerous Circumstances recorded in different places of Scripture, can easily imagine. (1<sup>st</sup>,) In the *first* place, an *Earthquake* terrified the *Watch*, and the Appearance of an *Angel* made them become as dead men; Matt. xxviii. 2. Then, (2<sup>dly</sup>,) the persons who came with a design to *embalm* the Body, saw likewise an Angel, and were told by him that their Lord was risen from the Dead; ver. 6. Immediately after this, *Jesus himself* appeared to them, and comforted them; ver. 9. To which St *John* adds this particular circumstance, ch. xx. 17; that when one of them embraced his *Feet*, rejoicing and worshipping him upon his Discovering himself who he was, he said  
 unto



unto her, *Touch me not, for I am not yet* S E R M.  
*ascended to my Father.* Which words XIII.  
 most Interpreters so understand, as if they  
 signified, *Do not detain me Now, as if*  
*you thought I was immediately leaving you ;*  
*For I shall continue with you some time,*  
*and am not presently ascending to my Fa-*  
*ther.* But I think the truer meaning of  
 them is, *Do not expect I should continue*  
*with you Now ; for it is expedient and ne-*  
*cessary, that I first ascend to my Father.*  
 And therefore he adds in the very next  
 words ; *But go to my brethren, and say*  
*unto them, I ascend to my Father and your*  
*Father, to my God and your God.* Tell  
 them, *that I am risen from the Dead, ne-*  
*ver to die any more ; that I am about to*  
*return to my Father and your Father, to*  
*my God and your God, to receive full Pow-*  
*er over all things both in Heaven and*  
*Earth, and to prepare a place for you ;*  
*and Then, where I am, there shall ye be also.*  
 After This, (3dly,) he appeared to Two of  
 his Disciples going to *Emmaus ;* Luk. xxiv.  
 13, and talked with them, and *expounded*  
*unto them in all the Scriptures the things*

S E R M. concerning himself. Then again (4thly,) he showed himself to *Peter* alone, ver. 34; and I Cor. xv. 5. Then (5thly,) to St *James*, ver. 7. After That, (6thly) to *Seven* of the Apostles together; *Joh.* xxi. 2. Then (7thly,) to *Ten* of Them, *Thomas* only being absent, *Joh.* xx. 19. And, (8thly) a week after, to *all the Eleven*; ver. 26. *Thomas* being present with them; whose doubting Faith he vouchsafed to confirm, by suffering him to handle him; yet at the same time pronouncing a greater Blessing upon those who should *not see*, and yet would *believe*; Not that *Credulity* or *Believing without reason*, is in any case commendable; but, that believing, upon reasonable and good evidence, things not obvious to Sense; such as are the Being of the *Invisible* God, the Rewards and Punishments of a future State which now are likewise *invisible*, and the Coming of our Saviour to Judgment, though he does not presently appear; are the most valuable Acts of Religious Faith and Dependance upon God. *Lastly*, After these several more *private* appearances of our Lord to his Apostles,

*he was seen (saith St Paul) of above five hundred brethren at once; 1 Cor. xv. 6: of whom though some were fallen asleep, yet the greater part remained alive unto that present time, when St Paul wrote this epistle to the Corinthians. And in This manner continued he for forty days together, showing himself alive after his passion by many infallible Proofs, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God; Acts i. 3. After which, at mid-day, in the presence of all the Apostles, he was taken up from them visibly into Heaven; ver. 9. And they were told by Angels, ver. 11, what he also himself had before told them in his Lifetime, that in like manner as they saw him go into Heaven, so from thence likewise should they see him come, at the end of the World, with Power and great Glory, even in the Glory of his Father, and all his Holy Angels with him, to judge the Quick and Dead with a righteous and unerring Sentence, rendering to every man impartially according to his Works. Put all This Evidence now together, and let*

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S E R M. it be considered fairly in one View ; E-  
 XIII. vidence given by so many different *Per-*  
 sons, repeated at so many different *Times*,  
 diversified with such variety of *circum-*  
*stances*, yet all agreeing in such a perfect  
 Uniformity as to the *Thing itself*. And  
 was there ever more undeniable Proof  
 given, of any matter of Fact in the  
 World? Nevertheless, after All This, he  
 appeared again to St *Stephen*: Acts vii. 55.  
 Acts ix. 3. And again to St *Paul*, as he himself testi-  
 fies, 1 Cor. ix. 8. *Last of all* (says he)  
 Gal. i. 15. *he was seen of Me also, as of one born out*  
*of due Time*. Besides all which *Cloud of*  
*Eye-witnesses*, the Truth of our Lord's  
 Resurrection continued moreover to be  
 proved, by the *Miracles* which the *Apo-*  
*stles* worked in his Name; *i. e.* through his  
 Power and Authority; Also by the *Pro-*  
*phesies* he himself delivered, both before  
 and after his Suffering; The gradual ful-  
 filling of which Prophecies in all succeed-  
 ing times, has been and is a standing  
 Proof of our Lord's being truly risen,  
 and that he is invested with all Power,  
 to accomplish whatever he has foretold.

He

He clearly predicted, in the fullest and S E R M.  
most distinct manner, the Destruction of XIII.  
*Jerusalem*, and the Desolation of the  
whole *Jewish* Nation: Which Nation  
should yet nevertheless continue in Be-  
ing (as we see in fact it does at this day,)  
*till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*;  
Luk. xxi. 24. He foretold, that his Dis-  
ciples should be hated both by *Jews* and  
*Gentiles*, and persecuted from one City to  
another. That nevertheless their Doc-  
trine should spread over the whole Earth,  
and, by the mere Force of Truth and  
Reason, of Goodness and Charity, should  
prevail over all the Violence, and be  
established against all the Opposition of  
humane Authority. That after having  
so prevailed over all *outward* Enemies, it  
should, by an unaccountable corruption  
within *itself*, be over-run with almost a  
total Apostacy; the Power and Authority  
of *Men*, taking upon themselves to sit in  
the Seat of *God*; and compelling all men  
by Force and Violence, to submit to  
Doctrines of their own Invention; and  
turning Christ's Religion of Peace and

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Love, of Meekness and Charity, into a worldly Religion of Dominion and Power, of Contentiousness, Hatred and Oppression. All which predictions having been already exactly and particularly fulfilled, in the plainest and most remarkable manner; give abundant reason to expect, that what still remains, shall likewise in its time be no less punctually accomplished. That when the just pleasure of God has been performed, and the Christian World shall for its great Corruptions have been justly punished by those Corruptions themselves; at length the Kingdoms of the Earth, shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and men leaving off to contend about their own vain Notions and unreasonable Pretences of Power and Dominion, shall agree in the original Simplicity of that pure and undefiled Religion, the Sum of which, our Lord himself tells us, consists in *loving the Lord our God with all our Heart, and our Neighbours as ourselves.*

THE Truth of our Lord's Resurrection being thus *attested* by such a Multitude

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tude of *Witnesses*, and *confirmed* by such a Number of consequent *Facts*, that it is hardly possible the first Preachers of his Doctrine should either Themselves have been deceived, or be Deceivers of Others; we may now easily Answer that obvious Objection, suggested *Acts* x. 40: *why* Christ after his Resurrection *showed himself openly, not to all the people, but unto Witnesses only, chosen before of God.* And the Reason hereof is the same, as why in all other cases God does not all that he is *able* to do, but all that is *fit and right* for him to do. There is in every *Means*, a certain *Fitmess and Proportion* to the *End* it leads to; wherewith if Men will not be satisfied, there are no limits to unreasonable expectations, and no bounds where groundless imaginations may stop. The Wisdom of God provided as many unquestionable Witnesses of the Resurrection of Christ, as the Nature of the Thing required; as was sufficient, to make the Fact uncontestable; as was satisfactory, to any reasonable and unprejudiced person. To work *more* miracles

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S E R M. for the sake of obstinate and vicious Unbelievers, God was not obliged. And, if he *had* done it, the Objection would still have increased without End. For if it was not sufficient, that Christ showed himself openly to a *Number of Witnesses*; but it had been necessary that he should appear personally to the *whole City of Jerusalem*; for the same Reason it might be fancied necessary, that he should have shown himself also to the whole *Jewish Nation*: and for the same Reason, to all other *Nations* likewise; and to These, in *Every Age of the World*, as well as in *One Age*; and that, to *every single Person*, if one miraculous appearance was not sufficient, he might have shown himself *oftner* and with *more* miraculous circumstances; and so on, without End. Which shows plainly the Unreasonableness of all *Such Expectations*; when men are not satisfied with that Evidence which is fit and sufficient in its kind.

I SHALL conclude This Head, concerning the *Evidence of the Fact* of Christ's being risen from the Dead, with



only One Observation about the *Manner* S E R M. XIII.  
of his Rising. Which is, that in more than thirty passages of the New Testament, it is expressly affirmed that *God* raised up our Lord from the Dead, or that he was raised by the Power of the *Father*; and yet in two or three other places it is no less plainly asserted, that *Christ* raised up *himself*. Which different expressions might have seemed very difficult to be reconciled, but that our Saviour himself has in a most remarkable passage upon this Subject, (as it were *on purpose*,) explained them to us with the greatest accuracy and exact distinctness: *Joh. x. 18; No man, saith he, taketh my Life from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again; This Commandment, (that is, This Commission, This Power,) have I received of my Father. I* proceed Now in the

II<sup>d</sup> place, To consider what were the *Effects* of Christ's Resurrection, with respect to our *Lord himself*. And they were, 1<sup>st</sup>, that thereby he was effectually,  
and

S E R M. and in a most convincing manner, declared to be *the Son of God*; Declared to be *the Son of God* with Power, saith St Paul, by the *Resurrection from the Dead*; Rom. i. 4. Infomuch that even those words of the Psalmist, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, are by the same Apostle, in his Sermon to the people of Antioch, applied to this very purpose; Acts xiii. 32; *The Promise which was made unto the Fathers, God has fulfilled* (says he) *unto Us their children, in that he has raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* Not that Christ Then began to be the *Son of God*, but that he was Then declared to be so, by a most powerful and effectual Proof; having loosed the pains of Death, and shown that it was not possible that he should be holden of it. 2dly; Another Effect of Christ's Resurrection, with regard to our Lord himself, was his being thereby declared the Judge of Quick and Dead: Acts x. 40, 42; *Him God raised up the third day,----- and commanded us-----to testify, that it is*

*He*

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He which was ordained of God to be the S E R M.  
Judge of Quick and Dead And ch. xvii. XIII.  
31; God hath appointed a day, in which he  
will judge the world in righteousness by  
that man whom he hath appointed, whereof  
he hath given assurance unto all men, in  
that he has raised him from the Dead.

IF it be here asked, the appointing a day of general Judgment, being a Truth of so great importance to Mankind; why then was it not declared *Sooner and Universally, in All Ages and to All People?* The true Answer (I think) is, that in the Whole, the *Rule of Righteousness* and the *great Expectation of a Judgment to come*, is in all Times and in all Places the same; And yet the several *Dispensations*, or *particular Methods and Degrees* of God's manifesting these Truths to Mankind, by the Light of *Nature and Reason*, by Revelations to the *Jews and Patriarchs*, and by the *Gospel of Christ*, are and may as justly be very different, as, in other Cases, it is lawful for God, the Author of All, to make people of different Capacities and in different Circumstances. And accordingly,  
what

S E R M. what God, when he comes to judgement  
 XIII. will *finally require* of Men under these different circumstances, will be proportionally different. For the Judge of the whole Earth, will do what is right, and with *Equity* shall he judge the Nations. *The Gospel* was preached before, says the Apostle, even in the days of *Abraham*, *Gal. iii. 8.* And even *the Gentiles*, which have not the Law revealed, are yet a Law unto themselves, *showing the work of the Law* written in their hearts, *Rom. ii. 14.* So that, upon the whole, *God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him:* For, not the Hearers of the Law are just before God, but the Doers of the Law shall be justified: ver. 13. And on the contrary, as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law,-----in the day when God shall judge the Secrets of Men by *Jesus Christ*; ver. 16.

ACTS x. 34.

I T remains that I proceed in the  
 III<sup>d</sup> and Last place, T O consider what  
 are the *Effects* of our Lord's Resurrection,  
 with

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with respect to Us. And they are; 1<sup>st</sup>, S E R M.  
our *Justification*. That is to say; The XIII.  
Resurrection of Christ from the dead, was  
on God's part a publick and authentick  
Declaration of his *accepting* the Sacrifice  
of the Death of Christ, as an Atonement  
for the Sins of All that truly repent. This  
is the Meaning of those Passages of *St*  
*Paul*, where he tells us, that *Christ was de-*  
*livered for our Offences, and raised again for*  
*our Justification*; Rom. iv. 25. That *We*,  
that is, *wicked men*, both among *Jews* and  
*Gentiles*, having been *dead in Sin*, that is,  
having been in a State of condemnation;  
*God*, who *raised Christ from the dead*, hath  
*quicken'd Us together with Him*, (has re-  
stored us to the hope of eternal life,) *ha-*  
*ving forgiven us all Trespases*; Col. ii. 13.  
And that, *if Christ be not raised*, we are  
*yet in our Sins*: 1 Cor. xv. 17; that is, if  
Christ be not risen, we have *Then* no evi-  
dence of *God's* having accepted Christ's  
Mediation for us; nor consequently of  
*our* being justified, or having our Repen-  
tance accepted; to such *degrees* and *Pur-*  
*poses* at least, as God has now declared that

it

S E R M. it shall be accepted through Faith in  
XIII. Him.



2dly, T H E *second* Effect of the Resurrection of Christ, with regard to *Us* ; is our *Sanctification* or *Regeneration* : That is, our rising from the death of Sin, unto a Life of Righteousness ; *Rom. vi. 4 : 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 ; That having been planted together in the likeness of his Death, we should be also in the likeness of his Resurrection.* The Meaning of the Apostle is ; that the Death and Resurrection of Christ, into which we are Baptized, and whereof Baptism is an Emblem, ought to be a perpetual obligation upon us, to rise from the Death of Sin unto the Spiritual Life of Righteousness and Holiness ; *Col. ii. 12, and iii. 1 ; Buried with him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him.---- If ye then (saith he) be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above ; For ye are dead, that is, dead to Sin, (as the same Apostle explains*

explains it; *Rom. vi. 2 :*) and your Life is *hid with Christ in God*. And what he means by That Phrase, *hid with Christ in God*, is explained in the next verse, *ch. iii. 3 :* *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

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FOR 3dly, The Third and Last Effect of the Resurrection of Christ, with respect to Us, is the Assurance of Our Resurrection likewise, unto Glorification; *1 Cor. xv. 20 :* *Now is Christ risen from the Dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.* And therefore This is constantly used by the Apostles, as a perpetual Argument of Consolation to good Christians; *1 Pet. i. 3 :* *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again into a lively hope, by the resurrection of (Jesus) Christ from the Dead :* *Rom. viii. 11 :* *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you ; he that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*

And

SERM. And i Th. iv. 14; *If we believe that Je-*  
 XIII. *sus died and rose again, even so Them al-*  
 ~~~~~ *so which sleep in Jesus will God bring with*  
*him.*

BLESSED and Happy are They, *who*  
*shall be thought worthy to obtain That*  
*Life, and the Resurrection from the Dead;*  
*For from thenceforth they shall be before*  
*the Throne of God, and shall serve him day*  
*and night in his Temple; And God shall*  
*wipe away all Tears from their Eyes; and*  
*there shall be no more Death, neither sor-*  
*row nor crying; neither shall there be any*  
*more pain: For the former things are pas-*  
*sed away.*







# SERMON XIV.

Of CHRIST'S Descent into Hell.

[*Preached on Easter-Day.*]



PSALM xvi. 9, 10.

*Wherefore my Heart was glad, and my glory rejoiced; my Flesh also shall rest in Hope. For why? Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell; neither shalt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.*



THE Afflictions and Calamities which fall upon Many men in this present State, are of such a nature, that, were it not for the Hopes which True Religion and the Knowledge of God affords, their only Comfort would


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S E R M. be That expectation of *Death*, which  
 XIV. *Job* thus elegantly expresses, ch. iii. 17;  
 ~~~~~ *There the wicked cease from troubling, and  
 there the Weary be at Rest: There the  
 Prisoners rest together, they hear not the  
 Voice of the Oppressour: The Small and  
 Great are There, and the Servant is free  
 from his Master. But True Religion af-  
 fords virtuous and good Men a very  
 different Prospect; and teaches them to  
 expect, that, if God does not think fit to  
 deliver them out of their Troubles Here,  
 (which yet he sometimes does in a very  
 extraordinary and unexpected Manner;) yet even the Grave itself puts not an end  
 to his Power of Redeeming them; but he  
 can and will raise them up again, to a fu-  
 ture and a better Life. So that they may  
 look upon *Death itself*, not barely as a  
 putting an end to their present Afflictions,  
 but as a Passage to a Glorious and  
 Immortal State. Wherefore my *Flesh* also,  
 says the Holy Psalmist, shall rest in Hope:  
 For why? Thou shalt not leave my Soul in  
 Hell; neither shalt thou suffer thy Holy  
 One to see corruption.*

THE *Psalm*, of which these words are a part, seems to have been written by *David* in the time of some particular *personal Calamity*. Ver. 1; *Preserve me, O God; for in thee have I put my Trust.* The Ground of This his Trust, he expresses to be his *Adherence to the True Religion*, in opposition to the *Idolatry* of the *Nations* about him: Ver. 4, 6; *They that run after another God, shall have great Trouble;----- but The Lord himself is the Portion of Mine inheritance, and of my Cup.* The particular affliction, which he here refers to, *whatsoever* it was; he acknowledges, proved *beneficial* to him, in *fixing* his Mind *more steddily* upon things relating to his *spiritual estate*: Ver. 8; *I will thank the Lord for giving me warning; my Reins also chasten me in the night-season: I have set God always before me; for he is on my right hand, therefore I shall not fall.* And then he adds, in the words of the *Text*, the *Comfort* arising to him from the *sense* of this *Improvement*: *Wherefore my Heart was glad, and my Glory rejoiced; my Flesh al-*

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S E R M. *so shall rest in Hope : For why ? Thou wilt*  
 XIV. *not leave my Soul in Hell ; neither shalt*  
 *thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.*

'T IS remarkable here, that the former part of these words ; *My Heart was glad, and my Glory rejoiced ;* are cited, Acts ii. 26 ; according to the Rendring of the LXX, *My Heart rejoiced, and my Tongue was glad.* Which not only, in other words, expresses the very same sense ; but shows us also *what* it is, that the Psalmist, in Other Passages, means by his Glory. Psal. xxx. 12 ; *To the end that my Glory, (that is, that my Tongue,) may sing Praise to thee, and not be silent.* And Psal. lvii. 9 ; *Awake up, my Glory ; awake, Lute and Harp ; I my self will awake right early : That is ; Both with my Voice, and with Instruments of Musick, will I sing Praise unto thee.*

The latter part of the words ; *My Flesh also shall rest in Hope : For why ? thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither shalt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption :* are by Many understand to be a highly figurative expression in the Psalmist,


mist, of his earnest expectation of a *literal* and *temporal* Deliverance from the Affliction he was at present under. In like manner as *St Paul*, speaking of his own Escape from a very dangerous Persecution, calls it a deliverance from a *great Death*; 2 Cor. i. 9; *We should not trust, says he, in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the Dead: Who delivered us from so great a Death, and doth deliver: In whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.* And so likewise Those remarkable Words of *Job*; ch. xix. 25; *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the Earth; And though, after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God; Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not Another, though my reins be consumed within me: Even These words, I say, are by some Interpreters understand as a Prediction, in highly figurative and prophetical expressions, of his Restoration to his Temporal Greatness and Prosperity. But as This is a very forced Sense of the words, and, if it were*

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S E R M. their *True Meaning*, would still be at  
 XIV. least the *borrowing of a Figure* from the  
 ~~~~~ Notion and Expectation of a *Resurrection*  
*from the Dead*; it is more *reasonable and*  
*natural* to understand them in that *ob-*  
*vious* and *literal* sense, wherein they are  
 clearly and plainly the Expression of a  
*better and more certain Hope*. And, for  
 the same reason, the words of *my Text*  
 likewise, if they are *at all* to be applied  
 to the *Psalmist himself*; may with a better  
 emphasis, and as a more assured Ground  
 of Hope, be understood to signify his ex-  
 pectation of a *Future State*, than of a  
*Temporal Deliverance*. But indeed, in  
 their *real and most proper* Sense, they are  
 not applicable to the *Psalmist himself*,  
 but to *Him* of whom *David* was both a  
*Prophet* and a *Type*; The *same Spirit* of  
 God, which through the *whole Period* of  
 the old Testament from the Beginning of  
 the World pointed perpetually to *Christ*  
 through an innumerable variety of *Types*  
 and *Prophecies*, *here likewise* directing  
 the inspired Penman to such Expressions,  
 as might be a *strict and literal* descrip-  
 tion

tion of the *Resurrection* of *Christ*, but could not with the same propriety be applied to *David*. Thus the Apostle observes, Acts xiii. 36 ; *David, after he had served his own generation by the Will of God, fell on Sleep, and was laid unto his Fathers, and saw corruption ; But he whom God raised again, saw no corruption.* And chap. ii. 29 ; *The Patriarch David is both dead and buried, and his Sepulchre is with us unto This day : Therefore being a Prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an Oath to him, that of the Fruit of his Loins, according to the Flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his Throne ; He, seeing this before, spake of the Resurrection of Christ, that his Soul was not left in Hell, neither his Flesh did see Corruption.* And it is remarkable, by the way ; that, as the fore-cited words of *Job*, which are much more emphatically descriptive of the *Resurrection of the Dead*, than of his *Restoration to his Temporal Prosperity* ; are, in order to excite our more particular Attention, introduced with That extraordinary and most solemn

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S E R M. exclamation, *Oh that my words were now*  
 XIV. *written, that they were printed in a Book !*  
 *that they were graven with an iron pen, and*  
*lead, in the Rock for ever !* so *This Psalm,*  
 which contains in it so *important* a Pro-  
 phesy of Christ, is distinguished by a  
 \* *Micktam* \* *Title* prefixed at the Head of it, which  
*in the Original* signifies a *Memorial en-*  
*graved* on Stone or Marble for perpetuity  
 of Ages.

B U T to proceed,

C O N C E R N I N G that *particularly re-*  
*markable* Phrase, *Thou shalt not leave my*  
*Soul in Hell* ; 'tis to be observed, that  
 though in our present language, the word  
*Hell*, in common Speech, does *Now* always  
 signify *The State of the Damned* ; yet in  
 This Text, it is evident, it cannot be un-  
 derstood in That signification. For, that  
*David* was not condemned to That Place  
 of Torment, is agreed on All hands : And  
 that *Christ*, of whom *David* was a *Type*  
*and Prophet*, did not, by *descending into*  
*Hell*, enter into the Place appointed for  
 the Final Punishment of the wicked, is  
 very evident both from *Scripture* and  
*Reason*.



IN the *Scriptures of the Old Testament*, SERM.  
XIV.  
 the word which we render *Hell*, frequently signifies only *The State of the Dead* in general. Thus *Pf. lxxxix. 47* ; according to the Translation in our *Common Prayer* ; *What man is he that liveth, and shall not see Death ; and shall he deliver his Soul from the hand of Hell ?* is, in our Translation in the *Bible*, *shall he deliver his Soul from the hand of the Grave ?* And what *Solomon* affirms, *Prov. xxvii. 20* ; that *Hell and Destruction are never full*, is plainly the very same in sense, with what in *ch. xxx. 15* ; is Thus expressed ; *There are three things that are never satisfied, yea four things say not, it is enough : The Grave, and so on.*


IN the *New Testament* ; the word, *Hell*, sometimes signifies the *Place appointed for the Final Punishment of the Wicked*, and at other times it denotes only *The State of the Dead* in general. But This ambiguity, is in our own language only, and not in the *Original* : For whenever the *Place of Torment* is spoken of, the word *Hell*, in the *Original*, is always *Gebennah* : But  
when

S E R M. when *only the State of the Dead in general*  
 XIV. is intended, 'tis always expressed by a quite  
 ~~~~~ different Name, which though *We* render by the same word *Hell*, yet its signification is *at large* The *Invisible State*. Thus when St James says, that the  
 Jam. iii. 6. *Tongue*, meaning a *wicked and profane* Tongue, is *a world of iniquity,----and setteth on Fire the course of Nature, and is set on Fire of Hell*: And when our Saviour says to the Pharisees, *Ye serpents, ye generation of Vipers, how can ye escape the Damnation of Hell?* and tells them, that when they have gained a *Profelyte*, they  
 Mat. xxiii. 33. *make him twofold more the child of Hell, than themselves*: And when he admonishes  
 ver. 15. his Disciples to *fear Him, who, after he has killed, is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell*; and warns them, that *who-soever shall say unto his Brother, Thou Fool, shall be in danger of Hell-Fire*; and advises them, *If thy right Eye offend thee, (that is, if the Desire of any thing as dear to thee as thy Eyes, be in danger to draw thee into Sin,) pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that*  
 Matt. v. 22, and ver. 29. *one*

*one of thy Members should perish, and not* S E R M.  
*that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell:* XIV.

In all *These* Passages, I say, the word *Hell* is, in the Original, *Gehennah*; which always signifies *The State of the Damned*. But in *Other* Places, where we, in our Rendring, still make use of the *same* word, *Hell*; the Original has a *very different* <sup>'Ad 75.</sup> word, which signifies only *The Invisible State*, or the *State of the Dead* in general. Thus *Matt. xi. 23*; *Thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell*; The Meaning is; That Great and Proud City should be levelled with the Dust, and disappear utterly as Those who have been long buried in the Grave. Again: When the Rich man *in Hell, lift up his eyes, being in Torments*, *Luke xvi. 23*; the word in the Original denotes *at large* That *Invisible State* of the Dead in general, wherein were both *Abraham and Lazarus in his Bosom*, (and the *Paradise* wherein the *Penitent Thief* was to be *with* our Saviour,) as well as the *Souls of the Wicked* in their *Torments*. Again: When our Lord promises; *Matt.*  
xvi,

S E R M. XVI. 18 ; that *the Gates of Hell should*  
 XIV. *not prevail against his Church ; the*  
 \* words, (*Gates of Hell,*) properly and  
 strictly rendred, signifie *The Passage to*  
*the Invisible State, that is, Death : And*  
 the Sense of his Promise is, that even  
*Death itself,* (which is the utmost Ex-  
 tent of all Persecution from *those who*  
*kill the Body, and, after That, have no*  
*more that they can do,*) should never be  
 able to suppress his Doctrine, and extin-  
 guish his Religion in the World. Lastly ;  
 When 'tis declared in the Prophecy con-  
 cerning the end of the World ; Rev. xx.  
 13 and 14 ; that *Death and Hell delivered*  
*up the Dead which were in Them ; and*  
*that, after the Judgement, Death and Hell*  
*were cast into the Lake of Fire ; 'tis very*  
 evident, that *Hell* in These Passages can-  
 not possibly signify *The State of the*  
*Damned ; but That State of departed Souls*  
*in general,* from whence All shall be sum-  
 moned at the Great Day of Accounts ;  
 and which *State of Death, or Death it-*  
*self,* after the final Judgement, shall be no  
 more. And thus therefore likewise in the  
 words

words of *my Text*, as they are cited out S E R M. of the *Psalms* by the Apostle St Peter, XIV. *Acts* ii. 27; *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in*  Hell; the True and complete sense is plainly This; *Thou wilt not relinquish me, thou wilt not suffer me to continue, in the State of the Dead; but wilt certainly raise me up again, at thy appointed time.*

FROM This explication of *all the Texts* relating to This matter, 'tis very clear that the *Scriptures* no where teach, that our Lord, by *descending into Hell*, ever entred into the Place appointed for the Final Punishment of the Wicked. Nor is there any thing in *Reason*, from whence it can by any just *Consequence* be *inferred*, that it was at all requisite for him so to do.

IT has been conceived by *Some*, that it was needful for our Lord to go down into the place of Torment, in order to render his *Satisfaction* complete, by undergoing himself the very same Sufferings, which were due to Those for whom he made Satisfaction. But This notion is founded entirely upon a Mistake. For the Satisfaction of Christ, does not depend upon the  
Same

S E R M. *Sameness of the Sufferings*, but upon the  
 XIV. *good pleasure of God* who ruleth over all;  
 ~~~~~ who has been pleased to declare himself  
 appeased by the voluntary condescension  
 and Sufferings of our Lord, as a sufficient  
 Vindication of his Supreme Authority;  
 so that he can, upon the Merit of That  
 Sacrifice, consistently with the Honour  
 and Dignity of his Laws, accept the *Re-*  
*pentance* and *Amendment* of returning Sin-  
 ners, and *Freely* forgive them their past Sins.  
 But, besides This, Neither was it indeed  
*possible* in the Nature of Things, that our  
 Lord should *at all* undergo the Torments  
 of the Wicked. For the Sting of *their*  
 Punishment is the *Worm that never dieth*,  
 and an endless *Despair of the Favour of*  
*God*; Which are things altogether impos-  
 sible to have fallen upon *Him*.

O T H E R S therefore have fancied, that  
 our Lord descended into *Hell*, not indeed to  
*suffer* any thing there *himself*, but to *deli-*  
*ver Others* out of That Place of Torment.  
 But *This* also is plainly an erroneous opi-  
 nion. For since the Scripture every where  
 teaches, that *as the Tree falleth, so it shall*  
*lie*;

lie ; and that, for those who die impenitent S E R M.  
and unreformed, there is no Redemption ; XIV.  
'tis certain the *Wicked*, when once con-  
demned, are no more capable of being  
delivered at all. And as to *Virtuous* and  
*Good* men ; it is no less certain that *the*  
*Souls of the righteous are in the hand of*  
*God, and there shall no Torment touch them.*  
They are in Scripture represented as being  
in *Paradise* ; or in *Abraham's Bosom* ;  
but never as being in the *place of Tor-*  
*ment* at all.

L A S T L Y, therefore, it has been sup-  
posed by *Others*, that Christ descended in-  
to the place appointed for the final Pu-  
nishment of the *Wicked*, to *triumph* There  
over *Satan* in his *own Kingdom*. But nei-  
ther is This opinion, in any wise, agree-  
able to Scripture. For the Devil and his  
Angels are not yet confined to the Pit of  
Destruction, before the day of Judgement.  
And if they were, yet *That* is *not* their  
*Kingdom*, but their Place of *Punishment*.  
The *Kingdom* of the *Devil*, is the Preva-  
lency and Dominion of *Sin* in *this World* :  
And here Christ *triumphs* over him, by  
con-

S E R M. converting men from their Sins and De-  
 XIV. baucheries, from their Unrighteousness  
 and Iniquities, which are the *Works of the Devil*; to the Practice of Virtue, Justice, Goodness, Temperance, Charity and Truth, which are the establishment of the *Kingdom of God* upon Earth.

U P O N the *Whole* therefore, there is no sufficient Foundation, either in the *Reason* of the *Thing*, or in the *Declarations* of *Scripture*, to suppose that our Lord ever descended at all into the *Place of Torment*, into the place appointed for the final Punishment of the Wicked. But the Full Meaning, both of those words in my *Text*, *Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell*; and of all the *Other* Passages in *Scripture*, relating to That matter; is, that our Lord continued in the *State of the Dead*, in the *Invisible State of departed Souls*, during the Time appointed; but that, it not being possible for him to be holden of Death he was raised again without seeing corruption.

T H E natural Inference from which Doctrine, both of our Lord's overcoming  
 Death,



Death, and of *good mens* being assured S E R M.  
 consequently that *They* shall overcome it XIV.  
 also ; is *That Hope* and *Comfort* to virtu-  
 ous and religious Minds under all *Tempo-*  
*ral afflictions* whatsoever, of which the  
 Psalmist expresses his Sense in the words  
 whereof my Text are a part. *I have set*  
*the Lord always before me ; because he is*  
*at my right hand, I shall not be moved.*  
*Therefore my Heart is glad, and my Glory*  
*rejoiceth ; my Flesh also shall rest in Hope.*  
*For thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell,*  
*neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to*  
*see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path*  
*of Life ; In thy presence is Fulness of Joy,*  
*at thy right hand are Pleasures for ever-*  
*more.*

THE *Resurrection of Christ*, is the  
 Great *Evidence* of the Truth of his *Doc-*  
*trine*. And a *Principal Part* of his *Doc-*  
*trine*, is, the *bringing Life and Immor-*  
*tality to Light* ; or, the giving us an Assu-  
 rance, that, as *Christ* is *risen* from the  
 Dead, so *We* also, if we imitate him in  
 the Obedience of his Life, shall, after  
 Death, rise with him unto Glory. The

S E R M. Condition and Circumstances of this present transitory Life are such, that, without the expectation of a future and a better State, the Satisfactions of *Life* are very uncertain and precarious, and in *Death* there is no foundation of Hope. They who enjoy the *Greatest Affluence* of the Good things of this present time, yet have them mixed with so many Interruptions, with so many Fears, with so many Anxieties and Vexations of Life, if in *These things alone* their Prospect of Happiness is terminated; that, upon the Whole, it can hardly be said, that their *Pleasures compensate* for their *Uneasinesses*: But with regard to *far the greatest part* of Mankind; what St Paul affirms concerning *Christians in particular*, that, *if in This life only* they have Hope, they are of all Men the most miserable; may, with equal Truth, be asserted generally concerning Men; if in *This life only* they have Hope, they are of All *Creatures* the most miserable. The wisest and best men therefore, even in the *Heathen* World, have, in All Ages and in All Nations, from the consideration of the

*Natural reason of Things*, from their *Idea* S E R M.  
of the *Attributes* and *Perfections* of God, XIV.  
and from the *unequal Distribution* of things  
in the *present* Life; justly and strongly argued themselves into a Belief and Expectation of a *Future* and a *Better* State. They argued, that nothing can be imagined more vain and empty, nothing more void of all Marks of Wisdom, than the Fabrick of the World and the Creation of Mankind; if all This was done without any further Design, than only for the maintaining a perpetual Succession of such short-lived Generations of Mortals, as we at present are; to live in the utmost Confusion and Disorder for a very few Years, and then Perish eternally into Nothing. They argued, that, since This *could not rationally* be the case, there *must* consequently be a *Future State*. And if so; then the Calamities and Afflictions, which in This World often fall upon the Best of men, cannot but be intended some way for their Benefit, if not *Here*, yet certainly *Hereafter*.

SERM. THE *Patriarchs* of old, who, besides  
 XIV. *this general Light of Nature*, had more-  
 over some *particular* Manifestations of  
 God, carried this matter still further :  
 And though Life and Immortality was not  
*completely* revealed to them, yet from the  
*Manner* of God's dealing with them they  
 assuredly gathered, that his Promises did  
 not terminate in 'This Mortal Life. Ac-  
 cordingly, they *so* behaved themselves in  
 this *present World*, as showed plainly that  
 they sought a *better country*, *that is, an*  
*heavenly*; *Looking for a City which hath*  
*foundations, whose Builder and Maker is*  
*God*. They endured by Faith, *as seeing*  
*Him who is Invisible*; and often were tor-  
 tured, *not accepting Deliverance, that they*  
*might obtain a better Resurrection*. Saying  
 with the Psalmist in the Text, even in  
*Death* itself; *My Heart was glad, and*  
*my Glory rejoiced*; *my Flesh also shall rest*  
*in Hope*; *For thou wilt not leave my Soul*  
*in Hell, nor suffer thy Holy One to see cor-*  
*ruption*.

AND if *This* was the Behaviour of  
 Those who saw the Promises *only afar off*,  
 and

and had them revealed to them *only in Types* S E R M.  
*and Figures*; What manner of persons XIV.  
ought *We* to be, to whom *Life and Im-*  
*mortality* are now clearly and distinctly  
brought to *Light* by the Gospel! And if we  
live *worthy* of the *Vocation* *wherewith* we  
are called; how gladly may we say with  
*St Paul*, under *Any Troubles* of life what-  
soever; that *our light affliction* which is  
but for a *Moment*, *worketh* for us a far  
more exceeding and eternal *Weight of Glo-*  
*ry*: While we look not at the things which  
are seen, but at the things which are not  
seen; for the things which are seen, are  
temporal, but the things which are not seen,  
are eternal.



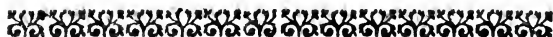




# S E R M O N XV.

Of CHRIST's sitting on the Right  
Hand of GOD.

[ *Preached on Ascension-Day.* ]




H E B. viii. I.

*Now of the things which we have spoken,  
This is the Sum : We have such an  
High-Priest, who is set on the right hand  
of the Throne of the Majesty in the Hea-  
vens.*




IN the foregoing chapter, the S E R M.  
Apostle sets forth at large the XV.  
Excellency, of our Saviour's  
*perpetual and unchangeable*  
Priesthood ; by comparing it  
with That *mutable and successive* one a-  
mong

S E R M. mong the Jews: Ver. 23; *They truly*  
 XV. *were many Priests, because they were not*  
 *suffered to continue by reason of Death:*  
*But this man, because he continueth ever,*  
*hath an unchangeable Priesthood. Where-*  
*fore he is able also to save them to the*  
*uttermost, that come unto God by him, see-*  
*ing he ever liveth to make intercession for*  
*them. For such an High Priest became us,*  
*who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate*  
*from Sinners, and made higher than the*  
*Heavens. Who needeth not daily, as those*  
*High Priests, to offer up Sacrifice, first for*  
*his own Sins, and then for the peoples;*  
*but has, by One Offering of himself, for*  
*ever perfected them that are sanctified.*  
*The full explication of This Doctrine,*  
*and of the Consequences of it, is the Sub-*  
*ject of this Whole Epistle: And a brief*  
*Summary of it, is given us in the words*  
*of the Text; Now of the things which we*  
*have spoken, This is the Sum: We have*  
*Such an High Priest, who is set on the*  
*right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in*  
*the Heavens.*



OUR Lord, after his Resurrection, as S E R M.  
XV.  
we find it recorded in the *Gospels* and in the *History of the Acts*, *showed himself alive to his Disciples by many infallible Proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God; conversing with them familiarly, opening their Understandings, expounding to them the Scriptures, explaining to them in all the Prophets the things concerning Himself, directing them in what manner they should preach the Gospel to all Nations, and promising to be with them by the Assistance of his Spirit even unto the End of the World.* By which means when they were fully instructed for the execution of their Office, he departed from them, ascending visibly into Heaven, in such a manner as is described by *St Paul* under the prophetick words of the *Psalmist*, *When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men: Now-----He that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.* From thenceforth therefore,

S E R M. we have (as the Text expresses it) *such an*  
 XV. *High Priest, who is set on the right hand*  
 *of the Throne of the Majesty in the Hea-*  
*vens.*

THE word, Heaven, when applied to the *Omnipresent God*; as in that expression of *Solomon, God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth, therefore let thy words be few*; and in that compellation where-with our Lord begins his prayer, *Our Father which art in Heaven*; The word, *Heaven*, I say, when thus applied to *God*, does not signify *literally* a particular *place*, in point of *Situation*; but *figuratively*, a *State of Highest Dignity and Supreme Dominion*. For *God*, being *essentially* present *every-where*, cannot be *really and literally* in *One place* more than in *Another*. But he can make *particular manifestations* of his *Glory*, when and where and how he pleases: And where he does This in the most *conspicuous* manner, *That place* is called, by way of *Eminence*, his *Habitation*, his *Throne*, his *Presence*. Now because the *Heavens*, are *higher* than the *Earth*; because *Thence* are derived all bene-

beneficial Influences, upon this lower S E R M.  
 World ; because *There* is the Habitation XV.  
 of Angels, attending upon the Commands  
 of God ; *therefore* God, who is *really and*  
*essentially* Present *every-where* alike, yet,  
 with regard to the *Exercise of his Power*  
 and the *manifestation of his Glory*, is to  
*Us* represented as being particularly in  
*Heaven*. And *Thither* therefore did our  
 Lord *Jesus Christ* accordingly ascend,  
 to the Highest place of Glory and Dig-  
 nity, to the most immediate Presence of  
 the Majesty of God, to *His* Father and  
*Our* Father, to *His* God and *Our* God ;  
 and is *set down* (as the Text with great  
 elegance expresses it) *on the right hand*  
*of the Throne of the Majesty in the Hea-*  
*vens*.

THIS phrase, *The Majesty*, used thus  
 absolutely and indefinitely, without men-  
 tioning the person to whom it belongs ;  
 is, in a very sublime and emphatical  
 manner, expressive of the *Supereminent*  
 Glory and Majesty of *God*. It sets forth  
 to us in *such* a sense, the *singular* and  
*transcendent* Glory of the Divine Majesty ;

S E R M. as that, *comparatively* speaking, there is  
 XV. No other Majesty but *His*. Thus, in O-  
 ther places of Scripture, when God is  
 stiled absolutely and by way of Eminence,  
*The Holy One*; *The Blessed*, (as *Mar. xiv.*  
*61*; *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the*  
*Blessed*?) *The Power*, (as in the verse next  
 following, *Ye shall see the Son of man sit-*  
*ting on the right hand of Power*; ) *The*  
*Excellent Glory*, (as *2 Pet. i. 17*; *There*  
*came such a voice to him from The Excel-*  
*lent Glory*; ) The sense of these expressions  
 is, that, *comparatively* speaking, there is  
 None *Holy*, None *Blessed*, None *Power-*  
*ful*, None *Glorious*, but *He Alone*. Good  
*Men*, are in Scripture frequently stiled  
*Holy*; and *Angels*, are the *Holy Angels of*  
*God*; and yet of him and to him alone it is  
 said, *Thou Only art Holy*. *Angels* and  
 the *Souls of Men* are *Immortal*; and yet  
 of *Him* it is in a most just sense affirmed,  
 that *He only hath Immortality*. Others  
 have Wisdom ascribed to them in their  
 Degree and Order, and yet *He* neverthe-  
 less is *God Only Wise*. Others are, in  
 their rank and proportion, truly and

justly called Good; and yet Our Lord, with peculiar Emphasis and High Propriety, declares, *There is None Good, but One, that is, God.* The Scripture, without Any Scruple, calls *Temporal Deliverers, Saviours*; Nehem. ix. 27. And our Lord *Jesus Christ*, in the *spiritual* and infinitely *higher* sense, is, by way of Eminence, stiled *Our Saviour*: And yet the *Father Almighty*, (who in *St Paul's* language, *Tit.* iii. 4, 5, is *God our Saviour* which *saves us through Jesus Christ our Saviour*,) declares concerning Himself, *Isai.* xliii. 11; *Besides Me, there is no Saviour.* The manner of speaking, is very *just*, as well as lofty and sublime; and it is useful and proper, in order to keep up in mens minds a due and awful sense of the Supreme and unapproachable Greatness of God. *Others* have *Power* ascribed to them, and *Dominion* and *Majesty*; There are, as *St Paul* tells us, *Gods many, and Lords many, in Heaven and in Earth*, 1 Cor. viii. 5. Some *falsely* so called; *Others* rightly, in *such* a sense as the Scripture gives the Title of *Gods* and *Lords*


S E R M. to *Angels* and to *Men*: Yet, for all that,  
 XV. *there is still really no other God but One;*  
 and *The Majesty*, absolutely speaking, is  
*His* alone. Our *High Priest*, is set on the  
*right hand of the Throne*, of *The Majesty*  
*in the Heavens*.

T H E term, Right Hand, when applied to God, is not to be understood *literally*, as denoting a particular *Situation* with regard to *Place*, (for God has no *Hands*, no *Shape* or *Parts*;) But it signifies *figuratively* a *State* of *High Dignity*, *Dominion* and *Power*, next and immediately after God the Father himself. Our Saviour's being advanced to the Right Hand of God, is his being actually invested with That *Glory and Dignity*, for the Joy of which, when it was set before him, he willingly endured the Cross, (Heb. xii. 2:) despising the Shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God; That is, has overcome Death, and entered into his Kingdom of Glory. And therefore, in other places of Scripture, the very same Notion is set forth under the parallel expressions, that *Him hath God exalted with*  
*his*

his right hand, to be a Prince and a Sa-  
 viour; to be Lord both of the Dead and  
 Living; to be the Head of all Princi-  
 pality and Power, the Head over all things  
 to the Church: That he hath given him  
 All Power both in Heaven and Earth, and  
 put all things in subjection under his feet;  
 Angels, and Authorities, and Powers, be-  
 ing made subject unto him: That he has  
 appointed him Heir of all things, and, ac-  
 cording to the working of his mighty Power,  
 has set him far above all principality and  
 power and might and dominion, and every  
 name that is named, not only in This  
 World, but also in That which is to come;  
 That at the Name of Jesus every knee  
 should bow, of things in Heaven, and  
 things in Earth, and things under the  
 Earth; and that every tongue should con-  
 fess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory  
 of God the Father. All which exalted  
 characters, are emphatically included in  
 this one figurative expression; the right  
 hand of God, the right hand of the Throne  
 of the Majesty in the Heavens.

S E R M.  
 XV.  


Lastly,

S E R M.    *Lastly*, T H E word, sitting, or *being set*,  
 XV.    is likewise to be understood, not *literally*,  
 as denoting a *particular* corporeal *Posture*; (for in *other* places of Scripture it is expressed that our Lord *Is* at the right hand of God, or that he *Stands* at the right hand of God;) But the word, *sitting*, is for *This reason* more frequently used in the case before us, because it implies, in its *figurative* Use and Signification, Fulness of *Possession*, and perpetuity of retaining the Glory possessed; *Heb. x. 12: After he had offered One Sacrifice for Sins, he for ever sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting, till his Enemies be made his footstool; For by One Offering, he hath perfected for ever them that are Sanctified.* From the time of our Lord's ascending into Heaven, till his Second Coming to Judgment, there were *Many Ages* to pass over: And therefore St *Peter* in his Sermon to the *Jews*; *Acts iii. 19*, tells them, that *when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, he shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto*  
 them;



them ; *whom the Heaven must receive, S E R M.*  
*until the times of restitution of all things. XV.*

**T H E** *Office* which our Saviour executes during this his continuance in Heaven, is signified to us in the Text under the character of *High Priest* : *We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of ---the Majesty in the Heavens.* And the explication of the Nature of *This Office*, as applied to our Lord, is the principal subject of this whole Epistle. Upon which account the words of the Text are *thus* introduced by the Apostle : *Of the things which we have spoken, This is the Sum : We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens.* As, among the *Jews*, the *High Priest* in the *Temple* entered *once* a year into the *Holy Place*, with the Blood of *Others* ; so *Christ* having *once* in the *End of the World* put away *Sin* by the *Sacrifice of Himself*, it was necessary that He *with his Own blood* should *enter once* likewise into the *Holy Place*, into *That within the Veil*, having obtained *eternal redemption for us* : That is, it was

S E R M. necessary that he should ascend into Heaven, to finish and present his most acceptable oblation before God, for the propitiation of the Sins of the World. For so the Apostle interprets it: *Christ* (says he) *is not entred into the Holy Places made with hands, which are only the Figures of the True; but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.*

T H E first and immediate Effect of this his Appearing in the Presence of God for us, was the *Mission* of the *Holy Ghost*. Before our Saviour's Exaltation, the *Holy Ghost*, says the Evangelist, (speaking comparatively,) *was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified*; Joh. vii. 39. And our Lord himself: *I tell you the Truth*, says he; *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 ye into all Truth.* Accordingly, at the Pentecost after Christ's Ascension, the Holy Ghost fell upon the Apostles in a singular and most miraculous


lous manner, beyond the Examples of S E R M.  
former Inspirations. And by the conti- XV.  
nual assistance and ordinary operations of  
the same Spirit, has our Lord promised  
to *be with us* his true Disciples, to *be in*  
*the midst of them* where-ever two or three  
are gathered together in His Name, even  
unto the End of the World.

B U T further : The Scripture repre-  
sents this our Great *High Priest*, as con-  
tinually *interceeding* for us at the right  
hand of God, from the time of his  
Ascension till his final coming to Judge-  
ment. *We have an Advocate with the*  
*Father, Jesus Christ the righteous ; and*  
*he is the propitiation for our Sins : For*  
our Sins ; that is, for the Sins of all those  
who *truly repent* and *effectually amend*  
their Lives, according to the gracious  
Terms of the Gospel ; and who are there-  
fore accordingly represented as having  
*washed their robes, and made them white*  
*in the Blood of the Lamb.* For persons of  
*This* disposition, our Saviour is a perpe-  
tual and effectual Advocate, to obtain per-  
fect forgiveness of their past Sins, and to


S E R M. cleanse them by the perpetual assistance  
 XV. of his Spirit, from all unrighteousness.

They have an *High Priest*, not who cannot be touched with the feeling of their infirmities, but who was himself tempted in all points like as They are, yet without Sin. And he is able also, as well as willing, to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them; Heb. vii. 25. And because he thus lives for ever, and has an *unchangeable Priesthood*, therefore he is said in Scripture to be a Priest, not after the Order of *Aaron*, which was a perpetual Succession of Priests *not suffered to continue by reason of death*; but after the Order of *Melchisedec*, who was both *Prince* and *High Priest*, and of whom is recorded neither Predecessor nor Successor, that he might be a Type and Emblem of Him who ever *liveth to make Intercession for us*.

S O M E Unbelievers there have been in All Ages, and still are, who, in opposition to this Great Doctrine of Christianity, alledge, that God being always Omnipresent


present and ready to hear the Prayers S E R M.  
 which every one offers for himself, there- XV.  
 fore there was *no need* of appointing a   
 Mediator ; and that God always acting,  
 in his own nature, according to the exact  
 Right and Reason of the Case ; therefore  
 he cannot be *changed*, or have Any *Af-*  
*fection moved*, by the interposition of Any  
 Intercessor whatsoever. But in This mat-  
 ter they greatly mistake. For if God's  
 being himself every where present, were  
 a sufficient reason why *no Mediator* should  
 be appointed to intercede for *Men* ; it  
 would by the same argument be also a  
 sufficient reason, why men should neither  
 pray nor intercede for *themselves* : For  
 God *knows* their Wants as perfectly, even  
 without their ever praying for *Themselves*,  
 as without a *Mediator* interceding for  
 them. If therefore, notwithstanding God's  
 Omnipresence and Omniscience, it be still  
 reasonable to require that men should  
 pray for *Themselves* ; in order to keep up  
 in their Minds a constant sense of God,  
 and that they may make continual Ac-  
 knowledgment of their Dependence upon

S E R M. him : It may in like manner be very rea-  
 XV. sonable, in order to keep up in their  
 ~~~~~ Minds a just sense of their own *Unwor-*  
*thiness* and of the true *Demerit of Sin*, to  
 require of them, that through such a  
*Mediator* only, as he has thought fit to  
 appoint, should they have Access to *Him*  
*who is of purer Eyes than to behold ini-*  
*quity*. And though it be indeed very true,  
 that by No intercession whatsoever, can  
 God ever be moved to act otherwise than  
 is agreeable to perfect Right and Rea-  
 son ; yet in cases of *Mercy and Compassion*,  
 where the *whole* of what he does, pro-  
 ceeds from mere *Free Bounty* ; 'tis evident  
 he may convey those his *Free Gifts*, in  
 what *Manner*, and upon what *Terms or*  
*Conditions* and through what *Instruments*  
 he pleases ; and may require their being  
 accepted in *that* particular *Method*, or not  
 at all. For however *otherwise* it be in all  
 such cases, where there is any Claim of  
*Justice*, or Demand of *Right* ; yet un-  
 doubtedly, in Dispensations of *mere Mer-*  
*cy*, that which is true of every *Owner*  
 even among frail and mortal *Men*, may  
 with

with much greater propriety be said of S E R M.  
*God*; shall he not do *what* and *how* he XV.  
 will, with *his own*? 

T H A T which remains, is, to draw two or three *practical Inferences* from the whole of what has been said.

A N D 1<sup>st</sup>, From the doctrine of our Lord's sitting at the Right Hand of God to intercede continually for us, and to govern his Church by the mission of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, the Apostle's inference is very natural. Heb. iv. 16; *Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*: Again, ch. x. 19; *Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, (i. e. having access to God through Him,) by a new and living way which he has consecrated for us; and having an High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith. For He that spared not his own Son; Rom. viii. 32; how shall he not with Him also freely give us all things?-----Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that*

S E R M. *died, yea rather that is risen again, who*  
 XV. *is even at the right hand of God, who also*  
 *maketh intercession for us.*

2dly, IF *We follow the example of our Lord's Humility and Righteousness here upon Earth, we may hope through Him to be made Partakers also of his exaltation in Heaven. I go, says he, to prepare a place for you, and-----I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there Ye may be also. Again: To Him that overcometh, (that is, who perseveres in resisting the temptations of Sin;) unto Him will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His Throne. These Promises caused St Paul so to express himself, as if God had already raised us up together with Christ, and made us already sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; Eph. ii. 6. The manner of expression, is highly figurative; But the literal and proper Sense of it is what he elsewhere thus explains: We have Hope, says he, as an Anchor of the Soul, both sure and stedfast, and which*  
*entreteth*



*entreteth into that within the Veil, whither S E R M. our Fore-runner is entred for us. And if XV.*

*we have this Hope in us, then ought we accordingly to set our affections on things above, not on things in the Earth; that where our Treasure is, there may our Heart be also; that we may seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, and where our life is hid, (that is, deposited, laid up for us in the determinations of the divine good pleasure, 'tis hid) with Christ in God: that our Conversation, (the Thoughts of our Home and final Abode,) may be in Heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who, at his coming, shall so change Us, that we shall become like him, when we shall see him as he is; and, as we have born the image of the Earthly, we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly. By imploying our Meditations in This manner, upon our Lord's State of exaltation in Heaven; so as to make it a continual Motive to us, to prepare ourselves to become finally Partakers of that promised inheritance; we*

*shall*

S E R M. shall contribute what in *Us* lies, towards  
 XV. fulfilling that Prophecy which he spake  
 before his Death; *Job. xii. 32; And I, if I be lifted up from the Earth, will draw all men unto me.*

3dly; Another proper and most important Use of the Doctrine before us, is as follows. If our Lord came down upon *Earth*, to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself; and if, in his State of Exaltation in *Heaven*, the Design of his continual intercession with God, and of his whole Government of the Church by his Spirit, be still always one and the same, even the putting away of *Sin*: Then from hence we may learn how great and fatal a Corruption it is of Christian Religion, for men who live wickedly, in a course of *Debauchery*, or in the habitual Practice of any known Sin whatsoever, to expect to obtain Salvation by relying presumptuously upon the Merits of Christ, or upon His Intercession, instead of obeying his Commands delivered in the Gospel. The Blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, was shed, not to render

der men safe in unrighteous Living, but S E R M. XV.  
 to *purge the conscience* of such as truly re-  
 pent and amend, to *purge them from dead*  
*works to serve the living God*; Heb. ix. 14;  
 The *End* why our Lord gave *himself* for  
 us, being, *that he might purify to himself*  
*a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*  
 If this great End be attained; if (ac-  
 cording to the language of St *John*) *we walk*  
*in the Light*, (that is, in the practice of  
 true virtue and holiness,) even as *God is*  
*Light, and in Him is no darkness at all*;  
 then indeed *the blood of Jesus Christ his*  
*Son cleanseth us from all past Sin.* But if  
*we say we have fellowship with Him, and*  
*(still) walk in darkness*; (that is, continue  
 to live wickedly, and yet hope for Benefit  
 from the profession of God's true religion  
 from what Christ has either done or suf-  
 fered for us;) *we lie, and do not the Truth*;  
 1 Joh. i. 6.

4<sup>thly</sup>, and lastly: As from what has  
 been said, appears the *Reasonableness* of  
 mens applying to God through That *One*  
*Mediatour*, whom *he* has appointed; so at  
 the same Time appears likewise the *Folly*,  
 of

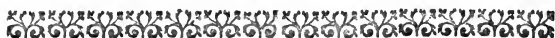
S E R M. of their setting up *Other* Mediators, of  
 XV. their *own* invention ; such as are Angels,  
 Saints, the Blessed Virgin, and the like.  
 For *there is One God*, says the Apostle, *and One Mediatour between God and Men*. And as departing from *the One God and Father of All, who is above all, and through all, and in us all*, is the first and highest Species of Idolatry ; so another sort of the same Sin, is setting up false and imaginary Mediators, by *will-worship*, by a *voluntary humility*, as St Paul styles it, *and worshipping of Angels* ; when men intrude into things which they have not seen, vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by Joints and Bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.



# SERMON XVI.

The Conversation of Christians is  
in Heaven.

[ *Preached on Ascension-Day.* ]



PHIL. iii. 20.

*For our Conversation is in Heaven ; from  
whence also we look for the Saviour, the  
Lord Jesus Christ.*



IN discoursing upon These words S E R M.  
of the Apostle, I shall 1<sup>st</sup> en- XVI.  
deavour briefly to show, *what*  
is the full meaning of this  
Phrase, of *having our Conver-*  
*sation in Heaven ;* and 2<sup>dly</sup>, *what* are the  
prin-

S E R M. principal *Benefits and Advantages*, which  
 XVI. may arise to good men from This con-  
 sideration.

I. A s to the Signification of the Phrase, *having our conversation in Heaven* ; it may properly be understood to imply, three things.

1<sup>st</sup>, O U R *Meditating* frequently upon That Heavenly State, That Kingdom of Truth, Virtue and Happiness, which is proposed to us as the Reward and End of our Christian Warfare. To *converse* with any Person *present*, signifies *delighting* in his *Company*, or being *concerned* in his *Affairs*. To be conversant with any person *absent*, signifies holding mutual *intercourse* and *correspondence* with him ; being *sollicitous* about what is *done* by him, or *happens* to him. To have our conversation in a distant Place, signifies being *much* *There* in our *Minds* ; desiring to *have an influence* or *interest*, in what is done *There* ; and judging, that What passes *There*, has an *influence* upon Us, *affects* us *nearly*, or *relates* to us more *immediately*. When therefore the Apostle affirms, as in the  
 Text,

Text, that our *Conversation is in Heaven*; S E R M.  
his meaning is, that though our *Persons* XVI.  
at present dwell on *Earth*, yet our *greatest Interest and Concerns* are in *Heaven*.  
Like a Merchant trading in a distant Country; his *present Abode* may be in *foreign parts*, but his *Estate*, his *Family*, his *settled Habitation*, is at *home*; and it is of *much more importance* to him, what the *lasting State* of his Affairs is at *Home*; than what happens to him *Abroad*, with regard to such *Accidental temporary Circumstances*, as do not much affect his *main Concerns in his own Country*. Thus *Christians*, have their *great, their lasting Interest*, in *Heaven*. And though they *cannot*, they *ought not*, any more than other men, to be *insensible* of what happens to them in this *short and transitory life*, according to the *true proportion* of things, and their *real value*; yet every thing *here*, ought *chiefly* to be considered, with regard to the influence 'tis likely to have, upon our *future and eternal State*. Which right Judgement and Estimation of things, 'tis impossible men should make; unless by  
fre-

S E R M. frequent and serious *meditation*, they so  
 XVI. behold the things *invisible*, as to bring them  
 ~~~~~ to make *proportionably* as strong an impression upon the *Mind*, as *Earthly* Objects do upon the *Senses*. Many men, like the Brute Creatures which have No Understanding, seem hardly to think at all upon any thing, but what is *present* and *sensual*. But *Reason* in general, and *Christianity* in particular, teaches us, and requires of us, to judge of things according to their *true* and *real Value*; and to be more concerned about things at present *invisible*, if they be really of *greater* and more *lasting importance* to us, than about things which do *Now* more *immediately affect* our *Senses*. St Paul, the great Business of whose Life was the Care of the Churches; thus writes to the *Corinthians* when at a distance from them; *I verily, says he, as absent in Body, but present in Spirit*; 1 Cor. v. 3; and to the *Colossians*; ch. ii. 5; *Though I be absent in the Flesh, yet am I with you in the Spirit, joying and beholding your Order, and the Stedfastness of your Faith in Christ*. The Description  
 the



the Apostle here gives of himself, with regard to the employment of his Thoughts upon his main Concern in *This life*; is what every sincere Christian ought to make good, with regard to his Expectations in the *Life to come*. Though he be in his *Body* an Inhabitant upon Earth; and, so long as he continues so, ought not, after a Monkish, Superstitious and Enthusiastick manner, to neglect the Affairs of *Himself*, his *Family*, his *Friends*, or his *Country*; yet at the same time in *Spirit*, in the *bent* and *habitual disposition* of his *Mind*, in the *direction* of the ultimate *View and Aim* of all his Actions, he may properly be said to *converse*, and to *Be*, in *Heaven*. Whoever *fears God* and *works righteousness*, and lives with a constant Sense of Religion upon his Mind; how little *Time*, or how small *Abilities* soever he has for abstract Meditation, may yet, even in the midst of his worldly affairs, be truly said, in *This* sense, to have his *Conversation in Heaven*: Because he lives according to the *Laws* of *Heaven*; has in his Mind the *Temper* of *Heaven*; and,

S E R M. by the Love of Truth, and Practice of  
 XVI. Virtue, is in a continual Preparation for  
 the *State of Heaven*. Nevertheless, though  
 the *Practice of Virtue and Goodness* is indeed the *End* of all religion, yet frequent and serious *Meditation* is valuable as a *Means* to promote That *End*, and to encourage That *Practice*.

THE proper Subjects *in particular* to be meditated upon, as being most likely to have an *immediate Influence* upon the Course of our Lives, and to cause our *Conversation on Earth* to be effectually preparative for that in *Heaven*; are, in the *first* place, the *Nature of God*, and of his *Relation to Us*: the consideration of his being *himself* a Person infinitely *Holy*; a Lover of *Virtue* and all *Goodness*; a *Hater of Iniquity*, of *Debauchery*, and of every *Corrupt Practice*; a *Just* and *Righteous Governour* of all things; and a *bountiful Rewarder* of them who serve and obey him; in whose *Presence* there will finally be *fulness of Joy*, and at his *right hand Pleasures for evermore*.

IN the next place is the Consideration of Christ our *Great High-Priest*, the *Mediatour of the New Covenant*; who gave himself for us, that by the *Doctrin* and *Example* of his *Life*, and by the *Merit* and *Influence* of his *Death*, he might *redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar People zealous of good works*: Who is now *sat down on the right hand of the Throne of God in the heavenly places*, to intercede for all those that truly and effectually repent: And who, *at the end of the World*, unto all them who with *patient continuance in well-doing look for him, shall appear the second time, without Sin, unto Salvation*.

THE next part of this Contemplation, tending to make us *hunger and thirst after Righteousness*, by having *at present* our *Conversation in Heaven*; is the consideration of the Company, by whom that region of Happiness is possessed. The Society of *Good Angels*, who *never departed* from their first estate; and of *Good Men*, who by true Repentance are *returned* unto it. The Society of *Holy Angels*, who,

S E R M. *going in and out before the Throne of God,*  
 XVI. *do always behold the Face of our Father ;*  
 even the Father, of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named : And the Society of Holy Men, who, having washed their Robes in the Blood of the Lamb, are by Him presented faultless before the Presence of his Father's Glory with exceeding Joy.

T H E last part of this Contemplation, is the consideration of the Happiness of this State itself, with regard to Ourselves. And in *This respect* indeed, it doth not yet appear what we shall be : But we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is. At present we see only, as through a glass, darkly ; For Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive, the things that God has prepared for them that love him : But Then, we shall see face to face ; and know, even as we are known, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. In general only, *This* we are Now assured of, and a sufficient employment it is for our Meditations upon This Head ; that the  
 Happy-

Happinefs of Heaven, tho' the *particulars* of it are not yet revealed, is a *Great* and *exceeding Weight of Glory*; to which the Apostle reckons, that nothing in *this present World* is *worthy to be compared*, 2 Cor. iv. 17; that it is a *Kingdom*, which cannot be moved; a *Treasure*, which neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and to which *Thieves* do not break through and steal: that it is a *Happinefs pure and unmixed*; For all tears shall then be wiped from our Eyes; and there shall be no more Death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more Pain; for the former things are passed away: Lastly, that it is an enjoyment which will satisfy all our *Desires*, an employment which will improve to the utmost all our *Faculties*; and, which is the *Crown* of all, will continue for ever; being, as St Peter expresses it, an *inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away*.

I conclude This Head, with the words of a most excellent Writer of our own: "O  
 " blessed Time, *saith he*, when Mortality  
 " shall be swallowed up of Life, and Death  
 " and Sorrow shall be no more;---when we


Archbp.  
Tillotson.

S E R M. “ shall be eased of all our Pains, and re-  
 XVI. “ solved of all our Doubts, and be purged  
 “ from all our Sins, and be freed from all  
 “ our Fears, and be happy beyond all our  
 “ Hopes, and have all this Happiness se-  
 “ cured to us beyond the Power of Time  
 “ and Change !” Let every man who lives  
 in the Practice of Any known Vice, con-  
 sider seriously with himself, how for one  
 morsel of meat he sells this Birthright.

T H I S is the *first* thing implied in the  
 Phrase of having *our Conversation in Hea-*  
*ven ; meditating frequently and seriously*  
*upon the Happiness of That State.*

2dly ; HAVING *our Conversation in*  
*Heaven*, signifies, not only meditating up-  
 on the Happiness of that State, but *prac-*  
*tically and effectually setting our Hearts*  
*and Affections thereon.* Speculative *Medi-*  
*tations* within our own *Minds*, or *moving*  
*Discourses* and *fine Descriptions* to Others,  
 are of no Use ; unless the things *medita-*  
*ted upon by us*, or *described to us*, affect  
 our *Hearts*, and operate in their influence  
 upon our *Lives and Actions*, as *Realities*,  
 and not as *Imaginations*. The Persons  
 Opposite

*Opposite* to those whose conversation is in S E R M. Heaven, (as they are described in the XVI. *Verse before my Text*) are those *whose God is their Belly, who mind earthly things,* ver. 19. By way of *contraries* therefore, they whose conversation is in Heaven, are Those only who *mind*, (not who can *imagine* or *describe*, but who *mind*,) that is, who in earnest *attend to*, as to their proper and most important Concern, the things which are in Heaven: Rom. viii. 5; *They that are after the Flesh, do mind the things of the Flesh; and they that are after the Spirit, do mind the things of the Spirit.* The meaning is; As *worldly* and corrupt Minds, are much more concerned about their *Temporal*, than about their *eternal* Affairs; so, on the contrary, Persons *truly religious*, though they *by no means neglect* the Concerns of this present Life, yet they are really *more solicitous*, they are *more rejoiced* or *grieved*, at the Prospect of their *Eternal*, than of their *Temporal* State. This is what St Paul exhorts us to, Col. iii. 1; *If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where*

S E R M. *Christ sitteth on the right hand of God: Set*  
 XVI. *your Affection on things above, not on things*  
 *upon Earth: For ye are dead, and your*  
*Life is hid with Christ in God. Ye are*  
*dead; that is, ye are by your Profession*  
*in Baptism, dead with Christ; dead with*  
*Christ from the rudiments of the World;*  
*buried with him by Baptism, into Death;*  
*dead, to all the vicious Desires, to all the*  
*sinful enjoyments of the World. And your*  
*Life (says he) is hid with Christ in God;*  
*that is, your Hope, (as it is expressed, ch. i.*  
*5.) the Hope of eternal Life, is laid up*  
*for you in Heaven, with Christ our Savi-*  
*our; laid up, reserved for you, in the de-*  
*terminate Counsel of God, against the day*  
*of retribution: At which time, when Christ,*  
*who is our Life, shall appear, then shall ye*  
*also appear with him in Glory. The only*  
*possible Means, by which we can in This*  
*sense fix our Affections, by which we can*  
*in This sense come to have our conversa-*  
*tion habitually in Heaven; is, that we take*  
*care, by works of Righteousness and true*  
*Holiness, by a life of Virtue and real*  
*Goodness, to secure to ourselves an Interest*  
 and



and a *Portion* There. *Lay not up*, says our Saviour, *treasures upon Earth, but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven*; For where your *Treasure* is, there will your *Heart* be also, Mat. vi. 21. The words next following to these, are difficult to be understood; unless compared with These, by which their Sense and Connexion may be explained: ver. 22, *The Light of the Body*, says our Lord, *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*! The Meaning is: That *True Judgement* and *Right Discernment* of the Difference of Things, by which *Treasure in Heaven* is more valued than *Treasure upon Earth*; the Rewards of *Virtue*, than the Pleasures of *Sin*; This true *Judgment*, I say, is to the *State* of the *Soul*, what the *Eye* is to the *Guidance and Direction* of the *Body*. If That which should be our *Guide* and our *Rule*, be itself *dark*, be itself *fundamentally erroneous*; how miserable must our *Errours* be!

SERM.

3dly, HAVING our Conversation in

XVI.



Heaven, signifies in the last place, according to the most strict and proper Import of the word in the Original; having our Citizenship, our *Home*, our proper *Country* and *Habitation* there. The State of *Heaven*, the *Happiness* which God has promised in the Life to come, to those who shall qualify themselves for it by the Habits of *Virtue here*; is in Scripture represented under the description of a glorious *City*; Rev. xxi. 10: *He shewed me that great City, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God; having the Glory of God, and so on.* And even the *Antient* Prophets, used from the beginning the same expressions; As appears in many passages of *Isaiab*; And *Tobit* xiii. 16; *Jerusalem, saith he, shall be built up with Sapphires, and her Walls-----with pure Gold.* Of this *new and heavenly Jerusalem*, the Apostle describes the *Patriarchs of old* to have been *Citizens*, while their dwelling on *Earth* was but as in a *foreign Country*: Heb. xi. 9; *By Faith, Abraham sojourned in the land of Promise, as in a strange Country;-----For he looked for a*  
City

City which hath Foundations; (in the original it is, *be expected* The City which hath The Foundations; that is, the Foundations of precious Stones, alluding to the Prophetic expressions;) whose Builder and Maker is God: And ver. 13: These all, that is, the Patriarchs, died in Faith, not having received the Promises, but having seen them afar off; and were persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed that they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth; For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a Country, even a-----better Country, that is, an heavenly; Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a City. And All who imitate the Obedience of these Patriarchs, in all Ages and in all Nations of the World, by a Life of Virtue and true Goodness; are in like manner represented in Scripture, as being Members of the same heavenly City: Eph. ii. 19; Ye are no more strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being

S E R M. *being the chief corner-stone; In whom all*  
 XVI. *the Building fitly framed together, groweth*  
 ~~~~~ *unto an Holy Temple in the Lord. In the*

1 Pet ii.  
 11.

*present world, upon account of the tran-*  
*sitoriness of This mortal life, we are*  
*styled Strangers and Sojourners, 1 Chr. xxix.*  
*15; and are exhorted, as Pilgrims, to pass*  
*the Time of our sojourning here in Fear,*  
*1 Pet. i. 17. For here we have no continu-*  
*ing City, but we seek One to come, Heb. xiii.*  
*14. A city to come; that is, the New, the*  
*heavenly Jerusalem: For so St Paul tells*  
*us, Gal. iv. 26; Jerusalem which is above,*  
*is the Mother of us all; that is, our pro-*  
*per Home and Country. Heb. xii. 22; Ye*  
*are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the*  
*City of the Living God, the heavenly Je-*  
*rusalem, and to an innumerable company of*  
*Angels, To the general Assembly and Church*  
*of the first-born that are written in Hea-*  
*ven, and to God the Judge of All, and to*  
*the Spirits of just men made perfect, And*  
*to Jesus the Mediatour of the New Covenant.*  
*In pursuance of which elegant Descrip-*  
*tion, virtuous and good men, raised and*  
*quicken'd together with Christ from the*  
*Death of Sin, are, by a lively figure, said*

to *fit together* (even *Now*) in heavenly S E R M.  
*places, in (or with) Christ Jesus, Eph. ii.* XVI.  
 6. And to *dwell in Heaven*: Rev. xiii. 6.  
*he, (that is, Antichristian Tyranny) opened*  
*his mouth in Blasphemy against God, to*  
*blaspheme his Name and his Tabernacle,*  
*and them that dwell in Heaven. To blas-*  
*pheme them that dwell in Heaven*; that is,  
 as it is explained in the following Verse, to  
*make War with and overcome the Saints*;  
 to persecute the true Worshippers of God,  
 whose *Conversation is in Heaven*.

II. HAVING thus at large explained  
 the *Meaning* of this Phrase, of having *our*  
*Conversation in Heaven*; it remains that I  
 proceed, in the 2<sup>d</sup> place, to consider the  
*Uses and Advantages* which may arise to  
 us therefrom. And

1<sup>st</sup>, IF we take the Phrase in Either of  
 the *Two former* Senses, as signifying that  
 we *Meditate* frequently upon the Hea-  
 venly State, or (which is the natural *con-*  
*sequence* of delighting in such Meditation,)  
 set our *Hearts and Affections* thereon; the  
 Advantage and Benefit of so doing, is, that  
 it will *continually* put us upon *preparing*  
 and *qualifying* ourselves, by the Practice  
 of

S E R M. of Virtue, for the enjoyment of That  
 XVI. Blessed State: *Ecclus. vii. 36; Whatsoever  
 thou takest in hand, remember the End;  
 and thou shalt never do amiss.* The Great  
 reason, why the World is generally so vi-  
 cious; is because men seldom *meditate* up-  
 on the final Consequences of Wickedness,  
 and seldom seriously reflect upon the real  
 State of their own Souls. They are like one,  
 who, walking towards a Precipice, shuts  
 his Eyes, and perceives not that there is  
 Any Danger. *Consideration*, is the *Eye* of  
 the Soul: And if this *Light* that is in us,  
 be itself Darkness; if our *Meditations* be  
 never fixed upon the things which can no  
 otherwise be discerned but by serious and  
 impartial *Meditation*; how great must the  
 Darknes and Blindness of our Minds be!  
 Men upon a Bed of Sicknes, and at the  
 Approach of Death, generally have very  
 right Notions of this Matter; And since  
 what will *Then* be True, we are sure  
 cannot but be equally True *Now*; wise  
 men will always endeavour, to fix those  
 Thoughts upon their Minds by timely At-  
 tention, and make them useful *at present*;  
 which *hereafter* will fix *themselves* upon  
 the



the Mind, whether a man will or no, when perhaps it may be too late for them to be of Any Use to him. *Considerate Christians wait continually for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. i. 7; Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts; living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious Appearance of the Great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Thus did the Apostles themselves; and to This did they continually exhort Others, as in the Text; Brethren, saith St Paul, be Followers together of Me, and mark them which walk so as ye have Us for an example;-----For Our conversation is in Heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

MORE particularly. Having our conversation in Heaven, as it signifies meditating upon the Presence and Attributes of God, will naturally be upon our Minds a strong Motive and a constant Assistance, to Purity and Holiness of Life. For if hereafter we shall therefore be like him, because we shall see him as he is; at present also in proportion we cannot but imitate

S E R M.

XVI.



imitate him, if by serious *meditation* we accustom ourselves to live *as Seeing him who is invisible*. And therefore St *John* rightly infers, 1 *Job*. iii. 3 ; *Every man that hath This Hope in him, purifies himself even as he is pure*.

AGAIN: *Conversing in Heaven*, as it signifies *meditating* on the Company by whom that region of Happiness is possessed ; *an innumerable Company of Angels, and the Spirits of just men made perfect*, living together in compleat and uninterrupted Love ; and *Jesus himself, the Mediatour of the New Covenant*, who loved us, and gave himself for us All : under *This View*, it cannot but be a powerful Argument perpetually upon our Minds, to live *here* also, as preparative to That more perfect State, in mutual *Love, Forbearance, and universal Charity*.

*Lastly*, As it signifies *meditating* on the *Greatness and Duration of the Happiness* itself, which we shall There enjoy ; it is the great Security, to preserve us from being overcome at any time by the Temptations of worldly *Prosperity*, or by the Fears of Temporal *Adversity*. *I reckon,*  
faith



Faith St Paul, that the Sufferings of this present world, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For which cause we faint not ; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen, are temporal ; but the things which are not seen, are eternal ; 2 Cor. iv. 16. By This Faith, the Martyrs of old suffered themselves to be tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better Resurrection ; Heb. xi. 35. By This Faith, Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season ; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures in Egypt ; for he had respect unto the recompense of Reward ; ver. 25, 26. And our Saviour himself ; ch. xii. 2 ; for the Joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the Shame, and is set down at

S E R M.  
XVI.

~~~~~  
Rom. viii.  
18.

S E R M. *the right hand of the Throne of God.*


XVI.

But,



2dly, AND to Conclude. If we understand the Phrase, *having our Conversation in Heaven*, to signify in the *latter* Sense (according to the most *strict and proper* Meaning of the words in the Original,) *having our Citizenship, our Home, our proper Country or Habitation in Heaven*, and consequently *looking upon ourselves as Members and Subjects of That City or Kingdom which is above*: If we consider it under *This* View, the obvious Inference from hence is, that then we ought constantly to endeavour to obey the *Laws of That Kingdom*, that is, the Commandments of God; least if, during our Pilgrimage here in a *foreign Country*, we live contrary to the Laws of Heaven, we be hereafter rejected at our return, and refused admittance into our *own City*: 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; For without, are dogs and forcers, and whoremongers and murderers and Idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a Lie.*

*a Lie. For there shall in no wise enter in- S E R M. to it any thing that defileth ; neither what- XVI. soever worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lie. And the same thing is expressed by our Saviour in the Gospel ; Luc. xiii. 26. When ye begin to say, Lord, open unto us ; for---we have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our Streets ; he shall say, I know you not whence ye are ; depart from me, all ye Workers of Iniquity. The Laws of our heavenly Country, and the Customs of a vicious World, are contrary to each other. Rom. vii. 22 ; I delight in the Law of God after the inward man ; but I see another Law in my Members, warring against the Law of my mind : For the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh ; and These are contrary the One to the Other ; Gal. v. 17. This being the Case ; it follows therefore, as St James concludes, ch. iv. 4 ; that whosoever will be a Friend of the World, of the sinful and debauched, of the vicious and corrupt World, must needs be an Enemy of God : Because the Carnal mind is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither*

S E R M. *indeed can be ; Rom. viii. 7. For This*  
 XVI. *reason, the Apostle beseeches us, as being*  
 *Strangers and Pilgrims here, to abstain*  
*from fleshly Lusts, which war against the*  
*Soul ; that is, which unfit us for our*  
*heavenly Country, the habitation of ever-*  
*lasting Righteousness and Peace ; 1 Pet. ii.*  
*11 : and exhorts us, not to be conformed to*  
*This World ; Rom. xii. 2 ; but to be trans-*  
*formed by the renewing of our Mind ; that*  
*is, to press forward towards the Mark of*  
*the Prize of our High Calling, forgetting*  
*those things which are behind : After the*  
*example of the Patriarchs ; Heb. xi. 15 ;*  
*who truly if they had been mindful of That*  
*Country from whence they came out, they*  
*might have had opportunity to have retur-*  
*ned ; But now they desire a better Country,*  
*that is, an Heavenly. Where, if We al-*  
*so have our conversation Now, we shall*  
*together with them be glorified likewise*  
*hereafter.*



# SERMON XVII.

Of the Spiritual Nature of the  
G O S P E L.

[ *Preached on Whitsunday.* ]



2 C O R. iii. 17, 18.

*Now the Lord is That Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty; But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*



THE Holy Ghost having been S E R M.  
poured forth upon the Apo- XVII.  
stles at Pentecost in so very  
singular and plentiful a man-  
ner, as that, *before* that time,  
'tis said, comparatively, *not to have been*  
C c 3 *given*

S E R M. given at all; Joh. vii. 39; and Those who  
 XVII. were not yet acquainted with *That* day's  
 ~~~~~ Miracle, are represented as not having  
*heard* so much as whether *there* was any  
*Holy Ghost*, Acts xix. 2; that is, whether  
 there had yet been *any* such *plentiful Effu-*  
*fusion* of it, as the Prophets had foretold:  
 For This reason, St *Paul* in the 8th verse  
 of this chapter, whereof my Text is the  
 Conclusion, elegantly styles *the Gospel*, by  
 way of Eminence, the *Ministration of the*  
*Spirit*. And from That consideration,  
 through the *whole* chapter, he magnifies  
 the *Doctrine of Christ*, as being more clear  
 and plain, more powerful and efficacious,  
 more illustrious and glorious, than the  
*Law of Moses*. Ver. 3; *Ye are*, saith he,  
*the epistle of Christ, ministred by Us, writ-*  
*ten not with ink, but with the Spirit of*  
*the living God; not in tables of stone, but*  
*in the fleshly tables of the heart*: His  
 meaning is, The Power and Efficacy of  
 the *Gospel*, is as much greater than that  
 of the *Law*, as can be expressed by *com-*  
*paring* that which is written in a *Book*,  
 with that which is imprinted inwardly in  
 the very *Heart and Soul itself*. The same

Argument he pursues ; ver. 6 ; *God hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit ; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life ;* That is, The Gospel gives us those *spiritual* precepts, whereof the *legal* Ordinances were but *types and shadows* ; (that is the meaning of their being called the *letter* or *dead letter* ; ) and teaches us the way to *eternal life*, whereas the rigour of the Law could end only in *mens condemnation*. And from hence he proceeds to *magnify* the glorious manifestation of the *Gospel*, by *comparing* it with the Glory that shined in *Moses's* countenance ; which, though so bright that the children of *Israel* could not stedfastly behold it, yet was but temporary and transient, and only a type or figure of that permanent glory of the Gospel, which was to continue for ever ; ver. 7 ; *If the ministration of Death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away ; How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious ? For if the*

S E R M.  
XVII.  


S E R M. *ministration of condemnation be glory,*  
 XVII. *much more doth the ministration of right-*  
 ~~~~~ *teousness, (of justification, it should be*  
*rendred,) exceed in glory ;-----For if That*  
*which is done away was glorious, much more*  
*That which remaineth ( That which is*  
*Perpetual ) is glorious. And hereupon he*  
*takes occasion elegantly to describe the*  
*Blindness of the Jews after our Saviour's*  
*time, in not seeing through the types and*  
*figures and imperfect notices of the Old*  
*Testament ; he describes it elegantly, by*  
*comparing it to the Veil which Moses put*  
*upon his Face to conceal the Brightness*  
*of it : Ver. xiv ; Their Minds (saith he)*  
*were blinded ; For until This day remain-*  
*eth the same Veil untaken away, in the*  
*reading of the Old Testament ; which Veil*  
*is done away in Christ : But even unto*  
*This day, when Moses is read, the Veil is*  
*upon their Heart. Nevertheless, when it*  
*shall turn to the Lord, (that is, when they*  
*shall believe in Christ,) the Veil shall be*  
*taken away. And then he sums up and*  
*concludes his whole Discourse, in the*  
*words of the Text : Now the Lord ( says*  
*he ) is That Spirit ; and where the Spirit*  
*of*



of the Lord is, there is Liberty. But We S E R M.  
*All with open face, beholding as in a glass* XVII.  
*the glory of the Lord, are changed into the*  
*same Image, from glory to glory, even as*  
*by the Spirit of the Lord.* The words are  
 in themselves somewhat difficult, and have  
 in them several phrases very different from  
 our present manner of expressing things :  
 But the *general* design of them appears  
 in some measure, from the brief explica-  
 tion now given of the foregoing part of  
 the chapter, whereby they are introduced ;  
 and I shall now proceed to explain them  
 more *particularly*, by considering distinct-  
 ly the several expressions in the Order  
 they lie.

THE *Lord*, says the Apostle, is *That*  
*Spirit*. That is, *Christ*, the *Gospel* or  
*Doctrine* of Christ, is *That Spirit* I have  
 been speaking of in this whole Discourse ;  
 That *Spirit*, or *end and design* of the Law,  
 which giveth *life*, or shows men the way  
 to *justification* ; in opposition to the *dead*  
*letter* and to the *rigour* of the law, which  
 leads only to *condemnation* : That *Spirit*  
 or final *intent* of the law, which is to  
 continue *for ever*, in opposition to those  
 mere

S E R M. mere *types and shadows*, which were soon  
 XVII. *to be done away* : That *Spirit* or full  
 ~~~~~ *Meaning and Signification* of the law,  
 which is opposed to the *Veil of ignorance*  
 and *partial understanding* of it.

T H E *Lord*, is that *Spirit* : The word, *Lord*, is used here to signify the *Gospel* or *Doctrine of Christ*, by the same figure of speaking, as *St Paul* elsewhere uses, when he advises Christians to marry *only in the Lord*, that is, to *Christians*, to such only as have *received the Gospel* ; and when he speaks of the *dead in Christ* ; *i. e.* of those who died in the profession and practice of the true Religion ; and commands us to *put on Christ*, *i. e.* to obey his Doctrine.

T H E phrase, That *Spirit*, is made use of to signify the *True Meaning*, and *final Intent* of the Law ; because the opposite words, *Flesh* and *Letter*, signify on the contrary the mere *Shadow or Appearance* of a thing, without the *real Substance* and *true Intention*. Thus *Job. vi. 63* ; *It is the Spirit*, saith our Saviour, *that quickneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing* ; *The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit*  
 rit

*rit and they are Life.* Again, ver. 6 ; of S E R M.  
 This chapter in which the Text is, *Able* XVII.  
*ministers of the New Testament, not of the*  
*Letter, but of the Spirit :* And Rom. vii. 6 ;  
*That we should serve in newness of Spirit,*  
*and not in the oldness of the Letter :* The  
 meaning of which is explained ; ch. ii. 29 ;  
*He is a Jew, which is one inwardly, and*  
*circumcision is that of the Heart, in the*  
*Spirit, and not in the Letter, whose praise*  
*is not of Men, but of God.* As therefore  
 the law of *Moses*, upon account of its  
 many ritual observances, is by a very sig-  
 nificant Figure, in several places of St  
*Paul's* epistles, called *Flesh* ; so here on  
 the contrary, concerning the *Gospel* of  
 Christ, which was the End of those types,  
 it is with no less propriety and signifi-  
 cancy affirmed, that *the Lord is That*  
*Spirit.*

IT follows, *And where the Spirit of*  
*the Lord is, there is Liberty :* Liberty, in  
 the first place, from that *Veil of ignorance*  
*and obscurity*, which remained upon the  
*Hearts*, and perplexed the *Understandings*  
 of the unbelieving *Jews*, when the Old  
 Testament was read to them : In oppo-  
 sition

S E R M. fition to which, the Apostle argues ; ver. XVII. 12 of this chapter, that *We use great plainness of Speech, and not as Moses which put a Veil over his Face* ; And upon this account he stiles the Gospel, *the Manifestation of the Truth* ; ch. iv. 2 ; and *the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation* ; Eph. i. 17.

T H E N, in the next place, *Liberty* from the bondage of that yoke of Ceremonies, *which neither our Fathers nor We*, says St Peter, *were able to bear* ; Acts x. 15. Concerning which numerous and burdensome rites, St Paul also is to be understood, when he rejoices that *we are now delivered from the law* ; Rom. vii. 6 ; and compares the *Jews*, who were under these legal Obligations, to Servants or to Children yet under Age, Gal. iv. 3 ; and exhorts those, who by embracing the Gospel were discharged from that Law, to *stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and not to be intangled again with the yoke of bondage* ; ch. v. 1. Which liberty nevertheless, lest any man should so misinterpret, as to think himself discharged thereby from *moral* as well

well as *ritual* obligations, (which is the absurd Use Some in modern times have made of these Texts,) he takes care to add a very exprefs caution ; ver. 13 ; *Brethren, ye have indeed been called unto Liberty ; only use not Liberty for an occasion to the Flesh : That is ; Do not, under pretence of being fet free from the Mosaic Observations, run into immoralities, which are Breaches of God's everlasting Law : And St Peter in like manner ; 1 Pet. ii. 16 ; As free, yet not using your Liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, (or, as an Excuse for Immoralities,) but as the Servants of God.*

ADD to This, that by the *Liberty* which the Text affirms is always *There, where is the Spirit of the Lord ; i. e.* wherever the Gospel prevails in Faith and Practice ; is meant also a Liberty from that *Fear and Terrour*, which under the Law, could not but make men (as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* expreffes it ) *all their lifetime subject to bondage ;* till they were assured of Pardon by the reconciliation of Christ, for such *things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.*

In

S E R M. In This sense it is, that St *James* uses the  
 XVII. word, when he stiles the Gospel *the perfect Law of Liberty*; Jam. i. 25. And by  
 This is easy to be understood That other-  
 wise difficult expression of St *Paul*; Rom.  
 viii. 15; *Ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to Fear, but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father*; The meaning is, we have Now, through the reconciliation of Christ, free Access to God, not as Servants to a strict Master, but as Sons to a merciful and compassionate Father. Which reconciliation itself, ought nevertheless to be always carefully so understood, not as if God was in Himself severe and cruel *before* the interposition of Christ; but that God, of his own original and eternal Goodness, freely provided for us That reconciliation *through* Christ, which his infinite Wisdom judged to be the properest Method of extending his Compassion to us.

Lastly, *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty*; not only from the Terror of *past* Sins, thro' the Redemption of Christ; but also Liberty from the *Power*  
*and*

and Dominion of Sin for the time to come, thro' the assistance of his Spirit. In This sense our Saviour uses the word; St *Joh.* viii. 36; *If the Son* (says he) *shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed; free,* in opposition to what is expressed in the 34th verse, *Servants of Sin.* St *Paul* in like manner; *Rom.* viii. 2; *The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death; free,* from the Slavery and Dominion of Wickedness; *delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

THE words next following in the Text, *But we all with open Face,* are not to be understood by way of *opposition* to what went before; For *That* takes away the Clearness of the Sense: But the Connexion is, by way of explication of, or Inference from, the words immediately foregoing: *Where the Spirit of the Lord is,* where the Gospel prevails effectually, *There is Liberty;* And *We all,* or, *And therefore we all,* all true Christians, do *with open Face,* not thro' an *obscure Veil* as the *Jews,* but with *open face behold the glory of the Lord.*

S E R M.

XVII.



THE phrase, *with open Face*, signifies as much as, *clearly, plainly, and distinctly*; not in *types and shadows*, not in *obscure glimpses and faint representations*, not in *remote hints and distant prospects*; but with a *full and direct view*, an immediate intuition as of the *Substance and reality* of things *present and actually before us*. We behold the mystery of God in Christ, *not* as the children of *Israel* saw the brightness of *Moses's* countenance *thro' the Veil*, (which is what the Apostle here alludes to;) *but with open face*, as *Moses himself* is described to have seen the Lord: *Exod. xxxiii. 11*; *The Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his Friend*: *And Num. xii. 8*; *With Him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall be behold*. Thus to Us *Christians*, the Mystery of God's reconciliation to Sinners by the Method of the Gospel, *the Riches of the glory of this mystery* (as *St Paul* styles it,) *Col. i. 27*; *even the mystery which had been hid from Ages and from Generations*; is now made plain and manifest: so plain and open, as



to be called by way of Eminence, 2 Cor. S E R M.  
iv. 2; *The Manifestation of the Truth.* XVII.

WE all, with open Face, beholding the Glory of the Lord: That these words, the *Glory of the Lord*, are to be understood, not in the literal, but in a figurative sense, to signify the *clear and glorious manifestation of the Will of God by the Gospel*; is evident, as from the whole connexion of the Apostle's discourse in *this* place, so from the many *other* passages of Scripture, wherein the Gospel is stiled in like manner *the riches of God's Glory*, Rom. ix. 23; *the riches of the Glory of this mystery*, Col. i. 27; *the Glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth*, Joh. i. 14; *the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God*, 2 Cor. iv. 4, and ver. 6; *the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, shining in our Heart*. The words of that whole verse, are very remarkable; *God, who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness*, (that is, who manifested his Glory originally in the *first Creation of Things*) the same God *bath shined in*

S E R M. *our hearts* (has manifested his Glory  
 XVII. *the second time no less conspicuously in*  
*our redemption;)* *hath shined in our hearts,*  
*to give the Light of the Knowledge of the*  
*Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ.*  
 And these two last expressions, *Christ's*  
*being the Image of God;* and the *Light*  
*of the Knowledge of God's Glory, shining*  
*upon us in the Face (or in the Person) of*  
*Christ;* open to us the Ground and Mean-  
 ing, of that *Similitude* the Apostle inter-  
 poses in this part of the Text,

*Beholding as in a Glass, the Glory of*  
*the Lord.* That which he hereby in-  
 tended to express, is, that in *Christ*, who  
 is the *Image of the invisible God*, and the  
*Great Revealer of his Will*, we clearly and  
 plainly behold the whole pleasure of God  
 towards us. For, *the Father, no man hath*  
*seen at any time; no man hath seen, nor*  
*can see; but the only-begotten Son, which*  
*is in his Bosom, He has declared him;*  
 and has declared him so plainly, that *he*  
*who has seen me, saith our Saviour, has*  
*seen the Father, Job. xiv. 9.* There is a  
 phrase, very like to This in the Text, used

in a *contrary* sense by the same Apostle, S E R M. in his former Epistle to the *Corinthians*, XVII. ch. xiii. 12. Now (says he) *we see through a glass darkly, but Then face to face.* In which passage, *seeing through a glass*, signifies *seeing darkly or obscurely*, in *opposition* to *beholding plainly, face to face*: But here in the Text, the phrase signifies on the contrary, *seeing clearly or plainly*; and is the very same as, *beholding face to face*: *We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the Glory of the Lord.* The words in the Original, are in Both places more expressive, than in the Translation; and show plainly the Reason of this different Signification. In *one* place, the word, which we render, *glass*, signifies a *perspective-glass*; which brings distant things into the reach indeed of our Sight, but still very *obscurely, imperfectly, and indistinctly*; and does therefore very aptly and by a most proper similitude express That View of a future state, which we have by Faith and not by Sight. But now in this *other* passage in the Text, the word which we render, *glass*, signifies

S E R M. a *Mirroure* or *Looking-glass*, which on the  
 XVII. contrary represents things *plainly and distinctly*, *face to face*; and therefore it no less aptly represents that clear *Light of the Knowledge of the Glory and Will of God*, which *shines* to us (saith the Apostle) *in the Face of Jesus Christ*. *We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the Glory of the Lord.*

IT follows, *Are changed into the same Image*: The meaning is, As *Christ* is, by nature, the perfect *Image* of God; so *We*, by communication of *Light* and *Knowledge* from him, and by the practice of *Righteousness* and true *Holiness*, in Obedience to him and Imitation of him, are transformed *into the same Image*. As *Christ* is, by nature, the *Son of God*; so *We*, by *Adoption* and by the *Fruits of his Spirit dwelling in us*, have *this Love bestowed upon us*, that *We* also, should be called the *Sons of God*. For of his *Fulness* have we all received, and *grace for grace*, Joh. i. 16. That is, Through the *Fulness* of those Divine Perfections, and of that *Grace* which was conferred upon Him  
 without

without measure; God has communicated S E R M. to *Us* a *proportionable* Fulness of Divine XVII. Knowledge and Virtue, according to *our* capacities; and *Grace*, that is, Mercy and Favour, *according to the measure of the Gift of Christ.*

BUT more particularly; Being *changed into the same Image with Christ*, signifies Two things; *First*, being made like to him in *Holiness here*; and *Secondly*, being made like him in *Glory hereafter*. *First*, being *changed into the same Image with Christ*, signifies, being made like to him in *Holiness here*. The *Image of God* in the mind of *Man*, is *Virtue and true Righteousness*; and therefore, when the Scripture speaks of mens reforming from Vice, or improving in Virtue; it is a very lively description of the Excellency of their State, to express it by their being transformed into the *Image of God*, or being made after his *Similitude or likeness*. Thus the Psalmist; *As for me, saith he, I will behold thy presence in righteousness; and when I awake up after thy Likeness, I shall be satisfied with it* Ps.

S E R M. xvii. 16. And the Apostle St Paul, Rom. xviii. 29; *Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.* That God's predestinating men to be conformed to the Image of his Son, does not here signify, decreeing concerning the *Persons*, what they necessarily should do; but decreeing concerning the *conditions*, what he would have *them* do; is evident from the parallel place, *Eph. ii. 10.* where the same Apostle tells us that it was, not the *persons*, but the *good works*, which God before ordained, *that we should walk in them.* Again, *Eph. iv. 23.* Exhorting men to the practice of Virtue, he *Thus* expresses himself; *Be ye renewed* (says he) *in the Spirit of your Mind,-----after God,* (after the example and similitude of God,) *-----in Righteousness and true Holiness; After the Image of Him that created you; as it is, Col. iii. 10. Transformed by the renewing of your Mind; as he expresses it, Rom. xii. 2.*

OUR Saviour himself in his Prayer, S E R M. XVII.  
 delivering the same Notion, speaks after  
 the following manner, *Joh. xvii. 22 ; The  
 Glory which thou gavest Me, I have given  
 Them, that They may be One even as We  
 are One : His Meaning is the same as  
 That in the Text, We beholding as in a  
 glass the Glory of the Lord, (the Light  
 of the Knowledge of the Glory of God  
 in the face of Jesus Christ, as it is explain-  
 ed immediately after,) are changed into  
 the same Image, are made partakers of  
 his Glory, are made (as St Paul elsewhere  
 speaks) the righteousness of God in Him.  
 This is the first signification of the phrase,  
 our being made like to Christ in works  
 of righteousness here.*

2dly, *BEING changed into the same  
 Image with Christ, signifies also being  
 made like him in Glory hereafter. Thus  
 1 Cor. xv. 49 ; As we have born the Image  
 of the Earthy, we shall also bear the  
 Image of the Heavenly : For, when Christ  
 who is our life shall appear, then shall  
 We also appear with him in glory : And  
 He shall change this our vile Body, that* Col. iii. 4.

S E R M  
XVII.Phil iii.  
21.

*it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to that mighty working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. St. John adds another particular reason, why we shall in this sense be changed into the same Image with Christ; 1 Job. iii. 2: We know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; For, says he, we shall see him as he is: The words are a perfect Explication of those in the Text; We all with open face beholding the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image.*

THE Next expression, *from Glory to Glory*, may be understood to signify the manner of Communication of Christ's Glory to Us, whether in the way of Righteousness here, or of Happiness hereafter. *We beholding the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory; that is, by Communication of Glory to Us, from His Glory: According to that Expression of our Saviour, before-cited, Job. xvii. 22; The Glory which thou gavest Me, I have given Them; and that of the Evangelist, Of his Fulness have we*

*we*



we all received Fulness, and Grace for  
(or from) His Grace.

S E R M.  
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BUT the more natural and obvious Meaning of the words, *from Glory to Glory*, is, *from one degree of Glory to another*: We are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory: That is, from our Likeness to Christ in works of Righteousness and true Holiness *here*, we shall improve and go forward unto a further and more glorious Likeness to him in the Enjoyment of eternal Happiness *hereafter*. And this is the more probable to be the true Sense of the words, because it is the Nature or Idiom of the *Jewish* language, to express any improvement in *degree*, by a *repetition* of the same word. Thus *Pf. lxxxiv. 7*; *They shall go from strength to strength*; that is, from one degree of strength to another: And *Rom. i. 17*; *In the Gospel, the Righteousness of God, (or the Mercy of God,) is revealed from Faith to Faith*; that is, from one degree of Faith to another; from one degree of Clearness of revelation, to another; from a less clear dis-  
pen-  
sa-

S E R M. penfation under the *Law*, to a clearer one  
 XVII. under the *Goffpel*. And Thus therefore in  
 the Text likewise, *from Glory to Glory*,  
 may well be understood to fignify, *from*  
*one degree of Glory to another*; from a *lefs*  
*degree here*, to a *greater* and more perfect  
*degree hereafter*.

Laftly, T H E Apoftle concludes the  
 Whole, with the addition of thefe words,  
*even as by the Spirit of the Lord*. The  
 meaning of which is, that all thefe things  
 he had hitherto been difcourfing upon,  
 were accomplifhed in fuch a *manner*, in  
 fo wife, fo effectual, fo glorious a man-  
 ner, as became the Dignity of the Great  
 Agent, and were worthy the Operation of  
 the *Spirit of God*. The *clear Revealing*  
 the Goffpel, to be the *Spirit* and End of  
 the Law: The *Liberty* procured men by  
 this merciful Difpenfation, from the Bur-  
 den and from the Terrour of the Law;  
 from the Guilt of paft Sin by Pardon,  
 which is *Juftification*; and from the Do-  
 minion of Sin for the time to come,  
 which is *Sanctification*: The full and  
 diftinct *Manifestation* of the glorious *Pur-  
 pofe*

pose of God in Christ, of bringing men through him to everlasting Salvation: S E R M.  
XVII.

The *Communication* of this Glory of Christ to Us, by our being conformed to his Image in Righteousness here, and in Glory hereafter: All These, are the Fruits of that One and the same Spirit, which worketh all in all, and distributeth Gifts to every man severally according to the Will of God: That Spirit, which inspired the Predictions of the Prophets, which worked Miracles by the Apostles, which spread the Gospel by the Gift of Tongues, which rejoices when Men embrace the Doctrine of Christ, and assists them in practising it, and supports them in suffering for it, and brings them finally unto Glory by it. As St Paul excellently argues, Rom. viii. 10, 11; *If Christ be in you, the Body is dead, because of Sin; but the Spirit is Life, because of Righteousness: And if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*

SERM. THE Application of what has been  
 XVII. said, is: *First*, from the true Explication  
 of these words, *The Lord is That Spirit*, we may take occasion to observe, that in all *other* places likewise of St Paul's epistles, where the word, *Spirit*, is opposed to, *The letter* or *the Dead letter*, to *Flesh* or *carnal Ordinances*; it always signifies the *Gospel*, or the *spiritual* and *moral* Precepts of Christ, in opposition to the *Ceremonies* of the Law of *Moses*. Which Observation is of great Use, against those who would make Religion to consist, not in the Practice of Virtue and true Righteousness, but in unintelligible mystical and enthusiastick Notions.

*Secondly*, FROM the right understanding of these next words, *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty*; we may learn the true interpretation of those *many* passages, wherein the Apostle contends earnestly for the *Liberty* of Christians, or for their being *free from the Law*. In all which places, his Meaning is not, (as some in Modern times have most unreasonably argued,) that Christians are discharged

charged from any part of the Obligation S E R M.  
of the *moral* Law, or that the Gospel- XVII.  
dispensation (as some Enthusiasts have  
imagined) sets men *above* the confine-  
ments of common Morality: But his plain  
Meaning, is This only; that by the abo-  
lition of *Ceremonies*, we are discharged  
from the *Burden* of the Law; By the  
*Pardon* declared in Christ to Penitents,  
we are delivered from the *Terrour and*  
*Severity* of the Law; and by the As-  
sistance of his *Grace* we are made, not  
*free to Sin*, but *free from Sin*, for the  
time to come.

*Thirdly*, I F we now *with open face be-*  
*hold the Glory of the Lord*, i. e. under-  
stand his Will *clearly and distinctly*, not  
in types and shadows; then ought we  
above all things to endeavour to walk as  
*children of Light*, as becometh those who  
have such *clear Knowledge* of their Duty,  
in all Holiness and righteous Conversa-  
tion.

*Fourthly*, I F by *this Means* we are  
*changed into the same Image, from Glory*  
*to Glory*, i. e. from a Likeness with  
Christ

S E R M. Christ here, to a Likeness with him here-  
 XVII. after ; then ought we always to remem-  
 ~~~~~ ber, that by no other way can we arrive  
 at a conformity with Christ in *Glory*, but  
 by a conformity with him first in *Righ-*  
*teousness and true Holiness.*

*Lastly*, I F all this be worked in us *as*  
*by the Spirit of the Lord* ; if all these Be-  
 nefits be the Operation of that One and  
 the same Spirit, which always works with  
 us in proportion to our own Endeavours,  
 and will not dwell in a Soul that is pol-  
 luted with Sin : Then ought we above all  
 things to take heed, lest by any vicious  
 practice we quench and grieve this good  
 Spirit of God, and drive him from us,  
 and thereby be found to have done de-  
 spite unto the Spirit of Grace.

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