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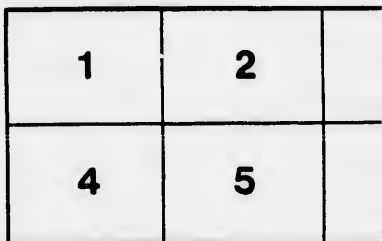
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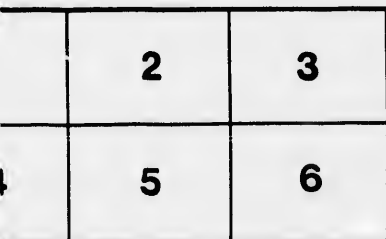
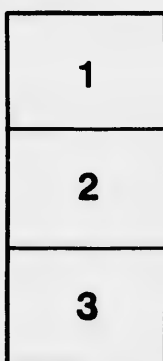
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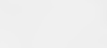
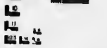
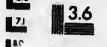
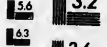
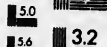
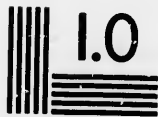
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THE REV. WILLIAM DYER.

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BIOGRAPH

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR.

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WILLIAM DYER, an eminent English Nonconformist divine, was born in 1636. He was successively minister of Cholsbury and Chesham, Buckinghamshire. He was one of the two thousand ministers who were ejected from the Establishment in the year 1662—a year which shall be ever memorable in the history of nonconformity. After his ejection he removed to London, where he resided during the time of the plague, meanwhile preaching and assisting in the good work, which afterwards resulted in the nonconforming party being more favourably dealt with by the State than it had previously been. During this year he preached the celebrated sermons called *Christ's Voice to London*, and the *Great Day of God's Wrath*,—two powerful discourses on the pestilence then prevailing. Later in life, from conscientious motives, he became a member of the Society of Friends, with the principles of which he afterwards identified himself. After living a life of usefulness, and passing through many vicissitudes, he died in 1696, aged sixty years.

The reputation of Dyer as an author rests chiefly upon the present work, which was first published in 1683, and called *Christ's Famous Titles handled in divers Sermons*. He afterwards published a sequel to this work, entitled, *A Golden Chain for Believers to hang about their necks*,

which has maintained a popularity almost equal to that of the *Famous Titles*. He also wrote *A Cabinet of Jewels; or, a Glimpse of Sion's Glory*.

The style and composition of our author resemble those of John Bunyan, although they must be acknowledged to be inferior to those of the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, being deficient in the beautiful simplicity distinguishing that work; but in intensity and sincerity they are equally excellent.

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## NOTE TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

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COURTEOUS READER,—It is the great unhappiness of our age, that the greatest part of men busy themselves most in that which concerns them least. Look into the world among rich and poor, high and low, young and old, and see whether it appear not, by the whole scope of their conversations, that they set more by something else than Christ and salvation. So they may have but some of the earth in their hands, they care for nothing of heaven in their hearts, though gold can no more fill their hearts than grass their purses.

Most men are like that silly woman who, when her house was on fire, so minded the saving of her goods that she left her child roasting in the flames; at last, being put in remembrance of it, she cries out, O my child, my child! Oh how many men are there that drop into perdition merely for a little wealth!

There are many that are temporally miserable, that are eternally happy; and there are many that are temporally happy, that shall be eternally miserable. Oh there is a great vanity in all worldly excellences; the earth is big in our hope, but little in our hands; it cannot satisfy the sense of men, much less can it satisfy the souls of men.

Dear children, according to my talents received, I have endeavoured to set forth the riches, the loveliness, the

preciousness, and excellences which are in Christ, to draw the heart after him, and to be sick of love for him. Oh! Jesus Christ is a fountain of life, light, love, grace, glory, comfort, joy, goodness, always full and flowing, yea, overflowing. Paul was so much taken with Christ, that he was ever in his thoughts, always near his heart, and upon his tongue. Oh that our hearts and tongues were thus busied about Christ, and taken up with Christ, and these treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are in him!

The design of this piece is not the ostentation of the author, but the edification of the reader; though the author be contemptible, yet the matter is comfortable. I hope none will blow out such a candle upon earth, by the light of which they themselves may see the way to heaven. If God had given in more of himself to me, I should have given more out to thee; but God looks not for what he gives not. If God may have glory, and the church edification, by these labours of mine, I shall have my end. Now, the good Lord bring thy heart more and more in love with Christ, who is altogether lovely, that shortly thou mayest enjoy endless felicity in his bosom! This shall be the prayer for thee of him that is thy servant in Christ,

WILLIAM DYER.

LONDON, 1665.

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THE

## FAMOUS TITLES OF CHRIST.

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### INTRODUCTION.

"He is altogether lovely."—SOLOMON'S SONG v. 16

OUT of the Lion of the tribe of Judah comes better and sweeter honey than out of Samson's lion; that is the sweetest honey which we suck out of Christ's hive: for the face of none is so comely in a saint's eye as the face of Christ: and the voice of none is so pleasant in a saint's ear as the voice of Christ. O Christian! the God whom thou servest is so excellent, that no good can be added to him; and so infinite, that no good can be diminished in him. He makes happy, and is not the less happy; he shews mercy to the full, and yet remains full of mercy. Oh come, eat and drink abundantly! O beloved! there is no fear of excess here; though one drop of Christ be sweet, yet the deeper the sweeter.

The wine that Christ draws is the best wine that a Christian drinks: this whole book of Canticles is bespangled with the praises of Jesus Christ. The subject-matter of this book is a declaration of the mutual intercourse of love and affection between Christ and his Church: what spiritual entertainment is given on both sides, with the sweet content they have in each other's beauty. Here you may see the

king in his glory, the spouse in her beauty: here you may see Christ giving her sweet promises, adorning her with sundry excellences, communicating his love, and commending her graces: here you may also see the Church even ravished with the consideration and contemplation of Christ's love and beauty; his beauty is taking, his love is ravishing, his voice is pleasing, his goodness is drawing, his manifestations are enticing; he is the beloved Son, and the Son of love; he is nothing but love to those that are his love.

But I shall no longer entertain you with a crumb at the door, but carry you to the chapter out of which my text is taken, and so lead you to the cabinet where the jewel lieth.

Brethren and beloved, you have a glorious description of Christ in this chapter, and that from ver. 10—16, where the spouse is setting forth the riches, the dignity, the excellency, the beauty, the majesty, the glory, the preciousness, the loveliness of Jesus Christ. "He is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold rings set with beryl: his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires. His legs are as pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars." And thus she sets forth her beloved, and at last winds up all with this rare expression, "HE IS ALTOGETHER LOVELY."

This text is a sacred cabinet, which contains in it—

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1. The jewel Christ in this word HE.

2. The price of the jewel, *Altogether lovely*.

The observation, or doctrine, is this, That Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely. He is the most amazing and delightful object. The very name of Jesus Christ is as precious ointment poured forth. It is said that the letters of his name were found graven upon Ignatius' heart. Jesus Christ is in every believer's heart, and nothing can do better there; for "he is altogether lovely." That Jesus Christ is thus transcendently lovely, will appear—

*First*, By titles.

*Secondly*, By types.

*Thirdly*, By resemblances.

*Fourthly*, By demonstrations.

I shall speak only to the first of these. Our Lord Jesus hath seven famous and lovely titles, which are as so many jewels of his crown:—

I. The Desire of all Nations.

II. The King of kings.

III. The Mighty God.

IV. The Everlasting Father.

V. The Prince of Peace.

VI. The Elect Precious.

VII. Wonderful.

## I.

## THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS.

This title occurs in Haggai ii. 7 — “And the Desire of all Nations shall come.” But you shall say, How is Christ the Desire of all nations? Do not all the nations abhor him, and say, We will not have this man to rule over us? “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers took council together, against the Lord, and against his anointed,” Psal. ii. 2. The kings of the earth are afraid lest Christ's government should un-king them; the rulers are jealous lest it will depose them from their dignities; even the reformers, that have adventured all to set it up, are jealous, lest it will encroach upon their power and privileges: kings are afraid of it, and think themselves but half kings where Christ doth set up his power and discipline: lawyers are afraid of it, lest it should take away their gain, and the laws of Christ should overtop the laws of the land: the people are afraid of it, lest it should compel them to subjection to the law and way which their souls abhor. Oh how long hath the world rebelled against Jesus Christ and his government!

But tell me, Have the people gained anything by resisting Christ, his Gospel and government; by hating his servants, and by scorning his holy ways? or doth it make the crown sit more securely on the heads of kings? I shall leave you to judge of this.

I shall show you, in five particulars, that though Jesus Christ be not actively desired by all nations, yet he is rightly styled, THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS.

*First*, Because he is most desirable in himself, and all things that are desirable are in him.

Beauty is in Christ, bounty is in Christ, riches and honour are in Christ, Prov. viii. 18.

Jesus Christ is the treasure hid in the Gospel, the pearl of great price: he is the sun in the firmament of the scripture, whom to know is everlasting life: he is a spring full of the water of life, a hive of sweetness, a magazine of riches, a river of pleasures, wherein you may bathe your souls to all eternity.

Oh! he is fulness and sweetness. "The chiefest among ten thousand," Sol. Song v. 10. He is more precious than rubies; and all things thou canst desire are not to be compared to him, Prov. iii. 15.

Alas! what are all the crowns and kingdoms of the world, all the thrones and sceptres of kings, to Christ? I say, what are the treasures of the east, the gold of the west, the spices of the south, and the pearls of the north to him? These, or whatsoever thou dost imagine, are not to be compared to the blessed Jesus! Beloved, the glories and excellences of Christ excel all others. As all waters meet in the sea, and as all the lights meet in the sun, so all the perfections and excellences of all the saints and angels meet in Christ. Nay, Christ hath not only the holiness of angels, the loveliness of saints, and the treasure of heaven, but also the fulness of the Godhead; the riches of the Deity are in him, Col. ii. 9. "For it hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell"—fulness of grace, fulness of knowledge, fulness of love, fulness of glory. He is lovely to the Father, lovely to the angels, lovely to the saints, and lovely to the soul. And therefore he may well be called the Desire of all Nations, for all desirable things are in him.

*Secondly*, Jesus Christ is called the Desire of all Nations, because his desire is after all nations, though he hath no need of them; he hath thousands of angels before him, and ten thousand daily minister unto him: yet such infinite love doth he bear to the sons of men, in whom there is no loveliness, that he himself saith, "My delights are with the sons of men," Prov. viii. 31. That our Lord Jesus had a strong desire to convert and save the nations will appear by three things:—

1. By what he did before he came into the world.
2. By what he did when he was in the world.
3. By what he doth now when he is out of the world.

*First*, Our Lord Jesus had a great desire after the poor nations before he came into the world, or else he would never have left his crown, his royal court, his Father's bosom, his glorious robes, to come into this world to be spit upon by men, and to be murdered by men; nay, he did not only become a laughing-stock to men, but a gazing-stock to angels. Now, beloved, do ye not think that Jesus Christ had a great desire after the nations' good, that he would leave all his glory, and greatness, and pomp, and riches, to come into this world, to be poor, to be hungry, to be weary, to be tempted, to be betrayed, to be sold?

But you may perhaps say, that Christ little thought his own countrymen would have shed his blood, and that one of his own family would betray him.

Why, do you think he did not know it? Yea, he knew it before he came into the world, that the Jews would crucify him, and that Judas would betray him, John vi. 64. He knew from the beginning who

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they were that believed not, and who should betray him. Christ knew it before he came from heaven what coarse entertainment he should have upon earth. Now, put all this together, and tell me, had not Jesus Christ a desire after us, before he came to us, that he would uncrown himself to crown us; and put off his robes to put on our rags; and come out of heaven to keep us out of hell? He fasted forty days that he might feast us to all eternity! He came from heaven to earth that he might send us from earth to heaven.

The Son of God became the Son of man, that we, the sons of men, might become the sons of God; and all this he did to save the nations.

*Secondly*, He had a longing desire after the nations when he was in the world.

Oh! Christ would fain have saved the nations, and healed them, and enlightened them: therefore he sends forth his apostles, Matt. xxviii. 19, and bids them "Go and teach all nations:" the people were in his eyes, and upon his heart; and so, in Matt. xxii. 3, Christ sends forth his servants, once, twice, thrice, as if he would take no denial; but they would not come. Nay, our Lord Jesus Christ did not only send others to poor souls to beseech them, to entreat them to come in, to repent and to believe in him, that their souls might be saved, but he went himself and desired them; nay, that is not all, he even cried to them, and said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink," John vii. 37.

Oh how earnest was Jesus Christ with poor souls to come to him! "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," Matt. xi. 28. So in Luke xiv. 23, "Go to the highways, and compel them to come in, that my house may be full."

From this you see what vehement desires Jesus Christ had after the nations and souls of men, that he might ever make them happy, when he was in the world; and he hath the same desire still. How often would Jesus Christ have healed the Jews, that poor nation, as he himself speaketh in Matt. xxiii. 37: "How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her young ones, and ye would not!" Nay, when he hath done all this, he doth not leave them, but weeps over them: his eyes were wet, because their eyes were dry. So this is clear, from what Christ did when he was in the world, that he desired much the healing and converting of the nations.

*Thirdly*, He hath a great desire after the nations, now he is out of the world. Though he be gone to heaven, and entered into glory, and there sitteth at the right hand of the Father, yet his desires are as much after poor souls as ever. This will appear by two things:—

1st, In his forbearance and long-suffering.

Oh how long hath Christ borne with the sinful nations, and yet he bears with them still, notwithstanding they have broken his laws, and despised his Gospel, and contemned his ordinances, and shed his saints' blood, grieved his Spirit, and abused his mercies: this and much more have they done, and yet he spared them that he might be gracious to them, Isa. xxx. 18, "Therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you!"

Now, do you think that Jesus Christ would take all this at the nations' hands, but that he is unwilling to destroy them, and most willing to save them?

*2dly*, His love appears, not only by his bearing with them, but by his proffers to them.

O beloved, how doth God stand day after day, month after month, and year after year, proffering himself, his Son, his mercy, his love, his grace, and his glory, to poor souls !

Many have the space of repentance who have not the grace of repentance.

Now, my brethren, by these things you may see that Jesus Christ hath a great desire after the nations.

*3dly*, Jesus Christ is called the Desire of all Nations, because it is He only that can make any person, family, or nation, truly desirable.

O beloved, what is the reason that the Lord of hosts prefers his people before all the sons of men ? The Lord prefers his little remnant before all the world beside, Exod. xix. 5, " You shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people ; " " the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour, " Prov. xii. 26. Though his neighbour be a prince, a king, an emperor, or a pope, yet if he be more righteous, he is more excellent than he ; they are but base born. Believers be those worthies of whom the world was not worthy, Heb. xi. 38. " Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, " 1 Pet. ii. 9. Believers are not only diligent Christians, but excellent Christians.

Now, what is the reason that the saints are thus excellent above all others ? Is it for their birth, breeding, learning, riches, greatness, or honour ? No ; it is for none of these : but if you would know the reason, it is because Christ is formed in them, and married to them ; they have the new name, the new nature, the new heart, and the new spirit. Oh !

this is the reason; if there were anything beside Christ that would make any nation, or family, or person, truly desirable, it must be either birth, or greatness, or learning, or riches, or beauty, or wisdom, or strength. Now, all these do not make any one desirable; for if they did, then those that sit upon the nations would be the most desirable persons under heaven, because they have the most of these. But for this, see Dan. iv. 17: And settest over them the basest of men; Rev. xvii. 15, "The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues;" so that none of these can do it, but Christ only, Rev. v. 10.

He hath made us unto our God kings and priests. Oh! Christ hath made every believer a king; it is Christ's beauty that makes us beautiful; it is his riches that makes us rich; it is his righteousness that makes us righteous; he only makes us truly honourable and desirable. Well may Christ be called the Desire of all Nations; it is he that can make a nation desirable.

*4thly*, Jesus Christ is called the Desire of all Nations, because all nations stand in need of him: nay, not only all nations, but all persons, young and old, rich and poor, high and low. He that will be saved must have a Saviour to save him, or else he can never be saved. The apostle tells us, Acts iv. 12, "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved." And Christ saith, John xiv. 6, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me;" so that not only all nations, but all persons stand in need of him.

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You may go to heaven without health, without wealth, without honour, without pleasure, without friends, without learning, but you can never go to heaven without Christ.

What will you do if you begin to die naturally before you begin to live spiritually; if the tabernacle of nature be taken down before the temple of God be raised up; if your paradise be laid waste before the tree of life be set up in it; if you give up the ghost before you receive the Holy Ghost; if the sun of your life be set within you before the Sun of Righteousness shines upon you; if the body be fit to be turned into the earth before the soul be fit to be taken to heaven; if the second birth have no place in you the second death shall have power over you?

Though the nations need nothing more than Christ, yet they slight nothing more than Christ.

Tell me how you will live when you die, that are dead whilst you live?

Oh! is it not sad that the nations should resist Christ, his Gospel and government, as they do?

Indeed, if men might be their own judges, then Christ had no enemies; we are all his friends.

If the Jews might so have been their own judges, it was not the Son of God whom they crucified, but an enemy to Caesar. It was not Paul, a saint, they persecuted, but one that they found to be a pestilent fellow. Some men will say now, they do not persecute the saints of God, but seditious lunatics: but God will shortly take off the veil of hypocrisy from their faces.

Oh! grieve for them that cannot grieve for themselves.

And thus you see that all nations stand in need of Christ, who is the Desire of all Nations.

*Silly*, Our Lord Jesus is called the Desire of all Nations, because when he sets up himself in any one as their Desire, then they run after him, and count nothing too dear for him, Isa. xxvi. 8, 9, "The desire of our soul is to thy name; with my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early."

When the Desire of all Nations once setteth up himself in the soul, then he becomes the desire of the soul.

When he hath thus endeared himself to their souls they count nothing too dear for him, all shall be at his command; their gold, their silver, their lives, Rev. xii. 11: "They loved not their lives unto the death." So that, let men be enemies to Jesus Christ, yet as soon as Christ sets up himself in their hearts, they will love him, own him, serve him, and suffer for him.

Now, put all these together, and it will fully prove Christ to be the Desire of all Nations.

I shall make but a short use of it, and so conclude.

It is so that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Desire of all Nations, and that all things desirable are in him! Oh, then, let me beg of you, let me beseech you, for the Lord's sake, and for your soul's sake, make Christ Jesus the desire of your souls!

He is the Desire of all Nations, and shall he not be the desire of your souls? whom will ye love, if not the KING of saints? whom will ye long for, if not for the Desire of all Nations? whom will ye prize, if not the Prince of Peace? He is the SON OF GOD, the second Person in the glorious Trinity, before whom angels and archangels, and all the host of heaven bow. He is the glory of glories, the crown of crowns, the heaven of heavens; he is a light in darkness, joy in

sadness, riches in poverty, life in death: it is he that can resolve all your doubts, secure you in danger, save your souls, and bring you to glory, where all joy is enjoyed. Oh, therefore, let all the glory of your glory be, to give all glory and yourselves to him!

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## II.

## THE KING OF KINGS.

I now proceed to the second title which is given to the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is, King of kings. Augustine desired to have seen three things before he died: *First*, Rome in her glory and purity. *Secondly*, Paul in the pulpit preaching. *Thirdly*, Christ in the flesh upon earth. Cato, the heathen, repented himself of three things: *First*, That ever he spent a day idle. *Secondly*, That ever he revealed his secrets to a woman. *Thirdly*, That ever he went by water when he might have gone by land. Thales gave thanks for three things: *First*, That he was endued with reason, and was not a beast. *Secondly*, That he was a man, and not a woman. *Thirdly*, That he was a Grecian, and not a Barbarian. And I, poor I, desire to see three things before I die: *First*, Babylon's ruin. *Secondly*, Christ's reigning. *Thirdly*, Satan's binding. The angel hath sworn by him that lives for ever, "That time should be no longer," Rev. x. 6. Who will not believe his sacred oath? Did he say it?—No; he swore it. How? by himself?—No; by HIM that lives for ever. What? that time must be a little?—No; it must be no longer—The time shall be no longer. "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come," said the prophet in Mal. iii. 1. They who keep the word of God's patience, God will keep them in the hour of temptation.

Well, the second title of Jesus Christ is, KING OF KINGS. In Rev. xix. 16: "He hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS

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AND LORD OF LORDS." Here is a title now, KING OF KINGS. Beloved, Jesus Christ is a threefold King.

*First*, His enemies' King. *Secondly*, His saints' King. *Thirdly*, His Father's King.

The first, he rules over—the second, he rules in—the third, he rules for.

*First*, Christ is his enemies' King, that is, he is King over his enemies. Christ is a king above all kings, and over all kings, and therefore the scripture calls him "King of kings," as you have it in 1 Tim. vi. 15. Christ is a King above all kings, for if he were not a King above all kings, he could not be a King over all kings. Now, that he is a King above all kings, two scriptures prove it, Psal. lxxxix. 27. Saith God the Father there, "I will make my first-born higher than the kings of the earth." Now, who is the first-born? Why, it is Jesus Christ; as he is elsewhere called, "the first-born of every creature." "Now," saith God, "I will make my first-born higher than the kings of the earth,"—higher in glory, higher in power, higher in majesty. So in Rev. i. 5. There Christ is called "the Prince of the kings of the earth." Alas! alas! what are all the mighty men, the great, the honourable men of the earth to Jesus Christ? they are but like a little bubble in the water; for if all the nations, in comparison to God, be but as the drop of the bucket, or the dust of the balance, as the prophet speaks in Isa. xl. 15, oh, how little, then, must be the kings of the earth!

Nay, Christ Jesus is not only above the kings of the earth, and higher than kings, but he is higher than the angels; yea, he is the head of angels; and therefore all the angels in heaven are commanded to worship him; he is the head of all angels, Col. ii. 10. "He is the head of all principality and powers,"

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which includes angels. And in Heb. i. 6: "Let all the angels of God worship him." God will have the angels worship Christ as well as men.

Oh! Christ is a King, before whom angels veil their faces, and the kings of the earth do cast down their crowns.

Again, as he is a King above all kings, so he is a King over all kings too. Jesus Christ is an universal King. He is the King over all kingdoms, over all nations, over all governments, over all powers, over all people, Dan. vii. 14: "There was given to him," saith the text, "dominion, and power, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages, were to serve him." Now, who was this? In the 13th verse it is clearly meant of Jesus Christ: "All people, and all nations, and languages, and kingdoms were to serve him;" so that you see Christ is not only King of saints, but King of nations too; and therefore you find, in Psal. ii. 8, it is a text often read, but little observed, "Ask of me," saith the Father, "and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." The very heathens are given to Christ, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.

As the Lord Jesus Christ hath all the kingdoms of the earth given to him, so likewise he hath all power given to him, or else what would he do with a kingdom? In Matt. xxviii. 18, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Oh! this is a text that should revive the hearts of saints. It is he that binds kings in chains, and princes in fetters of iron, as in Psalm cxlix. It is he that suffers no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproves kings for their sakes, and breaks mighty kings in pieces for

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the saints' sake, Psal. cv. 13. And therefore it is he that overrules kings, and overcomes the kings of the earth that make war with the saints. In Rev. xvii. 14, the ten kings made war with the Lamb, but the Lamb prevailed; and why? because he was King of kings and Lord of lords. Thus we see that Jesus Christ is his enemies' King, that is, he is a King above their kings and over their kings.

*Secondly*, As Jesus Christ is his enemies' King, so he is his saints' King: I will give you two scriptures to prove it, though I need not, yet I will, because of making of things very clear as I go on: Rev. xv. 3. There Jesus Christ is called the saints' King: "Thou king of saints." So also in Matt. xxi. 9: "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, behold thy king cometh." So that by these two scriptures you see Jesus Christ is King of saints. Now, beloved, I beseech you here to give heed: Jesus Christ is King of the bad, and of the good; but as for the wicked, he rules over them by his power and might; but the saints, he rules in them by his Spirit and grace. Now to this the scripture witnesseth, that Jesus Christ rules in the saints, and is the King of the saints; and therefore it tells them, Col. i. 27, "Christ is in you the hope of glory;" and elsewhere, "Know ye not that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." Mark here, Christ must be in you, "Christ in you the hope of glory." So in Psal. xxiv. 7, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may come in." Here Christ is called the King of Glory; and the psalmist calls upon men to open their hearts that the King of Glory may come in. So in Rev. iii. 20: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in

and sup with him, and he with me." Oh! this is Christ's spiritual kingdom, and here he rules in the hearts of his people; here he rules over their consciences, over their wills, over their affections, over their judgments and understandings, and nobody hath anything to do here but Christ. It is Christ that rules over the consciences and judgments of men; and therefore he is called the King of saints. It is true, other kings may bear rule over the estates of men; but as for the soul, that only belongs to Christ; and therefore believers are said to be all glorious within. "The King's daughter," which is the Church, in Psal. xlv. 13. The King of Glory rules there, and dwells there. You know God dwells in the highest heavens, and in the humble hearts. Christ is not only the King of nations, but King of saints: the one he rules over, the other he rules in.

*Thirdly*, Jesus Christ is his Father's King too, and so his Father calls him. God calls Christ his King in Psal. ii. 6: "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." Well may he be our King, when he is God's King. But you may say, How is Christ the Father's King? Because he rules for his Father. There is a twofold kingdom of God committed to Jesus Christ.

I. A spiritual kingdom, by which he rules in the hearts of his people, and so he is King of saints.

II. A providential kingdom, by which he rules the affairs of this world, and so he is King of nations. Now, beloved, the scripture saith, "That the Father hath put all things in Christ's hands," John iii. 35. And the apostle tells us, God hath put all things under his feet. The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son; and he hath appointed him over his own house. Now, as



Christ hath all, so he doth all, and rules all for his Father; and therefore the Father calls him His servant—Isa. xli. 2, “Behold my servant;” and in the other text, “my King,” because he rules for his Father, and doth his Father’s will: so that, beloved, in these three respects Christ is a King. Now, I shall lay down some things wherein the Lord Jesus doth infinitely excel all other kings of the earth.

*First*, Jesus is a King that, in a spiritual sense, makes all his subjects kings. He hath a crown of glory for every subject. Oh, what a glorious King is this! Now, that Christ makes all his subjects kings, see Rev. v. 10; saith the Church there, “Who hath made us unto our God kings and priests.” Oh! it is better to be a member of Christ than the head of a nation. Oh, how infinitely happy are all Christ’s subjects! They are all kings, all heirs, all favourites, all sons: all true believers are so; the believer is the only happy man. Alas! where is there such a king to be found, that makes all his subjects kings? There are many kings that undo their subjects, but Christ makes his subjects kings: many kings make their subjects beggars, but Christ makes his subjects kings: many kings put their subjects to death, but Christ died that his subjects might live. They give their subjects titles, but Christ gives all his subjects grace and glory.

In a word, this is the greatest nobility, to be the servant of the great God; he is nobly descended who is born from above. Oh, how many lords hath that man who hath not Christ for his Lord! Every sin is his lord, and every lust lords it over him. Now, where Jesus Christ comes to be king, he makes them kings to his Father, and kings over their lusts. Now, beloved, here is the blessedness and happiness of our

King, he makes us all kings, and gives all crowns of glory.

*Secondly*, Jesus Christ is a most just and righteous King; he reigns in righteousness, he brings peace by righteousness, he makes us righteous, and therefore he is called "The Lord our righteousness," Jer. xxiii. 6. Other kings often deal unjustly, they bear the sword to execute wrath upon well-doers, and strengthen the hands of evil-doers; justify the wicked and condemn the godly; and break oaths, and falsify covenants; and many times they oppress their subjects, and wrong their people; and therefore the scripture saith, "When the wicked bear rule, the people mourn," Prov. xxix. 2, "When the righteous is in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn." But Jesus Christ is a righteous King, so he rules in righteousness; and thou shalt have nothing but righteous dealing from him: look at this text of scripture, which infinitely speaks out Christ's righteous dealing with poor souls, in Rev. xv. 3: "Just and true are thy ways." Mark who is just and true here. It is the King of saints, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Justice and truth well becometh the King of saints. In Prov. iii. 17 it is said, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace;" speaking of wisdom, which is meant of Christ. Oh, what a golden King is here! what a glorious King is here! He is just and true, and all his ways are pleasantness, and all his paths are peace. Oh! this is the excellency of Christ, he oppresseth nobody, he wrongs nobody, therefore he is called just and true. He infinitely excels all the kings of the earth in righteousness: he is a righteous King, and deals for nothing but righteousness.

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*Thirdly*, Christ is a King that liveth for ever and reigns for ever: other kings, they are but of yesterday, they be dead and gone. What is become of all those great and mighty kings we read of? Why, they have gone like a tale, like a dream. But it is not so with the King of saints: the Lord is King for ever, he reigns for ever; and therefore the apostle calls him King immortal, eternal, 1 Tim. i. 17. Christ is there called a King immortal, because he lives for ever. So in Heb. vii. 25, speaking of Christ, who "ever lives," saith he, "to make intercession for us." Now, beloved, here is the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, he lives for ever: other kings are dead, and their subjects may do what they will, but Jesus lives for ever.

*Fourthly*, Jesus Christ is a King that hath a perfect knowledge of all his subjects: kings, and princes, and states, do not know all their subjects; nay, they know very few of them; the poor subjects are unknown to them; they are not acquainted with all the wrongs, and wants, and miseries, that their poor subjects lie under. We are unknown, most of us, to our prince; but now, here is the excellency of Christ, he hath a perfect knowledge of all his subjects; he knows them all by name; he knows all their thoughts, all their wants, all their ways, all their conditions. Now, this is a great happiness, that we have a king that knows us so well.

O poor souls, Christ knows you all, all your wants, all your conditions, all your necessities whatsoever! The Lord Jesus knows all thy sufferings, and therefore saith Paul, in Phil. iv. 19, "My God shall supply all your need." Oh! it is a sweet scripture, "My God shall supply all your need." Your King will supply all your need: he knoweth

all your straits, all your fears; and he will supply all your needs. Oh! here is the excellency of this King.

*Fifthly*, Jesus Christ is a King that sits upon his Father's throne; at this very time he sits upon his Father's throne. But, beloved, this is not all: Christ doth not only sit there himself, but he hath promised, that all men who overcome shall sit down with him upon his throne: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit upon my throne," Rev. iii. 21. Mark that Christ promises all his subjects, that they shall sit upon the throne with him! Now I wonder where there is any king but Christ who will suffer his subjects to sit upon his throne with him. Alas! this would be treason for a man to desire it. I remember, among other things I have read of, a king, who passing over a water, his crown fell from his head into the water, and one of his poor servants, out of love to him, leapt in and fetched it up, and for his greater ease put it on his head, that he might get the better out; and for this the poor man had his head cut off. So high, and mighty, and lofty was this prince. But the Lord Jesus is not so: he is no such proud King; he did not only uncrown himself to crown us, and wear the crown of thorns, that we might wear the crown of glory, but he consents and gives leave to his subjects to sit upon the throne with him: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me upon my throne." Oh, what a glorious King is this, that every one of his poor subjects shall sit upon the throne with him! So in Rev. xxi. 7, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." A man would think this very thing would draw the whole world after Christ. Oh, how should this draw the affections of men to be in

love with those great proffers, and privileges, and honours that Christ bestoweth upon his poor followers! He doth not only make them kings, but he grants them to sit upon his throne with him; thou wouldst say it were an honour indeed, O true believer, couldst thou look into heaven, and see Christ sit upon his throne! But this honour hath all his saints; yea, much more, he maketh them all kings, and grants to them to sit upon the throne with him.

*Sixthly*, Jesus Christ is a King that loves all his subjects, and all his subjects love him; and I am sure that this cannot be said of any king under heaven, but it may be said of the Lord Jesus Christ, for he is a King that loves all his subjects, and all his subjects love him.

There are nine or ten particulars wherein the love of Christ to his subjects doth appear, and is wonderfully manifested.

*First*, His love to his subjects is a primary love. "We love him," saith the apostle, "because he first loved us," 1 John iv. 19. "We love him," and why? "because he first loved us." His love is the cause preceding, our love is the effect following. If he had not fired our hearts with the flames of his love, we should never have bestowed one spark of spiritual love upon Christ: he must draw before we can run; and therefore saith the Church, Song i. 4, "Draw me, and we will run after thee." We cannot run without drawing: he must draw us before we can run, and when he draweth we run. It was not man's loveliness that engaged God to love and save men: God loveth his enemies even in their sinful state, though not with a love of well-willing to them. Oh! since God loved us when we were

not like him, we should strive to be like him who thus loved us; nothing can engage a saint to love God so much as this, that God loved him so much. A minister once weeping at the table, and being asked the reason of it, answered, Because I love Christ no more. Indeed, friends, this should grieve us that we love so little, who are so much beloved. You have a famous saying of Augustine, "He loves not Christ at all who loves him not above all:" this is the first love wherewith God loves his people: it is a primary love.

*Secondly*, Christ is a King that loves his subjects with a distinguishing love, and a separating love, the general love of Christ is scattered and branched unto all the creatures in the world; but his special love, his exceeding great and rich love, is only settled upon his Church. Now, if you ask me what Christ's distinguishing love is, I shall name it, and but name it to you. It is pardoning love—it is redeeming love—calling love—justifying love—adopting love—sanctifying love—glorifying love. This, I say, is a particular love. Christ's love is not only sweeter than wine, but better than life: he is most lovely, he is altogether lovely. Christ is nothing but love to those who are his love.

*Thirdly*, Christ loves his saints with a protecting love, Isa. xlix. 15, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" Is it possible a woman should be so inhuman, to forget her tender infant, and not have compassion on the child of her womb? Yes, saith the Lord, they may forget them; yet I will not forget thee. God may as soon cease to be God as cease to be good; he may as soon cease to live as cease to love; no, no, he cannot forget them.

Did he forget Israel in Egypt, or his Church in Babylon, or Daniel in the lions' den? Did he forget the three children in the furnace, or Jeremiah in the dungeon, or Jonah in the whale's belly, or Peter in the prison, did he forget them? The wicked say indeed, The Lord doth forget, "The Lord hath forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not." Ezek. ix. 9; but they are much mistaken. There are three or four texts of Scripture, which I shall offer to your serious consideration, that do wonderfully speak out God's protecting love to his people. The first is in Rev. vii. 2, 3. You find there an angel hath power given him to hurt the earth and the sea. Now there comes another angel, and cries out, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees." Why? what is the reason? In the third verse, "Till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." Do not pour out your judgments upon them until we have secured the servants of God. Oh how wonderfully doth the Lord protect his people! So again, in Ezek. ix. 4. Certain men he set to destroy that wicked people, and among the rest the Lord calls, and bids one set a mark on them that sigh for the abominations of the land, and for the rest, saith he, destroy them, old and young. Oh! this doth wonderfully set out God's protecting love to his people. So in Isa. iii. 8, 10. The Lord bids the prophet tell them what sad judgments should come upon them, upon the kings and princes, and great men, and soldiers. Now, saith the Lord, "Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with" them; none of this shall come near them. Oh how wonderfully doth this magnify God's protecting love! Isa. xxvi. 20, "Come, my people, enter into your chambers, shut the door, and

hide yourselves for a little moment." Why so, O Lord? Why, until the indignation be overpast. Come, saith God, I am resolved to execute my judgments on wicked men; therefore hide yourselves for a moment. And therefore, I say, let no man's heart fail him; it is but for a moment, and then thy miseries shall end. Beloved, when our miseries are at the greatest, his help is at the nearest. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. When Mordecai is thoroughly humbled, the rude Haman shall be hanged.

*Fourthly*, Christ loves his people with a most cordial love; he loves them with all his heart: nay, they are the dearly beloved of his soul, as he himself calls them, Jer. xii. 7: "I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hands of her enemies." Christ's love to his people is not a lip-love, from the teeth love outwardly; but a real love, from the heart inwardly. Christ loves his people as his Father loves him; and how is that, can you tell? No, all the men on earth, nor angels in heaven cannot declare the love that the Father bears to Christ; and yet as God loves Christ, so doth Christ love his people. You have a full text for this; they are Christ's own words: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you," John xv. 9. Oh how infinitely doth the Father love the Son, and how infinitely doth the Son love his people! Why, he loves them as the Father loves him. O Lord, what love is this! That the Saviour should love the sinner: that Christ should love the miserable sinner: and thus it is. Believers are like letters of gold, engraven on the very heart of Christ. Oh the breadth, the length, the depth, and height, of the love of Christ, saith the apostle, it passeth knowledge! Eph. iii. 19. As if there were both want of words and



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want in words, to set forth the love of Christ, for certainly it must be very great. Alas! others love the saints; but how do they love them? why, not with a cordial love; they do not love them for their good, but for their goods: it is more for the money in their purses than for the grace in their hearts: they love the saints as the Samaritans did the Jews; just as men do with their sun dials, never look on them but when the sun shines: why so? The world never looks upon the saints but in the time of prosperity. When the Jews flourished and were in their glory, Oh what great friends were the Samaritans to them! But when the poor Jews were under affliction, then they had no worse enemies than they: but Christ is not so, he loves thee when thou art poor as well as when thou art rich; as well when thou art in thy rags as when thou art in thy robes; when thou art in adversity as well as when thou art in prosperity. Christ loves his saints as well upon a gallows as though it were in a palace; for whom he loves he loves unto the end. Heb. xiii. 5. He is faithful who hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;" never leave thee in any condition or any place. Oh what a love is this! And therefore, a rush for what the world can do, or for the world's love; it is like a Venice glass, soon broken; it smiles now, and quickly frowns; it cries "Hosanna" to-day, and to-morrow "Crucify him!" but Christ's love is from the very heart.

*Fifthly*, Jesus Christ loves his subjects with a love of benevolence, John iii. 16: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" and, saith Paul, "He loved me, and gave himself for me," Gal. ii. 20. The Father

gives the Son, and the Son gives himself, "who loved me, and gave himself for me:" all that Christ did and suffered it is for me; all that Christ hath is mine. O soul! Christ's love is thine to pity thee; Christ's mercy is thine to save thee; Christ's graces are thine to beautify thee; and his glory is thine to crown thee: Christ's power is thine to protect thee. He that is sure of God's love to him, is sure of God's power for him. Christ's wisdom is thine to counsel thee; his angels are thine to guard thee; his Spirit is thine to comfort thee; and his word is thine to teach thee. There are four attributes of God which are of great support to Christians—his faithfulness, his mightiness, his goodness, and his wisdom.

And therefore it is your duty to live upon promises, while providence seems to run cross; Christ's love to you is free love. All that he hath given you is free: his grace is free, his love is free, his salvation is free, and himself is free. And a grain of grace in the heart is better than a chain of gold about the neck. Now, beloved, all that Christ hath bestowed upon you is free, and therefore it is a love of benevolence.

*Sixthly*, Christ loves his subjects with a love of compassion, sympathizing with them in all their sorrows and sufferings; truly this is a great comfort indeed: "In all their afflictions he was afflicted," Isa. lxiii. 9. So saith the apostle, Heb. iv. 15, "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" that is, we have an high priest that is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; one that doth weep in our tears, and sigh in our sighs, and sorrow in our sorrows, and suffer in our sufferings; and therefore saith Christ, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Oh what a sweet love is this! a love of compassion and sympathizing

with us in all our sorrows and sufferings. Christ was first persecuted by Paul in his members, and afterwards he was persecuted in Paul as one of his members. Now, beloved, Jesus Christ loves his people with a love of compassion, and therefore let thy sufferings be what they will, Jesus Christ doth as it were bear a share with thee.

*Seventhly*, Jesus Christ loves his people with a love of delight and complacency, Prov. viii. 17: "I love them that love me." And in Psal. xlv. 11, speaking there of Christ, "The KING shall greatly delight in thy beauty." And therefore Christ calls his Church his love, his dove, his beloved, his fair one. Oh how infinitely doth Christ love his Church! Certainly Christ bears a great love to his Church; and hence it is you read, "Christ walketh among the golden candlesticks, and he feedeth among the lilies, and his delight is with the sons of men." Although poor believers be ravens in the world's eye, yet they are doves in Christ's eye: they are very precious in his esteem; though they be the loathing of wicked men's souls, yet they are dearly beloved of God; he delights in them. The King shall greatly delight in them.

*Eighthly*, Christ loves his people with an everlasting love, and an undying love: it is a love that never dies, never waxeth cold: Christ's love is like a fountain ever flowing, and never dried up; whom he loves from eternity, he loves to eternity, and they are believers. Now, is not this a great favour to be beloved? "He loves them even to the end," John xiii. 1; not for a day, a month, or a year: not for a flash and away; but even unto the end. And in Jer. xxxi. 3, speaking there of his love, it is called an everlasting love: "I have loved thee,"

saith God, "with an everlasting love." Oh! this is a love that shall bed and board with thee, that shall lie down and rise up with thee, that shall go to thy death-bed with thee, to the grave with thee, and to heaven with thee: the saints shall put off the jewel of faith when they die, but not the jewel of love; for that shall remain with them to eternity. God loves his saints with an everlasting love.

*Ninthly*, Christ loves his people with an universal love; his love is universal to all his saints. Oh! there is not one saint but Christ infinitely loves; he loved poor Lazarus as well as rich Abraham, and despised Job as well as honourable David. He loves the poorest saints as well as the richest, he loves them all alike: God is no respecter of persons. Oh! where is there such a King now as Christ? They love their nobles, but Christ loves all his subjects. Christ's love extends to all his saints: his love is like the beams of the sun, which reacheth always east, west, north, and south; so doth Christ's love.

*Tenthly*, His love is a correcting love. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," Heb. xii. 6.

*Eleventhly*, Christ's love is a directing love; he hath promised to guide and direct his people in the way wherein they ought to walk.

Oh! put all these particulars together; and you must needs confess that Jesus Christ loves his subjects infinitely; as it was said of Lazarus, when Christ wept for him, they made this construction of it—Oh how he loves him! Oh how doth Christ love you who are his people! he loves you infinitely, even beyond measure. Now, for the Lord's sake, consider of it, and let this draw forth your love to him.

I shall next come to shew you the love of Christ's subjects to him.

“HE IS ALTOGETHER LOVELY.”

The spouse indeed was sick of love, but Christ exceeded her; for he died for love. Whilst we were sinners Christ died for us, saith the apostle. He loved us more than his own life; yea, the very life of Christ to him was not too dear for us. Some write of a fowl called a pelican, and they say that she feeds her young ones with her own blood. O sirs! Christ is our pelican, that hath nourished and fed us with his own blood. “My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed,” saith Christ, John vi. 55. Christ's red blood hath taken away our red guilt; scarlet-red sinners are by grace become milk-white saints; all our precious mercies come swimming to us in precious blood. Christ bled love at every vein; his drops of blood were drops of love; yea, the more bloody the more lovely: he was most lovely upon the cross, because then he shewed most love to us.

I have thus shewn you the great love which Jesus Christ bears to all his subjects; and the sum of my discourse is this, That Jesus Christ loves his subjects with an everlasting and undenyng love. That which I am now to shew to you is this, That all Christ's subjects love him; and what a kind of love it is.

The saints' love to Christ is vehement and strong: this will appear if you consider to what the Scripture likens and compares the saints' love. It is compared to sickness, to death, to the grave, to fire.

To these things is a believer's love compared in Scripture. I shall handle them in order.

*First*, Sickness. This is the first comparison which doth set forth the strength of the believer's love; this is set down in two places of the Song of Solomon, chap. ii. 5, "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love." And in chap. v. 8, "Tell ye him whom my soul loveth, that I am sick of love." She is overwhelmed, she is overcome, and even ravished with his love and beauty. Oh! I thirst, I faint, I pant, I long for him. Oh! the Church is very sick, and ready to swoon; never was Ahab so sick for a vineyard, never was Sisera so desirous for milk, nor Samson for water, nor Rachel for a child, nor Amnon for his sister Tamar, as poor broken-hearted sinners are for Christ. When Christ gets into the heart, he draws all the affections to him. I remember the speech of a gracious woman, "I have born," said she, "nine children, with as much pain as other women, and yet I could with all my heart bear them over again; yea, bear them, and bear them all the days of my life, that I might be sure of a part in Christ." Oh how infinitely do believers love Christ! David wonders at his own love, Psalm cxix. 97, "O how love I thy law!" He makes a wonder at it here; with what vehemency he loves God's Word. - So the spouse here, she does not only love him, but she is sick of love, ready to die for love. Here is a sickness not unto death, but unto life; it is a sickness that still bringeth blessedness and happiness with it: a sickness that shall be cured by him who is the great Physician of souls.

*Secondly*, The next thing whereby she expresseth the strength of her love to Christ is by death. This you have in Song viii. 6. She there says "her

love is strong as death." Beloved, you know death is strong; it is the king of terrors, and the terror of kings: it subdues all sorts of people, high and low, rich and poor, old and young, good and bad; the greatest monarchs, kings, and emperors have been thrown down by death. Where did ever that man dwell that was too strong for death? If strength could have resisted it, then Samson had missed it: could greatness have overlooked it, Nebuchadnezzar had escaped it: could beauty have outaced it, then Absalom had never met it: could riches have bribed it, Dives had avoided it. But, alas! none of these were hardy enough for death; it trode on the necks of them all: and, therefore, Oh! look upon death also as a thing you must meet with: look upon yourselves as a thing you must part with. Now, by this you may guess what love is; "it is strong as death." Oh how strong is death! Nay, believers' love to Christ is not strong as death, but stronger than death, as some scriptures make it appear. A believer's love to Christ is stronger than death: "I am persuaded," saith Paul, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," Rom. viii. 38, 39. Death, though it may kill us, it cannot hurt us; though it may send us to the pit of darkness, yet it cannot send us to the place of torments; though it may take away our lives, yet it cannot take away our loves; bloody tyrants have taken away the martyrs' lives for Christ, but they could never destroy their love to him. One of the primitive Christians, when he came to suffer, said, "Oh, I

shall die for my Saviour but once, and no more lives to lay down! Oh, I could die an hundred times for him!" Oh! love is a thing that outlives all enemies, all persecutions, all dangers, nay, death itself. In Rev. xii. 11, saith the text, "They loved not their lives unto the death." And so saith Job, "Though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee:" as if he had said, O Lord, though thou take away my posterity, my greatness, my health, my goodness, my children, yea, my life itself, thou shalt never take away my love: though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee, Job xiii. 15. So that love is not only as strong as death, but stronger than death; for love is the conqueror at the last.

*Thirdly*, Another thing whereby she expresseth the strength of her love, and her strong affection for Christ, is the grave. Her "love is cruel as the grave." The grave is the bed of darkness, which is always craving, and never satisfied, but devours all that comes. Christ tells us, in John iv. 14, "Who-soever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."—What! thirst no more? No more after the world and worldly things, but more and more after Christ and heaven. He that drinks of the water that I shall give him shall thirst no more. No more after those low poor things, but more and more after Christ. No hungry man did ever with more appetite long for bread, nor a thirsty man long for water, nor a naked man for clothes, nor a covetous man for riches, nor a sick man for health, nor a condemned man for pardon, than souls that are truly gracious do for Christ Jesus. "My soul thirsteth for thee," saith David, in Psal. lxxiii. 1. "My soul thirsteth for thee." Why, David, how doth your soul thirst for God? He



tells you, in Psal. xlii. 1, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."—Now mark, the poor hart, which is hunted by dogs, is, as it were, all over in a flame, in a burning heat, and then it pants and thirsts, and is ready to die for water. Oh the vehement fire of David's thirst! and again, he tells us elsewhere, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee," Psal. lxxiii. 25. Do you not desire your wives, your children, your crown, your kingdom? Yea, these he desired in their places, but these were nothing in comparison to God. I remember the saying of the martyr to one that asked him if he did not love his wife and children, when they wept by him. "Love them! yes," saith he; "if all the world were gold, and mine to dispose of, I would give it all to live with them, though it were in a prison; yet," saith he, "in comparison of Him, I love them not." Oh! we must tread upon father, and run over mother, to come to Christ. You know Peter, to come to Christ, would go upon the bare water: rather than sail, he went upon the sea to Christ; truly it was a dangerous passage; but Peter bore up excellently well, while his faith bore up; but when his faith sank, then Peter began to sink too. The world is called a sea in Daniel and in Revelations, and we must go upon these waters to Christ, and be sure to keep up faith, and then you will hold out; but if faith fail you shall be sure to sink. The believer's love is unsatisfied like the grave; none but Christ, none but Christ, saith the martyr; and, as Augustine saith, "O Lord, take away all, only give me thyself."

*Fourthly*, Love is compared to fire, and it hath a most vehement flame, in Song viii. 6. Now, beloved, the saints' love to Christ is not only compared to fire, for its warming and heating, but for its kindling, and increasing, and flaming. "Whilst I was musing," saith David, "the fire burned," Psal. xxxix. 3. What fire? Why, the fire in his heart, and not the fire in the hearth. And when the apostles went to preach the Gospel, the fire sat upon their tongues, Acts ii. 3. Now, beloved, as the saints' love is compared to fire in the Scripture, so you shall find afflictions, and persecutions, and dangers, and other cruel things that accompany the poor saints in the world, are called waters and floods in Dan. ix., and Psal. lxxix., and Matt. vii. But two scriptures that are more than ordinary, in Rev. xvii. 15, where they are called waters, "The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." The Spirit opens it to our hand; and you have another full scripture in Rev. xii. 15, where it is there said of the dragon, That he cast out much water like a flood after the woman. Now, what is this flood? Why, this flood is bloody persecutions and devilish prosecutions. Now, beloved, how long hath the dragon been spewing out her water upon the Church? and wherefore is all this water thrown out? It is to quench the fire that I speak of; but can they do it? No, alas! they may spew till their eyes come out of their head, and to no purpose, Song viii. 7. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." All the bloody persecutions and afflictions cannot quench love: and therefore let wicked men send forth as many floods as they will, it can-

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not drown the saints' love. All the water that Saul and his party threw after David did not quench his. No, saith he, "Though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, yet will I fear no ill," Psal. xxiii. 4. David is not afraid to go by death's door. All the waters that Herod and the rulers threw upon the apostles could never quench their love. Now, beloved, you will find after the apostles were whipt soundly, they went away rejoicing, and rejoicing in this very thing, that they were accounted worthy to suffer for Jesus Christ. "They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods." Heb. x. 34. And saith Paul, in Rom. viii. 35, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, and the like?" Believe it, sirs, all these are trying things, and yet, saith he, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" No, no, they cannot do it: there is nothing shall ever be able to separate us from the love of Christ: so that the believer's love is not made of such metal to be quenched by this flood; the saints are all on fire for Christ. And we find that great flood which Nero and Julian poured out upon the primitive Christians: What, did it quench fire? I remember one of them said, Had I ten heads they should all suffer for Christ. And another said, If every hair of my head were a man, they should all suffer for Christ. Alas! the poor Christians caught their torments like so many crowns: and the scripture tells you, that "many waters cannot quench love." Now, beloved, put these four things together, and it is very clear, that the saints' love to Christ is vehement and strong; they will hang for him, they will burn for him, do any thing for him, suffer the

greatest torments rather than he should lose the least dram of glory. But you will say, Why do all God's subjects love him with this love? The reasons are two. *First*, Because he deserves it; *Secondly*, He commands it.

*First*, Christ deserves our love. Why do we love him? why, he deserves it at our hands were it ten thousand times more than it is. Beloved, it was he that created us; it is he that sanctified us; it is he that redeemed us, and loved us; it was he that changed our natures, and pardons our sin; it was he that made our peace, and pacified his Father's wrath for us, and satisfied his Father's justice for us, and wrought everlasting righteousness for us: it is he that bore our cross, that we might wear his crown. He waded through a sea of sufferings for us, to bring pardon to our souls; and doth not this Christ deserve our love? Oh infinitely, infinitely! And truly, sirs, the more Christ hath done and suffered for us, the dearer should he be unto us.

*Secondly*, As Christ deserves our love, so he commands it: Christ commands us to love him above life, above wife, above relations. Christ will have all, or none at all. Jesus Christ must weigh heavier than all relations in the balance of our affections: he commanded to love him above all.

APPLICATION. I now proceed to the application of all to ourselves, which is the third thing in order to be handled, and I shall make three uses of it. *1st*, For consolation. *2dly*, Examination. *3dly*, Exhortation.

First of all, Is it so that Christ loves us with an everlasting and never-dying love? Why, then, here is comfort for you who are his people. I speak only now to such. "Comfort ye, comfort ye,

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comfort ye my people, saith your God," Isa. xl. 1; and saith Christ, John xiv. 1, "Let not your heart be troubled." Christ would not have his poor saints troubled; and saith the apostle, 1 Thess. v. 16, "Rejoice evermore!"—Alas! how can we rejoice when men villify us; when men reproach us, and abuse us, and persecute us, how can we rejoice? but hark what Christ saith, Matt. v. 11, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake." Mark, Blessedness goeth in the first place, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you." Oh! it is a matter of blessedness, and therefore be not cast down. You know what was said of old, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world," John xvi. 33. O poor soul! this is all the hell that thou shalt have, therefore be of good cheer; here thou hast thy bad things, thy good things are to come; here thou hast thy bitter things, but thy sweet things are to come; here thou hast thy prison, but thy palace is to come; here thou hast thy rags, thy robes are to come; here thou hast thy sorrow, thy joy is to come; here thou hast thy hell, thy heaven is to come. After the cup of affliction comes the cup of salvation; the sweetness of the crown which shall be enjoyed, will make amends for the bitterness of the cross which was endured. One passing by a place where a cross lay on the ground, he caused it to be reared up, and found much riches and treasure under it. O Christians under your greatest trouble lie your greatest treasures, patience for sorrow: the seed of sorrow on earth, shall reap a golden crop of joy in heaven; they that sow holiness in the seed-time of

their lives, shall reap happiness in the harvest of eternity. Never think to have an end of your sorrow till there be an end of your sin. The apostle tells us, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. iv. 17. A dram of reproach to a weight of glory! Oh what a short moment of pain to an eternity of pleasures! therefore, saints, be of good cheer. Here is comfort for you: your best days are to come; you are subjects who are beloved entirely, cordially, infinitely, with an undying love.

*Use 2.* For the use of examination. Is it so that the saints' love to Christ is vehement and strong? Why then, I beseech you, examine, and try, and search yourselves; how do your pulses beat after Christ? Oh that you would examine yourselves, that you may know whose you are while you live, and whither you shall go when you die, and what will become of you to eternity. Oh! sirs, are you sick of love? do you love Christ? for the Lord's sake, examine and try, and see whether you be sick of love to Christ. It is to be feared there be but few in the world sick of this disease. Many are sick for honours, that are but rattles to still men's ambitions; many are sick for gold and silver, which is but a little shining dirt; many men are sick for blood, who eat up the Lord's people like bread; God will lay on them the hand of vengeance who lay on his saints the hand of violence; many are sick with superstition, and the human traditions of men, which, instead of bringing their souls to heaven, will beguile them of heaven; alas! many are sick of their sufferings—who need fear the cross who are sure of the crown? but, O! how few are there

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that are sick of love to Christ! For the Lord's sake, do not deceive yourselves; you see the spouse was ready to swoon and faint, and die for Christ.

Her love was as strong as death; nay, stronger than death: is your love so? O soul! canst thou endure a prison for Christ, burning for Christ, hanging for Christ, forsaking all for Christ; wilt thou venture on the waves for Christ, as Peter did? Oh, for the Lord's sake, look to yourselves: there are many profess love to Christ in words, but more that deny him in their works: God was never more in men's mouths, and never less in men's lives. Beloved, is your love like the grave, never satisfied? Dost thou cry out more for Christ? Oh give me Christ, and take the world who will. Is this flame in your souls? For the Lord's sake try yourselves, deal honestly with your poor souls.

Now, beloved, I have given you a taste of true sincere love, and blessed are they who cast their love into the sweet bosom of their Maker.

*Use 3.* I shall now close all with a word of exhortation. Well, what can I say more to make you love Christ? he is most lovely, he is altogether lovely. Therefore, love Christ, love Christ, —all causes of love are in him. There may be particular causes of love in men and angels; but I say all causes of love are in Christ: Oh love Christ; for if you do not there is a dreadful curse pronounced against you. There is no heaven, no happiness, no crown, without Christ; for in him doth all fulness dwell, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ, and the Father gives forth all his loving-kindness through Christ. Beloved, is it not better swimming in the water-works of repentance than burning in the fire-works

of vengeance? one of them you must; there is no coming to the fair haven of glory without sailing through the narrow strait of repentance: and there, say what you will, unless you believe in your Saviour, your souls will be miserable for ever; and therefore consider of what I have said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things. Love Christ more than ever, more than all, and above all; then you shall be happy for evermore.

*Seventhly*, Jesus Christ makes all his subjects, his subjects do not make him. "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth," Col. i. 16. By whom? By Jesus Christ, "by him were all things created;" "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not," John i. 10. "All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made," John i. 3. There was not any thing made without Christ, and all things were made by Christ. Beloved, Jesus Christ creates his subjects; in him we live, move, and have our being; he gives us a threefold being; our first being in a state of nature, our second being in a state of grace, and our third being in a state of glory. This is the seventh thing wherein Jesus Christ excels all other kings—he makes his subjects which none else can do.

*Eighthly*, Christ is the richest of all kings. He is rich in love, he is rich in knowledge, rich in goodness, rich in wisdom, rich in grace, rich in glory. He is as rich as the Father himself: the riches of the Deity are in him; "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," Col. ii. 9. Alas! what are princes' single crowns, or the pope's triple crown, to Christ's many crowns? Christ hath not one, or two, or three crowns, but many crowns



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upon his head, Rev. xix. 12, "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns." Christ is richer than any king, nay, richer than all the kings in the world; "for he is heir of all things," in Heb. i. 2. He is the greatest heir in heaven and on earth.

The Spanish ambassador coming to see the treasure of St. Mark at Venice, which was so much cried up through the world for a famous treasury, he fell a groping of it, to find whither it had any bottom; and being asked the reason of it, said he, "My great master's treasury differs from yours in this; his hath no bottom as yours hath;" alluding to the mines of the Indies. But, alas! what is the proud Spaniard's treasure to Christ's, and what are his mines to Christ's mines! what are all the jewels, and diamonds, and crowns, and the sceptres of all the kings of the earth to Christ's! "The whole Turkish empire," said Luther, "is but a crust that God throws to dogs," which is a great part of the world indeed; but it is no more than a bone, a crust that God throws to dogs. Oh! Christ's riches are so many, they cannot be numbered; they are so precious, they cannot be valued; so great, they cannot be measured. Oh the infinite riches of our King! Christ is a mine of gold, which we must dig till we find heaven.

*Ninthly*, Christ excels all other kings in this; he is a King whose power is absolute over all nations, and people, and kindreds, and tongues. His will is a law: no man's will in the world is sufficient to be a law, but the will of our King is sufficient.

*Tenthly*, Jesus Christ is a King who rules over the souls and consciences of men, over the wills and

hearts of men: other kings may rule over the estates and bodies of men, but not over their consciences. Now this is Christ's glory, which he will give to no other: Christ, by his power, is able to subdue the wills of men, and the hearts of men, though ever so stubborn and stout before. All the power of the world cannot do this: if all the kings, and princes, and emperors of the world were put together, they would not be able to subdue the heart of one poor man; they may beat his body, afflict his body; torment his body; but as for his heart, all the kings and potentates in the world, nay, all the angels in heaven, cannot subdue the heart of a poor sinner; and this is the glory of Christ, that he can do this. Heart-work is God's work. The great heart-maker must be the great heart-breaker; none can do it but he.

*Eleventhly*, Christ is a King that hath no need of any instruments: he makes use of them sometimes; but he needs not any. Alas! what can the kings of the earth do without instruments? how can they govern their kingdoms without instruments? they must have this instrument here, and the other there, or else farewell crown and kingdom quickly. But Jesus Christ hath no need of any; he can do anything by his own power. By himself he destroyed Pharaoh and his great host in the Red Sea, Exod. xiv. By himself he overthrew Jericho, that great city, Josh. vi. By himself he smote the great army of a thousand thousand men; the greatest army that ever we read of, 2 Chron. xiv. By himself he overthrew Ammon and Moab, and Mount Scir, who warred against Judah.

See what he hath done by weak means: he smote the kings about Sodom, even by Abraham and his

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poor family, Gen. xxiii. He overthrew that mighty  
 army of the Midianites by Gideon's three hundred,  
 Judges vii. By weak means he destroyed great  
 Goliath, even by David; and great Sisera by a  
 woman. He destroyed a garrison of the Philistines  
 by Jonathan and his armour-bearer, 1 Sam xiv. 4.

See what he did contrary to means. Why,  
 contrary to means he delivered the three children  
 from burning, being in the fire, Dan. iii. Contrary  
 to means he delivered Jonah from drowning in the  
 sea. Contrary to means he delivered Daniel from  
 the den of lions. Contrary to means he kept the  
 Israelites from being drowned in the sea. And  
 I might shew you what he hath done by contrary  
 means, but I pass that: so that you see our King  
 hath no need of instruments, and therefore he  
 wonderfully excels all others.

*Twelfthly*, Christ is a King who will overcome  
 and subdue all our enemies; yea, all our enemies,  
 both spiritual and temporal, he will utterly over-  
 throw. Our enemies are very many and very  
 mighty: high in power, and high in pride, and we  
 very weak. We may well speak in David's words,  
 in 2 Sam. iii. 39. "I am this day weak, though  
 anointed king." How David? Weak to-day, and  
 yet made a king to-day? Yes, saith he, "the sons  
 of Zeruah be too hard for me." Why, believers,  
 you are all kings in a spiritual sense, you are kings  
 elect, kings in disguise; but poor hearts, you are  
 weak, though you are kings elect: the sons of  
 Zeruah are too hard for you. But, Jesus Christ is  
 a King of kings, a King above all things, and over  
 all kings, and he must reign till he has put all his  
 enemies under his feet, 1 Cor. xv. 25. Mark, "He  
 must reign," he must of necessity, God hath spoken

it, till he has put all enemies under his feet—not only some, but all. Oh! this is good news to saints, excellent news. What king can do this but Christ? What king can put all his enemies under his feet? What earthly king can subdue all his enemies? Alas! they cannot subdue their own; for the most flourishing kings that we read of have fallen before their enemies for want of strength: Richard III. cried out in his distress, “A kingdom for a horse, a kingdom for a horse;” and yet all this could not save his life. But Jesus Christ can subdue all his enemies: he hath all power in heaven and in earth given to him, Matt. xxviii. 18. So that if he speaks the word, all his enemies are overthrown, even in a moment.

*Thirteenthly*, Christ surpasses all other kings in this: he is a King that gives his subjects the richest and the best gifts of any other king whatsoever: in John x. 27, 28. “My sheep,” saith he, “hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give to them eternal life.” The wise God, that he may invite and encourage poor sinners to a holiness of life, sets before their eyes the recompence of reward; that if the equity of his precepts do not prevail, the excellency of his promises may: he would fain catch men with a golden bait. Abraham’s servant gave jewels of silver, and jewels of gold to Rebekah, that he might win her heart over to Isaac, Gen. xxiv. 23. Oh the jewels, the excellent jewels, that Christ gives to poor souls to win their hearts to him! Christ gives us richly all things to enjoy; what can we desire more? Alas! the men of the earth give but poorly and penuriously; but Christ gives richly and freely. No man in the world gives so freely as Christ: Christ gives fre-

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quently; every day, every hour he scattereth  
 jewels to poor souls. The great king of Persia  
 gave two of his courtiers, to the one a golden  
 cup, to the other a kiss, and he that had the  
 cup complained to the king that his fellow's  
 kiss was better than his golden cup. Christ doth  
 not put off with a cup of gold, but he gives us the  
 best, he gives best gifts to his beloved ones; he gives  
 his best love, his best joy, his best peace, his best  
 mercies. Oh! where is there a king like this King?  
 Alas! earthly kings may give great titles, or a place  
 in the court, and the like: they may give a title to-  
 day, and a halter to-morrow, as in the case of  
 Haman; they may smile to-day, and frown to-  
 morrow; kiss to-day, and kill to-morrow; but Christ  
 doth not so: he gives the best of everything, the  
 best of his love, his best blood, not the blood of  
 his finger, but the blood of his heart. Oh how far  
 doth Christ excel all others in giving his subjects  
 the best gifts! What a gift is heaven! what a gift  
 is pardon of sins! I wonder what king can give  
 his people such gifts; and herein the Lord Jesus  
 excels all others.

*Fourteenthly*, Christ makes all his subjects free;  
 there is not one subject that he hath but is a free  
 man and woman. There are some things that  
 Christ frees from, and which, if we were not freed  
 from, would undo us to all eternity. He frees  
 us from the curse, the cursed curse; if Christ  
 had not freed us from the curse we had been  
 condemned for ever; but Jesus Christ hath freed  
 us. In Gal. v. 1. "Stand fast," saith St. Paul,  
 "in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you  
 free." And in John viii. 36, If the Son make  
 you free, then are you free indeed. He frees us

from the guilt of sin; our pride, our covetousness, our unbelief would damn us, had he not freed us from the guilt of sin; but Christ frees his people from this. Again, he hath freed us from the power of the devil, insomuch that the devil hath nothing to do with us, Acts xxvi. And he frees us from the flames of hell, and from the pit of hell; Christ hath cut off the entail of hell and damnation, 1 Thess. i. 10. He hath "delivered us from the wrath to come." Christ hath freed us from the flames of hell.

Again, Christ hath freed us from the slavery, from the bondage, from the yoke, in Gal. v. i. "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not again entangled in the yoke of bondage." We are "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," in Eph. ii. 19. And Christ tells us himself, in Matt. xi. 30, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." These things we are free from, and there are other things that we are made free of, and that in heaven, we are all made free men and women of the New Jerusalem, and we trade there, and have as good right there as any other saints: we are fellow-citizens, free men not only of heaven, but of all the promises and all the privileges that the saints enjoy.

Now, is not this a wonderful mercy that our King hath done for us? he hath freed us from all those miseries which would ruin us for ever, and made us free of all the excellent privileges whatsoever, which poor souls can enjoy. Oh how far doth Christ excel all other kings! The rulers of the earth may lay heavy burdens upon the consciences of men, and bodies of men, and estates

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of men, but Christ lays no such burden on us; no, Christ hath made us free, and no people so free, because Christ hath freed us upon the cross. Christ bought it dear enough: it cost him his best blood, his noble blood. I might name more particulars wherein Christ excels all other kings; but I think these are sufficient to demonstrate it.

*Use 1.* I shall close upon this head with a word of application; and so shall finish this second title, **KING of kings.**

*First,* Is it so that Christ is a threefold king, and is he a king that doth so far surmount all the kings of the earth? Then, however the world goes, here is comfort for saints, that he is such a King. Oh what a mercy is this! What a comfort is this to the Lord's people, that Christ is King above all kings, and over all kings, and must reign till he has put all his enemies under his feet! All his enemies must be brought down and made his footstool. Now this should comfort the people of God, and teach them to wait Christ's leisure, and let him alone. Some earthly kings would do great matters, but they want power; but Christ wants not power: for all power is given him in heaven and in earth. Now, did you really believe this, that all power is certainly given to Christ, it would be a cordial to revive you in the worst times, and saddest of trials. He who is our Saviour, he who is our head, our brother, our friend, is King of kings. This doctrine of Christ's kingly power is a very sweet doctrine to the members of Christ: and I beseech you, let those considerations which have been laid before you, bear up your spirits. I have shewed you with what an entire love Christ loves his subjects; he is King of kings, and can do anything without instruments; he needs

none to help him to do his work. He can, if he please, enable the most despicable creatures to do his work: therefore let these considerations make impression upon your souls. If a man should tell you, your brother or sister, beyond the seas, were advanced to great honours, as Joseph, when he heard that his father was alive, "Go," saith he "tell my father of all my glory and greatness in Egypt, for he will rejoice at it." Now I have told you a relation of Christ's kingly power; and therefore let this quiet your spirits: "Be still," saith the Lord, "and know that I am God," in Psal. xlv. 10. It is enough for you to know that I am God, and therefore be still, consider what I am.

*Use 2d.* By way of exhortation, I have one word to say to the saints, and another to sinners.

*First,* To saints. If it be so, that Christ is King of kings, and King above all kings, and over all kings; Oh then, you who are the people of God, you who are near and dear to him, upon whom and in whom Christ is formed and stamped; oh that you would give all the glory, and praise, and honour, to Christ, and study to advance his glory. He hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, to shew forth his praise. Oh! this should be our great endeavour. Oh that you would endeavour in your places to advance Christ!

*Secondly,* A word or two to such as are none of the subjects of Christ. Let me exhort you who are not yet subjects of Christ, to believe in him, embrace him, receive him, to lay hold upon him, to be one with him, or else you will one day cry out as that king did in distress, "Oh! a kingdom for a horse,"—a kingdom for a Christ.—Oh! thou wouldst give ten thousand worlds, if thou hadst them to

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give, for a part in Christ. Alas! sinner, what is the reason that Christ hath no more in thy esteem? Thou wilt part with Christ rather than part with thy swearing, and drunkenness, and filthiness. Oh this is sad! there is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved. He is the Desire of all nations, and we can never be happy without him; and therefore, for the Lord's sake, as you love your own souls, lay hold on him, that he may be the Saviour of your souls, the joy of your hearts, and your all in all: for the Lord's sake, consider of it, you that yet stand out against Christ. Oh that I could but tempt you to Christ! Oh that I could prevail with you to love Christ, and to have strong desires after him! Alas! if you do not believe and part with all your iniquities, you must part with Christ at last; and what a sad parting will that be to part with God, and Christ, and heaven! When thou wilt come to know what thou hast lost by hugging thy darling corruptions, oh what a sad condition will it be! Therefore I beseech you, think of it in time, and believe in your Saviour, that your souls may be saved in the day of Christ.

## III.

## THE MIGHTY GOD.

One of Christ's titles is, **THE MIGHTY GOD**: Isa. ix. 6. Beloved, I have shewn, from the second title, that Christ is a King, a King above all kings, and a King over all kings, and the King of kings, and that his laws are most equal, his subjects most happy; having no other tax laid upon them than love and fear. But now this title holdeth him forth, not only as a great King, but as a great God, before whom all kings and kingdoms are but as little drops, or as small dust, Isa. xl. 15. From this title, The Mighty God, I shall lay down the proposition, That **JESUS CHRIST** is true and perfect God. That is the point I shall insist on.

There are two sorts of people in the world who deny this doctrine,—who deny the deity of Jesus Christ; and who say the second Person of the Trinity is not God.

*First*, The unbelieving Jews. If Christ had come as the Jews dreamed, as a great monarch, treading upon nothing but crowns and sceptres, and the necks of kings, and had all the potentates of the earth to attend his train; I say, had Christ come in this worldly glory, and pomp, and power, then it may be the Jews would have believed on him; may be then he should have been their God. But now, beloved, because Christ came poorly and meanly, and “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant,” Phil. ii. 7; he took none of his gallantry, none of his bravery upon him,

but "made himself of no reputation;" therefore the Jews slighted him, and disowned him. The Turks mock us at this day with our crucified God. Oh! say they, you worship a crucified God; and some of the heathens say, they would not believe in such a God. O blessed Jesus, thus art thou reproached and despised by the unbelieving world, because thou camest poorly, and died shamefully for our sins. They who despise the death of the Lamb shall surely feel the wrath of the Lamb; they who turn away their ears from hearing Christ's voice now, Christ will turn away his ears from hearing their cries then.

*Second,* There be others that deny the Deity of Christ; and there are some seditious ones in this nation who say that Christ is but a mere man, and that every saint is as much God as Christ; and further, they say, that to equal Christ with God is high blasphemy. They that will not own Christ in his first coming, Christ will not own them at his second coming; they that will not obey the truth of God revealed from heaven unto them shall suffer the wrath of God revealed from heaven against them. O ye blasphemers, ye say the Son is not God: the Father saith he is God. Now, who speaks truth, God or you? Let God be true, and every man a liar. That it is so, I shall give you more clear proofs. Express scripture speaks it forth that Jesus Christ is true and perfect God. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," Titus ii. 13. Mark, Christ is here not only called God, but "the great God." O saints, he that came from heaven to make us righteous, will also come from heaven to make us glorious. Not

only so, but Christ is also called Mighty God; nay, not only Mighty God, but again, "God blessed for ever." Christ is God blessed for ever, Rom. ix. 5; not only blessed for ever, but the true God, 1 John iv. 20. Jesus Christ is there called the true God, not only the true God, but a God for ever and ever. Heb. i. 8. Unto the Son he said, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." The Father calls the Son God himself, and therefore well may we. Thus you see the doctrine fully proved, that Jesus Christ is the true and perfect God; but beloved, because the Deity of Christ is so much questioned at this day, and this being one of the serious and chiefest points in divinity, I shall give you some considerations, or demonstrations, or arguments, to fortify you against this great error. Jesus Christ is true and perfect God because he is, for time, co-eternal; for nature, co-essential; for dignity, co-equal with his Father.

(*First,*) For time, co-eternal, John xvii. 5: "O Father, glorify thou me with thyself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." You see here, Christ was before the world was; and therefore Christ is called the Everlasting Father, Isa. ix. 6. So in Rev. i. 8. Christ there, speaking of himself, saith, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which was, and is, and is to come, the Almighty." Mark, Christ is the same before time, in time, and after time; which was, and is, and is to come. Now, beloved, none can be eternal but God; but Christ is eternal, and therefore he is God, and co-eternal with his Father.

(*Secondly,*) He is, for nature, co-essential: "I and my Father are one," saith Christ, John x. 30. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the

Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one," 1 John v. 7. When Philip desires to see the Father, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us," John xiv. 8, saith Christ, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," 9th and 10th verses. How so? For "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." So that you know Christ is more than mere man: he is one with the Father. Oh! he is Theanthropos, God-man. If you make the Son mere man, you must make the Father so too.

(*Thirdly,*) He is, for dignity, co-equal with the Father, Phil. ii. 6: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal" with the Father. Christ thought it no diminution of his Father's glory to be equal with his Father in glory. And you shall further find that all the honour which belongs to God, the Father hath commanded us to give to the Son. "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father; for he that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father," John v. 23. Therefore it is clear to every eye that Christ is, for dignity, co-equal with the Father; for the Father hath commanded us to give the same honour to Christ which is due to him: so that it is no blasphemy at all to equal Christ with God; for in him are the riches of the Deity and the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him, Col. ii. 9. This is the first argument. He is for time co-eternal, for nature co-essential, for dignity co-equal with the Father.

*Secondly,* I shall lay down this argument to prove the Deity of Jesus Christ. Consider the work of creation; surely he that made heaven and earth must needs be a God; you will yield to this? so saith the Lord himself. "The gods that have not made

the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens," Jer. x. 11; but now, beloved, Jesus Christ made the heavens and the earth, and all things therein, and therefore he is God: "All things were made by him," John i. 3; mark, this is by Christ, "All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that was made." "By him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible;" "all things were created by him, and for him," Col. i. 16. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not," John i. 10. Now, beloved, had Christ been less than God, he could not have made heaven and earth, and therefore he is God of glory, the great God that now sits upon the throne: for he created the heavens and the earth, and all things therein.

*Thirdly*, That Christ is the true and perfect God appears if you consider the words and miracles which he did in the days of his flesh; here is another unanswerable argument to prove the Godhead of Jesus Christ. The winds and the seas obey him, the devils came out of the possessed, the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the deaf heard, the dumb spake, lepers were cleansed, the dead were raised, the sick were healed. Oh! who could do this but God, as you may see! Matt. xxi. 5. But you may say, the apostles did great miracles, and yet were not gods. Why, it is true they did great miracles; but in whose name did they do them? Was it in their own names, and by their own power? No, beloved, they themselves confess the contrary, Acts iv. 10. They tell you it is not in their own power, but in the name and power of

Jesus Christ. So that this is a strong argument to prove the Deity of Christ; they did great miracles in his name, and by his power his disciples did great miracles. And with this Jesus satisfied the disciples of John—Go and tell what things ye hear and see, how the lame walk, and the blind receive their sight; go and tell John. Now, I say, these great things could be done by none but by a great God; and therefore Jesus Christ is not only the Son of man, but the Son of God, even God blessed for ever.

*Fourthly*, Consider that divine worship is due unto Christ. Now, you know, worship is proper only to God. "Worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea," said the angel, Rev. xiv. 7. Now, beloved, all the acts of worship that belong to God the Father are given to the Son Jesus Christ; both angels and men are commanded to worship him, as well as we, Heb. i. 6. "Let all the angels of God worship him," Phil. ii. 10. "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth;" things in heaven, as well as things on earth, must worship Christ; and Christ himself saith, John xiv. 1, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Now, beloved, we are commanded to pray to Christ, to glorify Christ, to believe in Christ, to honour Christ, and worship Christ; and therefore the saints have prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," as Stephen did. So that you see worship is due to Christ, both from angels and men, and therefore he must needs be God.

*Fifthly*, There are clear promises of the coming of Christ under the Old Testament. No sooner was man fallen, but Christ was promised—"The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." All the prophets foretold of the Messiah—Isaiah,

Jeremiah, Hosea, Daniel, Malachi, and the rest of them, how falsely he should be accused, and how basely he should be used, and this will be enough to condemn the unbelieving Jews, and make them speechless in the great day of account. I might give you the sayings of the same prophets, but you may find them yourselves; search the Old Testament, and you shall find them all speak more or less of Jesus Christ. Thus I have clearly proved, by express scripture and undeniable arguments, that Jesus Christ is true and perfect God.

*Use 1.* The first use shall be for information. If it be so that Jesus is true and perfect God, then, though this be a strange truth to some, yet it is a sound truth; though the mystery be deep, yet the divinity is true, that he who made man became man, suffered by man, and for man. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness." What is the mystery? "God manifested in the flesh," 1 Tim. iii. 16.

The schoolmen compare the incarnation of Jesus Christ to a garment made by three sisters, and one of them wears it: so all the three Persons in the Trinity had a hand in the garment of Christ's flesh, but the second Person wore it: he was God manifested in flesh; and this is a great mystery. And truly it is a great mystery for happiness to become a curse; for him that made the angels to become lower than the angels, Heb. ii.; for the Creator to become a creature; for him that had the riches of all in himself to become poor. Oh! it is a great mystery, that he whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, his glory should be wrapt in the rags of flesh; that the great God should take upon him a piece of earth; that he who hangs the earth upon

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nothing should hang upon a cross between two thieves,—truly a great mystery; that he who rules the stars should suck the breasts; that he who thunders in the clouds should be cradled in a manger. Oh! a great mystery, that Abraham's Lord should become Abraham's son; that the God of Abraham should take upon him Abraham's seed; what a mystery is this! he was conceived in the bowels of his mother, that he might be received into the bosom of his Father. "Therefore," saith the apostle, "without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God manifested in the flesh." God's son became man's son, that we poor men's sons might become God's sons.

*Secondly*, Is Jesus Christ true and perfect God? My second inference is this, That Jesus is a precious God: he is honey in the mouth, beauty in the eye, joy in the heart, and music in the ear. "Let all their money perish with them, who esteem all the gold in the world worth one day's society with Jesus Christ," said a great marquis, when he was tempted with money. Oh! Christ's members are the happiest, Christ's comforts are the sweetest, Christ's reward is the highest, Christ's precepts are the purest, Christ's glory is the greatest, Christ's love is the truest, Christ's riches are the most precious; he is the glory of God, the paradise of angels, the beauty of heaven, the Redeemer of men. He is called "the brightness of his Father's glory," Heb. i. 3; he is the rich jewel in the cabinet of glory, he is the sparkling pearl; whosoever hath him cannot be poor, but whosoever wants him cannot be rich.

*Thirdly*, If Christ be a true and perfect God, then Christ's members are the greatest and hap-

piest; if Christ is God Almighty's only Son, believers are God Almighty's only daughters. You read of God's daughters in Ps. xlv. Christ is the King, believers are the queen; Christ is the Bridegroom, believers are the bride; Christ is the Lamb, believers are his wife, Rev. xxi. 9. The angels in glory are in a very glorious state, and, let me tell you, believers in Christ are higher than angels: they are servants, we are members; they are the friends of the Bridegroom, we are the bride; they have their personal glory, we have the same glory, for substance, with Jesus Christ, John xvii. 22. "The glory which thou hast given me," saith Christ, "I have given them." Believers are nearer the throne than angels; and this doth wonderfully speak out that we are higher than the angels. O beloved, how are believers advanced! how high are we become, poor dust and ashes, to be above angels! and this is the greatest happiness, which we get by Christ's assuming our nature for the salvation of our souls. Again, Christ's members are not only the greatest, but the happiest: our renewed condition is as good in Christ as it was bad in Adam. Oh! we were no more cursed out of Christ than we were blessed in Christ; Christ is as full of life as Adam was full of death; Christ is as full of sweetness to us as Adam was of bitterness to us. Truly, soul, if thou say Christ is thine, I will speak next, and say, Soul, thou hast that which is more worth than a king's ransom; that which is more worth than all that which the devil promised Christ, when he shewed him all the kingdoms of the world. Oh the happiness of poor believers! "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," Rom. viii. 1. Therefore they are happy.

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*Fourthly*, Christ Jesus is true and perfect God. Then we infer from hence that God's love and good-will to mankind was very great. That Jesus Christ should come from heaven to take our nature, that we might be partakers of the divine nature; Christ took upon him our shame, that we might be partakers of his glory. One drop of his blood is worth a sea of ours, and yet he died our death, that we might live his life; he suffered our hell, that we might enjoy his heaven. Oh how infinitely did he love us! He endured the sorest pains, that we might enjoy the sweetest pleasures. The scriptures tell us that he came leaping; he came with such a good-will, he came leaping; as you know when a man goes leaping, you may know that it was with a good-will. "He came leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills," Song ii. 8. Leaping, saith Gregory, how so? Why, saith he, from the throne to the womb, from the womb to the cradle, from the cradle to the cross, and from thence to the throne again; this was the leap. Oh how much did Jesus suffer for poor believers! he was hanged upon the cross on Mount Cavalry, that he might sit on the throne in mount Zion.

*Use 2.* By way of exhortation. To sinners, to unbelievers, to graceless persons, I have a few words to say. Methinks I cannot but do toward you as Christ did once toward Jerusalem; when he came near the city he wept over it. Truly, sinner, your state is a weeping state; your state is a miserable state; you lie open to all the wrath, all the vengeance, all the curses under heaven. O poor miserable sinners, cannot you pity yourselves? The Lord of heaven pity you! Did Jesus Christ come from heaven to you, sinners, and

will not you come out of your sin to come to Christ? Did Christ come from his Father's bosom, and leave his throne, and crown, and all his glory, to come to a poor lost world, and to die and suffer here for poor lost sinners? and what! sinners, will this make no impression upon you? Let me tell you, Christ came into the world for no other end and reason but to die for poor sinners. It was the great design of Christ to save poor sinners. If you will not credit me, look into the scripture, and then surely you will believe it. "This is a faithful saying," saith the apostle, "and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15. Mark, he came into the world to save sinners. Christ hung upon the cross, and wept upon the cross, and died upon the cross, to save sinners; all the hardships, all the wants, all the trials and sufferings which he met with was for the sake of poor sinners. Christ hath suffered all this woe and misery for thee; and wilt not thou leave thy swearing, and thy drunkenness, and thy wickedness for Christ? Oh the sad, sad day that is coming on thee! how canst thou answer this before God Almighty, that Jesus Christ, the King of kings, should come unto the world, and abase himself so much as to be in a mean state, and yet this should nothing affect you? Oh! who will pity you when you are condemned, when you are howling and roaring in hell, that would not pity yourselves? Oh! for the Lord's sake, consider that God should come and take our nature, and that he should take our rags, that we might wear his robes; and what! will you rather remain in your sins and die, than come to Christ for life? O sinner, put off your beggar's rags, that you may put on his lovely robes. I have read of

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Alexander the Great, that when he came against a city, he used to set up a candle, and if they yielded before the candle was out, they should have quarter, but if they stood out they might expect nothing but hanging, drawing, and quartering. Oh! Christ sets up a candle to thee, and if thou wilt come in to-day, thou shalt have mercy, or else there will be none. If all the angels and saints in heaven should fall upon their knees, and say, O Lord, spare this poor creature one dram of mercy for him, it would not be regarded, the Lord will not hear them; and therefore, for the Lord's sake, consider men are sentenced, not only for their sinfulness, but for their slothfulness; men may perish for being servants that are unprofitable, as well as for being sinners that are abominable. Methinks you should take as much delight in those precepts that enjoin holiness as in those promises that assure happiness; if the day of mercy leave you graceless, the day of judgment will find you speechless; though you may resist the judgment that he lays before you, yet you can never resist the judgment that he lays upon you: there is no standing before Christ but by standing in Christ. Ungodly men fear no wrath, because they feel no wrath; because the sin is unpunished, they think there is no punishments for their sins; because he goeth on to spare them, they go on to provoke him; as he adds to their lives, they add to their lusts; because he is very merciful, they will be very sinful; because he is very good, they will be very bad; because justice winks, men think he is blind; because he doth not reprove them for their sins, therefore they think he doth approve them in their sins. Justice will avenge the quarrel of abused mercy: the longer God forbears, not

finding amendment, the sorer he strikes when he comes to judgment. O sinners, though the patience of God be lasting, it is not everlasting; if, by the warning voice of God, you are not alarmed, you shall be consumed; the longer God is fetching about his hand, the heavier will be the blow when it comes: "I gave her space to repent of her fornication; but she repented not;" what follows? "behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation," Rev. ii. 21, 22. The day that begins in mercy may end in judgment. God is silent so long as our sins will let him be quiet; but know, that God hath vials of wrath filled with indignation, for vessels of wrath fitted for destruction: if God's mercy do not draw you to repentance, God's judgments will drive you to destruction; the sea of damnation shall not be sweetened with a drop of compassion. O sinners, either seek out a Saviour to deliver you from the wrath of God, or else find out a shoulder to bear you up under the wrath of God. Oh that you would consider your ways! Hath not God said that no swearer, no drunkard, nor adulterer shall enter into the kingdom of heaven? And such are some of you; God knows it, and your own consciences know it; and yet you flatter yourselves, and speak peace to yourselves, when God speaks not a word of peace to you. Oh! think of this before the bottomless pit hath shut her mouth upon you: oh! do no longer forget God and your own salvation. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation!" Heb. ii. 3. If you neglect the great salvation, you cannot escape the great damnation.

*Secondly*, Believers, let me beseech you to stand

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fast, and to hold fast that which you have already. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," Rev. ii. 10. He hath a crown for runners, but a curse for run-aways. As you look for happiness as long as God hath a being in heaven, so God looketh for holiness as long as you have a being on earth. "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them," Gal. vi. 16. To tread in any other path on earth is but to mistake your way to heaven. Whilst you are on this side of eternity you must hold the sceptre of grace in your hands, till God set the crown of glory upon your heads: this is the sparkling diamond that is set in the apostle's crown. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," 2 Tim. iv. 7. "O believer! it will be your happiness, your glory, your honour, another day, if in this day you are found faithful. Oh! do not turn your backs upon the truths of God, as too many in our days have done: they have gone from one religion unto all, till at last they have come from all religion unto none. That man's beginning was in hypocrisy whose end is in apostasy. Indifference in religion is the next step to apostasy from religion. Oh! do not make him a stone of stumbling that God hath made a stone for building. If the golden chain of duty will not hold you, the iron chain of darkness shall bind you; if you abuse your liberty in one world, you shall lose your liberty in another; if you had made as much conscience in your liberty, as you have had liberty for your conscience, it had been well. That soul was never related to Christ that was never devoted to Christ; there is no obtaining the prize of happiness without running the race of holiness. Oh! for the Lord's sake, do not you begin

in the Spirit and end in the flesh. Do not put your hand to the plough and look backward; be not true to the father of lies and false to the Father of truth; keep close to the Son of God, to the Word of God, to the ordinances of God, to the day of God, to the ministers of God, to the people of God, and to the ministers of God, to the people of God, and you will be safe. Gal. vi. 9: "Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." I shall wind up all with the saying of Ignatius, "They who adhere to them who adhere not to the truth, shall never inherit the kingdom of God."

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## IV.

## THE EVERLASTING FATHER.

Man is the excellency of the creature, the saint is the excellency of the man; grace is the excellency of the saint, glory is the excellency of grace.

I now proceed to the fourth title, and that is, EVERLASTING FATHER, Isa. ix. 6. Beloved, we have shewn you from the third title, Mighty God, that Jesus Christ is true and perfect God, a mighty God, mighty with God, mighty as God, the great and mighty God; but now this fourth title holdeth him forth to be a Father; not only a Father, but an Everlasting Father—the Everlasting Father.

The proposition which I shall lay down from the title is this, That God in Christ is a believer's Everlasting Father. That I may clear up this point I shall lay down these truths.

*First*, That God, in Christ the Everlasting Father, begot himself in us, and us in him; he is both the Author and Finisher of our faith, Heb. xii. 2, and of all our joy, of all our peace, of all our life, of all our salvation: he is a Father ever begetting and bringing forth himself in us. His light is in us, his love is in us, his nature is in us, his wisdom is in us, his power and strength is in us: "Of his fulness we have all received grace for grace," John i. 16. We believers that were in time past, we are in time present, in time to come: we that were, we that are, we that shall be hereafter, shall receive his fulness. And therefore he is called, The Everlasting Father. He is the sun, we are the beams; he is

the Fountain, we are the streams; he is the Root, we are the branches; he is the Head, we are the members; he is the Father, we are the children. And hence it is that believers are called his offspring. In creation God hath given us to ourselves, but in redemption he hath given himself to us: it is a greater favour to be converted than created; yea, far better to have no being than not to have a new being; it is only the new creatures that are heirs of the new Jerusalem.

*Secondly*, God in Christ calleth us his children by his name: he putteth his name upon them. "I will write upon them the name of my God," Rev. iii. 12. The saints are called godly from God; Christians from Christ; spiritual from the Spirit; and heavenly from heaven, because their conversation is there, because their Head is there, and they are heirs of heaven. So the wicked be called devilish from the devils; and the cursed from the curses; and worldings from the world; and sinners from sin. Oh the great difference that there is between the names of the saints and the names of the wicked! The ungodly he called dogs, vipers, swine, thorns, and ravening wolves who lick up and suck the blood of the innocent; but the saints are called jewels, treasures, kings, doves, lilies, and heirs of the kingdom of glory; and hence it is that some good men have gloried more in their name Christian than in their name emperor, and have thought it a greater honour to be a member of Christ than to be a king upon a throne—a greater honour to be one of Christ's little ones than one of the world's great ones. Indeed, a good heart is better than a great estate; inward holiness is better than outward happiness; a Christ without honour is better than honour without

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Christ; piety without prosperity is better than prosperity without piety; goodness without greatness is better than greatness without goodness.

*Thirdly*, God in Christ is a Father who is tender towards his poor children. When we were full of blood then he was full of bowels. Christ is more tender of his body mystical than he was of his body natural; he suffered his body natural to be hungry, to be thirsty, to be weary, to hang upon the cross, to bleed upon the cross, to suffer upon the cross, to be pierced and bored with nails upon the cross. Oh! he went through the furnace to keep us out of the flames. But now mark for his body mystical: oh how tender is he! He loves them, he pities them, he smiles upon them, he carries them in his bosom, and dandles them on his knees. Oh! they are the beauties of his eyes, the joy of his heart: he cannot endure to see them wronged, to see them injured and abused; every blow they get goes to his very heart,—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Acts ix. 4. You see how tender Christ is of his body mystical. This is our Jonah, who threw himself into the sea of his Father's wrath, to save us from perdition, and he hath opened the gates of heaven to let us into salvation.

*Fourthly*, God in Christ is a Father that layeth up for his children: he gives them in possession, but more in reversion; a little in hand and a great deal in hope. (1.) He gives them something in hand: he layeth out for us; he gives us the air to breathe in and the earth to tread upon; he gives us the sun, the moon, and the stars, wind, water, and fire: he giveth us the fishes of the sea, the beasts of the earth, and the fowls of the air. Poor man liveth by death; our natural life is preserved by the death of

the creature, and our spiritual life by the death of our Saviour; so that I may say we live by death. It is man's duty to serve God, since God hath made all the world to serve him: "Who giveth us all things richly to enjoy," 1 Tim. vi. 17. Mark, he doth not only give us some things, but all things; not only all things, but all things richly to enjoy. (2.) God in Christ is a Father that layeth up for his children, as well as layeth out: "Oh how great is thy goodness that thou hast laid up for them that fear thee!" Psalm xxxi. 19. David wonders at it: "Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up!" Mark the words in 2 Tim. iv. 8, "Hence is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." What, only for you, Paul? No, not only for me, but for all them that love his appearing. So again, see another scripture for this, 1 Cor. ii. 9, "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man" to conceive. Why, what is this which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive? Why, mark, "the things that God hath prepared for them that fear him." O beloved, God gives his children the best portion, the richest portion, the greatest portion: all things are theirs; life is theirs, death is theirs, things present are theirs, and things to come are theirs; God is theirs, Christ is theirs, the Spirit is theirs, heaven is theirs, and what can they have more? 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. God gives his children in this world a talent of grace, and in the world to come a talent of glory: they shall wear Christ's crown above who wear his cross below.

*Fifthly*, God in Christ doth protect and defend his children from their enemies, and from Satan,

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from sin, from the world, from the curse, and from the second death, which is hell: "He that overcometh shall not be hurt by the second death," Rev. ii. 11. A believer may feel the stroke of death, but he shall never feel the sting of death: the first death may bring his body to corruption, but the second death shall never bring his soul to perdition: though he may live a life that is dying, he shall die a death that is living; he that is housed in Christ shall never be housed in hell. God protects his children from all wrongs and injuries. "He suffers no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproveth kings for their sake," Ps. cv. 14. Pray mark the phrase well; if kings will lay on saints the hands of violence, God will lay on kings the hands of vengeance: he reproveth kings for their sakes: if kings will wrong the poor saints for Christ's sake, Christ will reprove kings for the saints' sake: so saith the Word of God. They that be gods before men be but men before God. If men will throw saints into prison for their piety, God will throw them into hell for their iniquity. Mark what the prophet saith in Isa. xxx. 33, "Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared;" and if so be the prophet should speak so downright, as though hell was chiefly prepared for great men;—oh, hell is prepared for great men as well as mean!—upon those on whom God bestows great mercies, if they abound in great vices, God will inflict great punishment. How shall they be able to lift up their heads before Christ who do lift up their heads against him?—"The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ," Acts. iv. 26. Christ will pass a sentence upon every sentence that is past. He

that saith, "Come, ye blessed," will also say, "Go, ye cursed."

*Sixthly*, God in Christ is a Father that teacheth his children, and instructs his children: "Thy children shall be taught of the Lord," Isa. liv. 13. All God's children shall be taught of God; and what doth he teach them? Why, among other things, he teacheth his children those six lessons: (1.) He teacheth them to deny themselves. A true believer will lay down his lusts at the command of Christ, and his life for the sake of Christ. (2.) Christ teacheth them contentment. Here is another divine lesson which Christ teaches his children. A believer will be contented to bear the wrath of man for him who bore the wrath of God for him. (3.) The vanity of the creature. He teacheth us that all things below are vanity and vexation of spirit. (4.) The sinfulness of sin. (5.) The deceitfulness of the heart. (6.) The right knowledge of himself.

O Christians, have you learned these lessons? Then let all your actions be Christ-like, and walk as you have him for an example. He lived to teach us how to live, and he died to teach us how to die. He that will not follow the example of Christ's life shall never be saved by the merits of his death. As he is the root on which a saint grows, so he is the rule by which a saint squares: if he be not thy Jacob's staff to guide thee to heaven, he will never be thy Jacob's ladder to mount thee up to heaven. We should be as willing to be ruled by Christ as we are willing to be saved by Christ. God made one Son like to all, that he might make all his sons like to one. If the life of Christ be not your portion, thou art dead.

*Seventhly*, God in Christ is a Father that stamps

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upon all his children the lovely image of Jesus Christ. As was said of Constantine's children, they resemble their father to the life: so we may say of believers,—they resemble Christ to the life. God will suffer no man to wear the livery of Christ upon him who hath not the likeness of Christ within him. "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. iii. 18. Oh what a rare jewel is grace! The Lord of grace calls it glory. Mark, "from glory to glory;" that is, from one degree of grace to another. Grace is glory militant, and glory is grace triumphant; grace is glory begun, and glory is grace made perfect; grace is the first degree of glory; glory is the highest degree of grace; grace is the seed, glory is the flower; grace is the ring, glory is the sparkling diamond in the ring; grace is the glorious infant, and glory is the perfect man of grace; grace is the spring, glory is the harvest. The soul of man is the cabinet, the grace of God is the jewel; Christ will throw away the cabinet where he finds not the jewel. He that restored us in his image will restore us to his image.

*Eighthly*, God in Christ is a Father that never dies; other fathers be dead and gone; our father Abraham is dead, our father Isaac is dead, our father Jacob is dead, and others be dead and gone. Oh! but God in Christ is a Father that lives for ever, that loves for ever, that reigns for ever. He is the Father of eternity, in eternity, from eternity, to eternity, Prov. viii. He was always, is always, and he cannot but be always, Rev. i. 8. Christ is the same before time, in time, and after time.

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Heb. xiii. 8. "Of him, and for him, and to him, and by him, are all things," Rom. xi. 36.

*Ninthly*, God in Christ is a Father that correcteth his children; all whom God loves he chasteneth, though he loves not to chastise. God had one Son without sin, but no son without sorrow: he had one Son without corruption, but no son without correction: "For whom the Lord loves he chastiseth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," Heb. xii. 6. "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten," Rev. iii. 19. Afflictions are blessings to us when we bless God for the afflictions. Christ tells us, "He that will be his disciple must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow him," Matt. xvi. 24. There is a fourfold self, that must be denied for Jesus Christ, or else you cannot be called his disciple. A sinful self;—a natural self;—a self-righteousness;—and self-gain, or lucre. Sinful self is to be destroyed, and natural self is to be denied; we cannot enjoy ourselves till we deny ourselves. God is as far from beating his children for nothing as he is from beating his children to nothing.

Is it so that God in Christ is the believer's Everlasting Father? Oh then, what is so sweet a good as Christ! and what is so great an evil as sin! Oh love Christ more, and hate sin more! Christ bringeth life with him; a life of grace, a life of comfort, a life of glory; but sin bringeth death with it, death of body, death of soul, death here, and death hereafter. Oh, the blood of Christ speaketh better things than the blood of Abel! Abel's blood crieth for vengeance, but Christ's blood crieth for mercy. He is the pearl of great price, for which the rich merchant sold all that he had, and bought it, and

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found more joy in this pearl than ever he had with all that he possessed. Oh, therefore, let me beseech you that are his children, to love him and to serve him! He is your Everlasting Father; therefore do his will on earth, as the angels do in heaven. You cannot complain of him for want of mercy: so good hath he been to you, as he hath not been wanting to you in anything; and will you be wanting to him in everything? A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: "If then I be a Father, where is mine honour? and if a Master, where is my fear?" Mal. i. 6. As a father, so will he be revered for his goodness. Oh what is that little he desireth of you, to that which he deserveth from you! If honour be not due to him, let it not be bestowed; if it be due to him, let it not be denied; if God do great things for his children, he will not accept small things from his children. Do but see the outcry that God makes against his children: Give ear, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth! What is the matter? "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me," Isa. i. 2. The nearer the relation, the greater the obligation. Christ is related to them as a lord to his servants, as a father to his children, as a prince to his subjects, as a head to his members: where the relation is nearest, there the provocation is greatest. It is a more pleasant thing to see rebels become children, than it is to see children become rebels. What mother can endure to see those lips that drew her breasts suck her blood? O children, you are more known to God than others, and therefore you must more acknowledge him than others; you do not look for so much splendour from the burning of a candle as from the shining of the sun;

nor so much moisture from the dropping of the bucket as from the dissolving of a cloud: "To whom much is given, of them much shall be required." God doth not expect much where little is bestowed, nor accept little where much is received. "Hear ye the word of the Lord, O children of Israel, you only have I known above all the families of the earth," Amos iii. 1, 2. God hath exalted you above all others, and therefore you must do more for God than others. It was a great blemish in Hezekiah that his returnings were not answerable to his receivings. O believers, let me beseech you to do much, to love much, to give much, to pray much, seeing you have received much.

God in Christ is your Father, your loving Father, your everlasting Father, and you are his children; therefore fear not, it shall go well with you here and hereafter: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," Luke xii. 32. "No good thing he will withhold from them that walk uprightly," Ps. lxxxiv. 11. He gives grace and glory unto you; grace is the silver link that draws the golden link of glory after it.

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## THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

Wherever Christ is a priest for redemption, he is a prince for dominion; wherever he is a saviour, there he is a ruler; where he is a fountain of happiness, there he is a fountain of holiness; where he is a redeemer, there he is a refiner; wherever he takes a burden from off the creature's back, there he lays a yoke upon the creature's neck. "The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us," Isa. xxxiii. 22.

I proceed to the fifth title of Jesus Christ, which is PRINCE OF PEACE; as in Isa. ix. 6. It is the happiness of the Church of God, that although they cannot give peace, yet they may get peace; though they cannot settle it on earth, yet they may seek it from heaven: peace is the well-being of all other enjoyments; all other mercies suck their livelihood at the breasts of peace: it is the mother of all prosperity; as the life of old Jacob was wrapt up in the life of the lad Benjamin, so is all happiness wrapt up in peace; it is the felicity of the saints on earth, and the glory of the angels in heaven. When the old Hebrews wished any happiness to any one, they only used this expression, "Peace be unto you."

From this title of Christ I shall lay down two propositions.

I. That Zion's King is a peaceable King.

II. That the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, is the cause and foundation of a believer's

peace. These two points lie full in the words; but I shall only speak of the latter, viz., That Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, is the cause and foundation of a believer's peace.

In the prosecution of it I shall shew you four things,—(1.) He is the peace-bringer. (2.) The peace-maker. (3.) The peace-giver. And, (4.) He is the Prince of Peace, or the peaceable prince.

*First*, Jesus Christ is the Peace-bringer. He brought in everlasting peace by righteousness, and not by a sword, "Peace on earth, and good will towards men," Luke ii. 14. Why was the Bread of Life hungry, but that he might feed the hungry with the bread of life? Why was Rest itself weary, but to give the weary rest? Why was the Prince of Peace in trouble, but that the troubled might have peace? None but the Image of God could restore us to God's Image; none but the Beloved of God could make us beloved to God; none but the natural Son could make us sons; none but the wisdom of God could make us wise; none but the Prince of Peace could bring the God of peace and the peace of God to poor sinners; and therefore he is called our peace, Eph. ii. 14. Oh what is so sweet a good as Christ, and what so great an evil as sin! the former brings us to joy and peace, the latter brings us to woe and misery.

*Secondly*, He is the Peace-maker as well as the Peace-bringer. He is the Peace-maker between God and men; sin is the great make-bar between God and the soul; sin is the wall of separation between God and us, and the Prince of Peace makes peace between God and us. He paid all the debts, and took up all the controversies, and blotted out

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the hand-writing, and hath broken down the partition-wall, and made up the great breach between God and man. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself," 2 Cor. v. 19. Mark, it is in Christ, as likewise elsewhere: "Ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ," Eph. ii. 13. O sinners! Christ is our Peace-maker: the Prince of Peace makes peace between God and us; he reconciles God to men and men to God; so that though God might be justly displeased with us, yet in his Son he is well pleased with us; he is more pleased with a believer for Christ's sake, than he was displeased with him for sin's sake.

*Thirdly*, Jesus Christ is the Peace-giver: alas! poor sinners, we have no peace with angels, no peace with conscience, nor one with another, till the Prince of Peace give it to us: "Peace I leave with you, peace I give unto you," saith our Lord unto his disciples, John xiv. 27. Oh! he gives peace with God. "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. v. 1. Christ giveth that peace to us which the world cannot take from us; worldly trouble cannot overcome heavenly peace.

*Fourthly*, He is a Prince of Peace or the peaceable prince, so he is styled not only Peace but the Prince of Peace. Indeed, beloved, he is all Peace to a believer. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace," speaking of Christ, Prov. iii. 17. Mark, *all* her paths are peace. Now, what are these paths? I shall name six to you. 1. The path of repentance. 2. Of faith. 3. Of truth. 4. Of self-denial. 5. Of obedience. 6. Of holiness. (1.) These are several paths of peace, and peaceable paths. Oh! there is no peace to be found but in the paths of

peace: as all his works be great and marvellous, so all his ways are peace and pleasantness. (2.) His Gospel is a Gospel of peace: it is a great mercy to enjoy the Gospel of peace, but a greater mercy to enjoy the peace of the Gospel. (3.) His reward is peace. "He shall enter into peace," Isa. lvii. 2. Here the joys of heaven are called peace. The true sons of peace, and the peaceable sons of truth shall be crowned with peace; they shall enter into peace. And thus I have briefly, yea, I have fully proved the point—That Jesus Christ is the cause and fountain of a believer's peace.

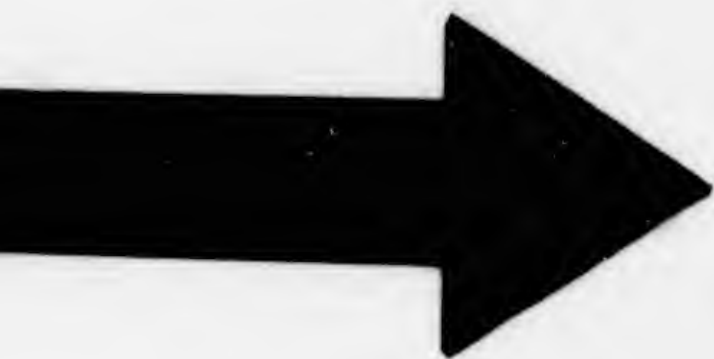
*Uses.* Now, for the application of the point, I shall reduce it to four heads. 1. For information. 2. For examination. 3. For exhortation. 4. For consolation. *First,* By way of information: Here we may see what great need we stand in of Jesus Christ. O Christians! is Jesus Christ the cause and foundation of all our peace? then we have no right or title to peace but by the Prince of Peace. "We have no peace with God," saith the apostle, "but through our Lord Jesus Christ;" we are reconciled to God in Christ Jesus; and we who were afar off, saith Paul, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. We are only acceptable in the beloved; so that it is all in Christ, and through him, that we have our peace. A Christless man is a peaceless man; he hath no peace with God, no peace with angels, no peace with conscience; till we be Christ's friends, we are our own foes. It is true a wicked man may speak peace to himself, but God speaks not a jot of peace to him; he may speak peace to himself till he falleth into everlasting flames: God is his enemy, the devil is his foe, angels hate him, all creatures cry

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for vengeance upon him. "There is no peace to the wicked," Isa. lvii. 21, saith my God: no, not a word, not a dram of peace to a person who is out of Christ; therefore consider in what need ye stand of the Prince of Peace. It informs us that to have peace with our God and Maker is the sweetest and best thing in the world. Oh how infinitely sweet is peace! what is sweeter than peace? Alas! gold is but dust, pleasures are but toys, wit is but a flash, beauty but a blast, honour but a rattle, life but a vapour: but peace is better than the sweetest, and better than the best of all those! Because he that hath peace with God may come boldly to God, Heb. iv. 16. He that hath peace with God hath communion and fellowship with God: "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John i. 3. He that is at peace with God is a son of God; peace is of all others the most sweet. Oh! it is wine to comfort us and bread to nourish us; it makes a man to live comfortably and die cheerfully. If Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, be the cause and foundation of all our peace, then he that wants the Prince of Peace wants all good things; he is the most miserable man in the world that is without Christ; he wants reconciliation with God, an interest in Christ; he wants the sealing and comforting of the Spirit; he wants justification, sanctification, and adoption; he wants pardon of sin, and freedom from the dominion of sin; he wants that favour which is better than life; that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory; and that faith, a dram of which is more worth than a king's ransom; he wants those riches which perish not; those evidences for heaven that fail not; that love which

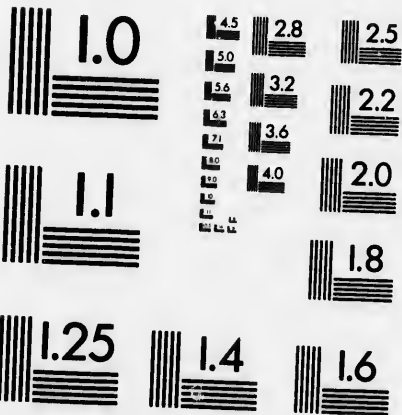






# MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



**APPLIED IMAGE Inc**

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dies not; that kingdom which shakes not. O beloved! how many things doth that poor soul want which wanteth Christ! He is "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," Rev. iii. 17. Christ is a pearl; whosoever hath him can never be poor, and whosoever wants him can never be rich. Did but men see all in this pearl of great price, then they would sell all for it. If Jesus Christ be the cause and foundation of our peace, then it is our greatest concernment to get into favour with the Prince of Peace. Many seek the ruler's favour, saith the Scriptures, but seek ye the favour of this prince. Poor souls, without him there is no mercy, no peace, no grace, no glory, no heaven, no crown, no eternal life: for this is eternal life, "to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," John xvii. 3.

*Use 2.* By way of examination and self-denial. The trial of ourselves is the ready way to the knowledge of ourselves. O Christians, would you see your God? then cast your eyes upward. Would you see yourselves? then cast your eyes inward. Contemplation is a glass to see your God in. It is of greater concern to know the state of our hearts than to know the estate of the kingdom. And therefore, I beseech you, examine yourselves, that you may know yourselves, that you may know whose you are while you live, and whither you will go when you die, and what will become of you to all eternity. Oh bring yourselves to the trial, and try yourselves, and see whether you are in the faith, and the faith in you! Faith is such a grace that a man cannot be saved without it, and not a man can perish that hath it. Oh see whether you be in the narrow way that leadeth

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to life, or in the broad way that leadeth to death; whether your hearts be chairs for vice to sit in, or thrones for grace to rule on; whether you are one of Christ's spouses or the devil's harlots; whether you are heirs of heaven or hell; whether ye be Satan's bondmen or God's freemen! Examination is the beaten path to perfection. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called," 1 Cor. i. 26. It is seldom that the sparkling diamond of a great estate is set in the gold ring of a gracious heart. A man may be great, with Saul, and graceless; rich, with Dives, and miserable; the richest are oftentimes the poorest, and the poorest are oftentimes the richest. Oh how many threadbare souls may there be found under silken coats and purple robes! They who live most downward die most upward; a sight of ourselves in grace will certainly bring us to a sight of ourselves in glory; those sins shall never make a hell for us that have been a hell to us.

*Use 3.* But it is time for me to turn my speech into an exhortation; and, oh that you would encourage me with your resolution to obey my message this day! that is, to make your peace with the Prince of Peace, that you may be the true sons of peace, and the peaceable sons of truth; that you may be righteous before God and holy before men; that you may gloriously shine in glory; and that you may have peace with God and with angels, and with your own consciences and with one another. What say you in answer to the message? Shall the Prince of Peace be your love and lord, your nearest and dearest, your joy and your delight? Will you kiss the Son, will you make your peace with the

God of Peace, and give up your souls and lives to be ruled by him? These things I exhort you to do, and God expects them at your hand. But that this exhortation may stay with you, I shall back it with some pressing considerations.

*First*, Consider God's goodness and good will towards men. God has given you rich means, that you may make and secure your peace with him. He hath given you the law and the Gospel. He hath generously given time and opportunity. Mercies and afflictions: mercies to draw you, and afflictions to drive you. He hath given you preachers, both inward and outward; by outward preachers, I mean the ministers of Christ, who beseech you, and entreat you, for Christ's sake, to be reconciled to God, and make your peace with him: by inward preachers, I mean your own conscience, that judgeth you, and checketh you, and reproveth you for your sins and abominations. He hath given you precepts and promises: precepts commanding you to do, and promises assuring you of a glorious reward for your doing. The Spirit and convictions: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man," Gen. vi. 3. Oh! how long will you stand out against God? What have ye to say against this? How can you answer? when you and I shall appear before God's judgment-seat? Have you anything to say against this? Oh! sad will be your end unless you make your peace with God: and therefore—seeing God has given these things to you, that you may make and secure your peace with him—he that liveth in sin without repentance shall die in sin without forgiveness.

*Secondly*, God inviteth and woeth you to come

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and make your peace with him: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk, without money, and without price," Isa. lv. 1. Beloved, here are three "comes" in this text, to shew the infinite willingness of God to save poor sinners; so in Rev. xxii. 17: "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." What! are there none thirsty among you? Do none thirst for Christ, and grace, and heaven? If you come, here you may have grace, and mercy, and happiness. Now, for the Lord's sake, consider wherefore is all this, but that you may make your peace with God? shall the God of heaven call, and you will not hear? What! will you rather stay in your sins, and die, than go to Christ for life? Oh! go to the Prince of Peace for peace, that you may have peace: if you do not lay your sins to your hearts, that you may be humbled for them, God will lay them to your charge, that you may be damned for them.

A *third* consideration is this: Either you must taste of God's goodness or of his fury. There is not a man, woman, or child among you, but must partake of the one or the other; your portion will be either joy or sorrow; either desolation or consolation. If you be not trees for bearing, you must be trees for burning; if you are not for fruit, you must be for the flames; if you do not swim in the water-works of repentance, you shall burn in the fire-works of vengeance; if you do not go and make your peace with God, that you may have heaven,

you shall go to hell for not making your peace: one of them you must do. Oh! I have set life and death, heaven and hell, bitter and sweet, before you this day. Will you make your peace with God or no? Will you still go in a way of wickedness, breaking his laws, grieving his Spirit? Will you die a natural death before you live a spiritual life? I say then, if you live so, and die so, you shall be damned with the damned, and punished with the punishment of hell, and so sent to hell with loads of wrath upon your backs. You shall have your part in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be damned, saith our Lord, Mark xvi. 16. Oh! it is better to repent without perishing, than to perish without repenting; therefore look to it as well as you will. Are you able to deal with God? Alas, alas! all the world is but like a drop of water in comparison of God; and therefore make your peace with him. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Heb. ii. 3.

*Fourthly*, Consider what the damned in hell would give for the offers of mercy that are now offered to you; certainly they would give ten thousand worlds, if they had them, for these opportunities that you enjoy. Should God say to poor wretches that are suffering in hell for their abominations on earth, as he doth to us, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," Oh how earnestly would they run and catch the word out of God's mouth! O beloved, the devils are too well acquainted with misery, to put by mercy if it were offered to them.

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But alas! alas! poor wretches, there is no dram of mercy for them; no, not so much as a drop of water for them; not one drop of water to cool their flaming tongues. Oh that you would consider this, and make your peace with God before death comes, which may be this night, for aught ye know! If ye lose your golden seasons, ye lose your souls. Oh therefore make your peace with God, that it may not be said of you, as it was once said of Jerusalem, "Oh that thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things that concern thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes!" Luke xix. 42. Here was a weeping word, a sad word to Jerusalem. Alas! now it is hid from their eyes; their golden season is gone; there is no place to be had; and therefore I beg of you, as though I were condemned, and begging of my life; so I beg of you in the bowels of Christ, and for your soul's sake, make your peace with God.

*Fifthly*, Seriously consider the multitude of sins thou hast been guilty of, even more than the hairs of thy head, or the sand on the sea-shore, or the stars in the heavens, which are innumerable. Alas! one of thy sins were enough to sink thee into hell for ever: what advantage doth Dives reap in hell of all these delicate banquets that he had on earth? Oh think on that time, wherein ye shall be ashamed of nothing but your wickedness, and glory in nothing but your holiness! Sin is like a serpent in the bosom that is stinging; or like a thief in the closet that is stealing; or like poison in the stomach that is poisoning; or like a sword in the bowels that is killing. Some are in hell already for the same sins thou livest in; and if thou livest and diest



without Christ, thou shalt ere long be with them: therefore, I say, make peace with God.

*Sixthly*, Consider that there is more bitterness following upon sins ending than ever there was sweetness flowing from sins acting: you that see nothing but well in its commission will suffer nothing but woe in its conclusion. It is better here to forego the pleasures of sin than hereafter to undergo the pain of sin. You that sin for your profits will never profit by your sins; he that likes the works of sin to do them will never like the wages of sin to have them. Sin is both shameful and damnable; it shameth men in this world and damneth them in the other world; it is like Judas, that at first salutes, but at last betrays us; or like Delilah, to smile in our face, and betray us into our enemies' hands. O sinners! think of this, and part with your sins, that you may meet with your Saviour, and make your peace with him.

*Seventhly*, Consider the heavy judgment that hangs over your heads. You lie open to all the judgments in this life and torments in the life to come. O sinners, the days are hastening upon you, wherein you have misery without mercy, sorrow without succour, pain without ease, punishment without pity, and torment without end, unless repentance do prevent. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Thes. i. 7-9. Oh! let

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*Eighthly and lastly*, If none of the former arguments or considerations prevail with you to make your peace with the Prince of Peace, yet let this one, I beseech you; and that is, the readiness and willingness of God to give Christ, and Christ to give himself to you. O sinners, is God willing to give his Son, and are you willing to receive his Son? Consider the willingness of God: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and will sup with him, and he with me," Rev. iii. 20. Mark, sinners, here: "Behold, I stand." Who? I that hath heaven to give; I that have a crown to give; that have all joys to give; I that have myself to give—I stand and knock. Do you see this, poor sinners? Who is it that stands at the door of your hearts and knocks? Who? It is the King of saints, the Prince of Peace, the Mighty God! and will you not open to him? What! are you unwilling to be saved, to go to heaven, and to be happy for ever? What! are you unwilling to be delivered from Satan, from sin, and from the flames of hell? If you be willing then, make your peace with God, for God is willing to open heaven for you, if you be willing to open your hearts to him; he is willing to save you if you be but willing to be saved; he is willing to give Christ if you are willing to receive Christ; let these considerations provoke you to go for life to the Lord of life, to go for peace to the Prince of Peace, to go for grace to the God of grace. Were men so diligent as to do their best, God is so indulgent he would forgive the worst.

## VI.

## THE ELECT PRECIOUS.

Who can be weary of preaching, or hearing, or reading, or learning Christ? who is so precious and lovely? Mahomet is the Turks' love; Moses is the Jews' love; the Pope is the papists' love; but Christ is a believer's love. I shall now make some entrance upon Christ's sixth famous and lovely title, THE ELECT PRECIOUS; 1 Pet. ii. 6. From this excellent title I shall lay down two propositions:

I. That Jesus Christ, the Mediator, is God the Father's elect. I pray mark, there is a threefold elect of God. (1.) The elect Jesus Christ, Isa. xlii. 1: "Behold my servant, my elect," saith the Father, speaking of Christ. (2.) The elect angels, 1 Tim. v. 21, "I charge thee before God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels." (3.) The elect saints; and for this see Col. iii. 12, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy." But, alas! what are the elect angels, or the elect saints, to the elect precious! It is only the blessed Jesus that is the Elect Precious and precious to the elect.

II. And this is, That a crucified and glorified Christ is very precious to all believing saints.

In handling this precious point, I shall shew you five things,—1. That he is precious. 2. That he is most precious. 3. He is all precious. 4. He is always precious. And, 5. Why he is so precious.

*First*, Jesus Christ is precious three ways; to

God, to angels, and to saints. (1.) To God the Father; and this will appear by what God the Father hath said himself of the Son: "My elect in whom my soul delighteth," Isa. xlii. 1. Here you see, Christians, what God saith to Christ; the soul of God delights in the Son of God: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," Matt. iii. 17. Mark here, not only pleased, but well pleased. Oh how precious is Christ to God the Father! The Lord Jesus, though he was a man of sorrows, yet he was not a man of sin; he had correction, but not corruption; he that was a way to others never went out of the way himself. Jesus Christ must needs be precious to the Father, because he never displeased him in anything, but pleased him in everything, John viii. 29. Christ there speaking of himself saith, "I do always the things that please him." O friends, it will be your glory, your crown, your honour, and happiness another day, if in this day you do these things that please God: so did Christ here: "I do always those things that please him." Christ went about doing good; he must needs please the Father, for he went about doing good, Acts x. 38. He did not always stay in one place, but he went about doing good. And truly, if people were not made better by his coming, they might thank themselves, for he went about doing good. As he was never ill employed, he was never unemployed; as he opened the Scriptures to our understanding, so he opened our understanding to the Scriptures. (2.) He is very precious to the angels as well as to the Father; the angels were very joyful at the birth of Christ their Lord; they sang praises to God on high, Luke

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ii. 13. See with joy and triumph the angels sang at the birth of Christ. Oh how precious is Christ to the elect angels! the angels adore him: "Let all the angels of God worship him," Heb. i. 6. The Lord of Hosts is worshipped by an host of angels. "Let all the angels of God worship him." The angels desire to pry into the mysteries of the Gospel of grace, 1 Pet. i. 12. The angels, though they are glorious to all eternity, look upon it as not below them to pry into the mysteries of Christ. Oh! the angels are desirous to know those things which we neglect to know. The angels stand before him as waiting-men to serve God, and to serve such as are God's; when he bids them go, they go; come, they come; do this, and they do it: they do all his commands, Ps. ciii. 20. Jesus Christ is the Creator of angels, the Lord of angels, the Prince of angels, the Head of angels, Col. i. 16. The Son of God is very precious to the angels of God; and well he may, for indeed he is a precious jewel in the cabinet of grace. (3.) Jesus Christ is precious to the saints, as well as to his Father and angels, 1 Pet. ii. 7. You have there a full text to this purpose: "Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious." Mark here, unto you; what you? "To you therefore that believe, he is precious." He is precious indeed to them that believe, and no wonder; he is a believer's all. Now that which is his all must needs be precious: Christ is his all; he is all that he enjoys: Christ is all that is worth; he is all that they are, they are nothing without him: they have nothing without him: whatever they are worth, it is he that makes them worth it; it is not worth a man's while to live unless he live in Christ; Christ

is the gain of a believer, living and dying; so that whatever is good for a believer, he must say, for this I am beholden to Christ. "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's."

Now let me give you a more particular account of the Christian's worth, and inventory of his estate; and all along I shall shew you that Christ is the worth of all that. What is it that makes a believer so precious and excellent? Why, it is such things as these: he is a living man; he is a seeing man; he is a person of honour; he hath a great deal of joys and hope of more; he is righteous and holy; and, in a word, he is saved at last. These are things that make a Christian so excellent a person, and he hath none of these but by Christ, and he hath all this alone by Christ.

1. This is the excellency of a Christian, that he is a living man: there is no man on earth can, in a spiritual sense, be called a living man but a believer; all men are dead men but they that believe. You know that it was said of the prodigal, while he lived in his sins he was dead, "This my son was dead, and is alive again," Luke xv. 24: when he believed, then he was alive. In things of nature life is the most valued which we have; skin for skin, and all that a man has will he give for his life: a man will rather part with his livelihood than with his life, because his life is so dear to him. Now, beloved, if natural life be so desirable a thing, what is a spiritual life, that which in scripture is called the life of God? Now, the believer is the only living man—every other man is spiritually dead; but now, how comes the believer to life? By whom doth he live? Why, it is by Christ Jesus: "I am crucified with Christ:

notwithstanding I live," Gal. ii. 20. What! crucified and yet live! Yes; Christ was crucified and yet lives: and so did Paul in resemblance and conformity to Christ—"I live," saith he, "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God," Gal. ii. 20. So that Paul will not call his life his own, but only as he derived it from Christ. Christ liveth in him more than himself liveth.

2. The excellency of a believer lies in this, that he is a seeing man. It is the sight which puts the difference between person and person. It is a sad thing to be born blind, or to be blinded after one is born. Now all blind men are either born blind or blinded after they are born. Now, beloved, would you know how precious sight is? Ask a blind man who once could see. We read of a poor man who comes running to Christ, and cries out, "O Lord, that I may receive my sight." Now, if in nature having the sight of our eyes be a thing that makes us so much more excellent than otherwise we would be without it, Oh how much value should we put upon this spiritual sight which refers to our souls! We can much better want the eyes of our heads than the eyes of our understanding. Now, in a spiritual sense, there is no seeing man but a believer; no man saw Christ savingly but they who saw him believingly; every man but a believer walks in darkness; nay, he is in darkness. The apostle tells somewhat to this purpose: "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord," Eph. v. 8. In the Lord Jesus Christ a believer doth see. And how comes he to see? It is in the Lord that he sees: he was as dark as others,

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3. The excellency of a believer lies in this, That he is a very beautiful and honourable person. Beauty and honour are taking, ravishing things of this world. Now, all but believers are deformed persons; there is no beauty nor comeliness why they should be desired. But the believer is a very lovely, beautiful person: he is so in the eyes of God: "And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and ear-rings in thy ears;" "Thou wast exceeding beautiful, and didst prosper into a kingdom," Ezek. xvi. 12, 13. But mark how she came by this beauty in the next verse: "And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty; for it was perfect through the comeliness which I had put upon thee saith the Lord God," verse 14. She was not only beautiful in the eyes of the Lord, but she had her beauty from the Lord: as they are thus lovely and taking in the eyes of God, so also are they in those of good angels and saints too. For as glorious a place as heaven is, the angels think it not below them to wait on the image and pictures of Christ here below; that is, to wait upon believers, and to be the Lord's guardians here upon earth: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. i. 14. But this is not all they do for them; they will not leave them when they die, but take those lovely souls, and transport them to a better country than ever this world was to them; for it is no paradox to say that there is no believer goes to heaven, but he goes to the arms of angels, Luke xvi. 22. In the



paraboliſtical hiſtory of Dives and Lazarus, ſaith the text, "Lazarus died, and his ſoul was carried by the angels into Abraham's boſom," that is, to heaven. Oh what an honour have believers at their death, that the very angels transport their ſouls to heaven: and they are alſo very lovely and honourable in the eyes of all good men. The truth is, there is ſcarce any man fit company for believers but believers; and therefore ſaith the apoſtle, "Be not unequally yoked," believers with unbelievers. Good men be much taken with a believer, though he be a ſtranger to them, on all accounts; they are very fond of one another in this world, and had rather ſuffer together than live with other men. Now, this makes a believer ſo excellent, that he is thus beautiful and honourable in the eyes of God, and good angels, and good men. Now, all this beauty and honour they have from Chriſt: ſee the text before quoted—To you who believe, he is an honour—ſo the word may be uſed: it is Chriſt that makes him honourable in the eyes of God, and in the eyes of good angels and good men: and all the beauty and honour they have, it is through Chriſt; he is their worth in every capacity.

4. That which makes a believer ſo excellent is, that he hath joy: all other men have no joy, but that which is not worth the having. Alas! the joy of the hypocrite, what is it but the crackling of thorns under a pot? But a believer hath a joy that no man intermeddleth with, nor no man partaketh of. But how, where hath he that joy? Why, in and from the Lord: "Theſe things I ſpeak," ſaith Chriſt, "that my joy may be in you." They have it from the Lord; they rejoice in the Lord: "We

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rejoice in Christ Jesus," saith Paul, "and have no confidence in the flesh."

5. Have they hope? it is from Christ: and indeed none have hope but from Christ. But the believer hath good hope, and this bears him up many times. Alexander thought this so brave a thing, that when he gave to one man whole countries, and to another vast treasures, and being asked what he would keep for himself, saith he, I will keep hope. For he thought it enough for so brave and great a soul as his to hope for that which would make him to do whatsoever he was able to do, or any one could think. The hope of mercy, and joy, and peace, will carry a man through thousands of difficulties. Now the believer hath this hope, for he hath it from Christ: "Christ in you the hope of glory," Col. i. 27.

6. Are they wise? are they righteous? are they holy? and none so but they? Every sinner is a fool, and therefore in Scripture is called a foolish man: he plays the fool all the time he spends out of the fear of God; all sinning-time is a foolish-time. Now, the believer is a wise man, and he is a righteous man and a holy man; but how he comes to be thus now, take an account of it in 1 Cor. i. 30. Christ is the all of a believer: "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." So that if a believer be a wise man, he may thank Christ for it; if he be a righteous man, if he be a holy man, he may thank God for it.

7. In a word, they are saved: and indeed this is the complement, ay, the complement of all the rest: are they saved? and none are saved but believers:

"For," saith Christ, "he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." The believer is already in the state of salvation, and the unbeliever is in the state of damnation. By nature we are all children of wrath; and faith in Jesus Christ is the means that God hath appointed to free us from being children of wrath. Now he that believes is past this—he shall not be condemned, he shall be saved; and how comes he to be saved? It is by Christ, by believing in Christ. Oh! who is the Saviour but Christ? To be in Christ is heaven below, and to be with Christ is heaven above; but there is no being with Christ above, if we are not in Christ here below. Thus you see, beloved, whatever it is that makes a believer so excellent and precious, it is Christ that makes him worth all: he hath it all from Christ; Christ is his all in all.

*Secondly,* As Jesus Christ is precious so he is most precious. O friends! angels are precious, saints are precious, friends are precious, heaven is precious; but a Christ, a Saviour, is ten thousand times more precious than these. A believer had rather have Christ without heaven, than heaven without Christ: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee," Psal. lxxiii. 25. Let a believer search heaven and earth, and yet he will find nothing comparable to God. To be like him is our happiness; to draw near to him is our holiness. Life is precious, freedom is precious, health is precious, peace is precious, food and raiment are precious, gold and silver are precious, kingdoms and crowns are precious; indeed they are, in their places, but nothing in comparison with Jesus

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Christ. Mark what the apostle saith, Phil. iii.  
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 God, and by having an interest in God, we have an  
 interest in all things. The believer is the only  
 blessed man, the only happy man, the only rich  
 man: "He that overcometh shall inherit all  
 things," Rev. xxi. 7. Oh what a glorious inheri-  
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 what can they desire more than all? All that  
 Christ hath is theirs; his wisdom is theirs to teach  
 them, his love is theirs to pity them, his spirit is  
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 not but be most precious to a believer, because all  
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most precious. (1.) Because he is the greatest gift that God can give or that we can receive. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son:" this is more than if he had given us all the world; for God hath but one Son, and can make no more sons; but God can make more worlds at his pleasure. This gift is God himself, and God can give us no greater gift than himself. We may say, as one said to Cæsar when he gave him a great reward, "This is too great a gift for me to receive:" "But it is not too much for me to give," said Cæsar.

(2.) Because he is the richest gift that ever was given, for Christ is all in all. If he hath given us Christ, he will give us all things else, Rom. viii. 32. He is the one thing needful that brings all things: yea, he is the gift of God: "If thou knewest the gift of God, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water," John iv. 10. Why is Christ called the gift of God? Surely God hath given us more gifts than one. True, but as the sun is more worth than all the stars, so this gift excels them all; according to the proverb, "We bless not God for stars when the sun shines; for when the sun shines the stars appear not." (3.) Because he is the chiefest gift that God hath to give. Other gifts he gives promiscuously to good and bad, so that no man knoweth love or hatred by anything that is before him, Eccl. ix. 1. Judas had the bag; and Dives fared deliciously every day when Lazarus would have been glad of his crumbs. But God never gives this gift to any but whom he loves with his dearest, special, and eternal love. Suppose some prince would woo a great lady, and had a jewel worth a million, it may be he would

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scatter pieces of silver, or some slight tokens of favour, unto the servants; but the rich jewel he gives to his spouse: this jewel is Christ. Abraham may give to Ishmael a bottle of milk; but Isaac had the inheritance. (4.) The Lord Jesus is the rarest gift of all others whatsoever: Christ is a gift given to very few, here one, and there another; millions of millions perish for not knowing and trusting in Christ. Oh what a rare jewel is Christ! Though our souls are more worth than a world, yet a world of souls is not worth Christ; it is he that makes us blessed in life, happy in death, and glorious after death. (5.) The Lord Jesus is the sweetest gift of all others; for if God gives his Christ, then he gives us all other gifts in his love, and they become a blessing sweetened to us. They that have this good-will shall want no good: "The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing," Psal. xxxiv. 10. Now put all this together, and you will see Christ to be most precious.

*Thirdly,* He is altogether precious. He is all precious; there is nothing in Christ but what is precious; he is amiable and desirable; he is fulness and sweetness, and greatness and goodness, light and life, and happiness. Believers enjoy all things in Christ: in all things he is the joy of a believer's life, and the life of a believer's joy. Oh! Christ is precious; he is very precious, he is most precious, he is always precious, he is altogether precious to the believing soul. (1.) His name is precious; he is called a precious Stone, Isa. xxviii. 16. (2.) His blood is precious, 1 Pet. i. 19; and well it may, for a drop of his blood is worth a sea of ours; and

yet he died our death, that we might live his life. (3.) Faith is precious, 2 Pet. i. 1. Faith is there called precious faith: the least grain of faith is more worth than all the gold in Europe. (4.) His promises are precious, 2 Pet. i. 4: "Given unto us exceeding great and precious promises." They are great for extent, and precious for their excellences. (5.) His gifts and graces are precious, Prov. iii. 15: "More precious than rubies;" all things thou canst desire are not to be compared to them. (6.) His members are precious, Isa. xliii 4: "Since thou hast been precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable." A believer indeed is a raven in the world's eye, but a dove in Christ's eye: the saints in the world's account are dross, but in God's account they are jewels and pearls. Graceless men look upon God's people as castaways, but God will give whole kingdoms for their ransom. Wicked men may call the saints factious, but God calls the saints precious. The scoffers and jeerers of the people of God in other ages were but bunglers to the scoffers and jeerers of the people of God in our age: well, there is a time coming when Christ will laugh at the ungodly for now laughing at ungodliness. Though holiness be that which a sinner scorns, yet holiness is that which a Saviour crowns; as you expect happiness from God above, so God expects holiness from you below. (7.) The reproaches of Christ are precious, Heb. xi. 26: "Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." I beseech you mark, it is not here said, that Moses did esteem the person of Christ, or the members of Christ, or the privileges of Christ, or the glory of Christ,

greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. Oh! beloved, the worst of his is better than the best in the world; Christ's cross is sweeter than the world's crown; the reproaches of Christ are greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. Will you give me leave to tell you that which few believe; and this is, that afflictions are good and precious. Few believe this truth, that afflictions are good and precious; and let me tell you, it is a great truth, and this I shall make appear.

Now, beloved, if I can prove that afflictions and reproaches for Christ be good and precious, which is the worst of him, then you will conclude with me that Christ is all precious. (1.) That must needs be good that comes from the only good; now, afflictions come from God, who is only good, Psal. xxxix. 9: "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth," saith David. Why?—"because thou didst it." (2.) That must needs be good which was suffered by the sweetest good; afflictions were endured by Christ, who is the sweetest good: "He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," Isa. liii. 3. (3.) That must needs be good which fits and prepares us for a glorious estate, the eternal good. Now, affliction doth this: "It was good for me that I was afflicted." Do you believe King David? Will you believe David a Christian? Will you believe David a saint? Will you believe David a man after God's own heart? Why, he tells, It was good for him he was afflicted. But you will say, why was it so good? Look in the 6th verse, and there is the reason; for, saith he, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." So again, in 2 Cor. iv. 17: "For our light afflictions, which are but for a mo-



ment, worketh for us." What work they?—"a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Do you know what they work for us? Why, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. O Christians! under your greatest troubles lieth your greatest treasures: afflictions are good, but not pleasant; sin is pleasant, but not good; but there is more evil in a drop of corruption than there is in the sea of afflictions. God by affliction separates the sin he hates so deadly, from the soul he loves so dearly. By the greatest affliction God teacheth us the greatest instruction: and a believer, when he lies under that hand that doth afflict him, lies in the heart that doth affect him. Believers are crucified by the world, that they may be crucified to the world. The flesh is an enemy to suffering, because suffering is an enemy to the flesh: it may make a man an early courtier, but it will never make a man a heavenly martyr: they that carry not the yoke of Christ upon their necks will never carry the cross of Christ upon their backs: but a believer studies more how to adorn the cross, than how to avoid the cross: none so courageous as those that are religious: a believer never falls asleep for Jesus till he falls asleep in Jesus: some glory in that which is their shame, and shall we be ashamed of that which is our glory? It is an honour to be dishonoured for Jesus Christ. Tell me, O believer, is not Christ with his cross, better than the world with its crown? Suppose, Christian, the furnace be hot, seven times hotter, it is but to make you seven times better: fiery trials make golden Christians; sin hath brought many a believer unto suffering, and suffering hath kept many a believer from sin-

ning: they that here are crossed for well-living shall hereafter be crowned for well-dying: the losing of our heads makes way for receiving of our crown: God will season our vessels with water of affliction before he pours in the wine of glory. By this you see, beloved, that the reproaches of Christ are precious. It is better to be preserved in brine, than to rot in honey.

*Fourthly*, Jesus Christ is always precious to believers: he is more precious to them than a thousand worlds: because he is always with them, in all their trials, and in all their troubles, and in all their straits, and in all their afflictions. "In all their affliction he was afflicted," Isa. lxiii. 9. Oh! who would not suffer with such a companion as this? "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee," Isa. xliii. 2. Do you see this, Christians? he is with you in the fire, in the water, in the prison, in all places, and at all times: he never leaves you, nor forsakes you, Heb. xiii. 5. He beds and boards with you; he lieth down and riseth up with you: he is called a friend, and indeed he is our best friend: "This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O ye daughters of Jerusalem," Song v. 26. Jesus Christ is a faithful friend; he is a prudent friend; a careful or providing friend; a compassionate friend; a constant friend; a loving friend; an everlasting friend. He loves us to the end, and there is no end of his love. He that gave his image to us loves his image in us. Jesus Christ gave himself to us and for us; he loves us in

himself and as himself. Oh what a sweet friend is Christ! God, in giving Christ to us, gave his very heart for us. Now, beloved, how can Jesus Christ be but always precious to a believer, who is thus always with a believer?

*Fifthly*, Why is Jesus Christ so precious to believers? (1.) Because he is a believer's life: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory," Col. iii. 4. There is a three-fold life that flows from Christ: a life of grace, a life of comfort, a life of glory. (2.) Jesus Christ is precious to believers because he is their light. Alas! alas! till we are in Christ we must be in darkness: it is in his light that we see light: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light," Eph. v. 14. (3.) Christ is precious to believers because he is their food: "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed," John vi. 55. Oh what choice fare have they to feed on, that have Christ to feed on! O soul! whatsoever thou art, that hast not Christ to feed on, thy bread is but perishing bread. (4.) Christ is precious to believers because he is their strength: take a man that is out of Christ, he hath no strength to withstand or overcome: "Without me," saith Christ, "ye can do nothing," John xv. 5. "When we were without strength, Christ died for us." To be without Christ, and to be without strength, is all one. (5.) Jesus Christ is precious to believers because he is their righteousness and holiness. (6.) Jesus Christ is precious to believers because he is their portion: he is the terror of his enemies and the portion of his people.

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I might, in a few particulars, anatomize the believer, and begin with his head, and show you all that he knows of the things of God he is beholden to Christ for it. Saith Paul, "God hath shined in our hearts by the light of the Gospel, in the face of Christ." All the knowledge of God, all Gospel light, all the knowledge of spiritual things, we have all from Christ. If we consider the believer in his heart—if we find there a broken heart, a tender heart, a good and honest heart, a new-covenant heart; how comes he by this? Why, he hath it only from him in whom the new covenant is made, and that is Christ. Consider the believer in his graces, as faith, and love, and patience, and humility, and rest; he hath all from Christ. "Of his fulness we have all received, and grace for grace," John i. 16. There is not one grace but we have it from Christ. Consider him in his life: he is an honest and just man. Who made him to differ? Why is he not so full of cheating tricks as other men? Why, he hath not so learned Christ: Christ teacheth him to live at a more holy rate than others do: so that if the believer be better than others in this, he may say, thanks be to Christ, for that before I lived as vainly as others did; but now I have not so learned Christ. Consider the believer in his privileges: he is the son of God, and it is by the Son of God that he is the son of God. "To as many as received him gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name," John i. 12. So that if he be the son of God, he must thank Christ for it; if he be one of the family royal, one of the chosen generation, he must thank Christ for it; for it is in him, and by him alone,

that we have all the good which we enjoy. Consider him in his comforts: he hath not one good day but it is from Christ. Hath he comfort in ordinances, in the society of saints and prayer?—he must thank Christ for all this. And thus I have given you a brief anatomy of the Christian, and showed you that Christ is all in all; whatever he is worth, he is beholden to Christ for it. Now put all this together, and see what great reason there is that Christ should be precious to believers: and is it any wonder that these souls be enamoured so with him that they think their lives not worth the living but for him, and in him, and for his sake? O believers! there is very great reason why believers set so high a value and esteem upon Christ, who is their all in all.

**APPLICATION.**—The first use shall be for examination and self-trial. You have heard that Christ is precious, precious to God, to angels, to saints; but now, O soul, is he precious to thy soul? if he be precious to you, then all which is precious to him is precious to you. Oh that men would but deal truly with their own souls! Many talk of grace, but few taste of grace; every one doth not walk like a Christian that talks like a Christian; many know what is to be done, but never do what is to be done; many wear Christ's livery and do the devil's drudgery; many have hands as white as wool and their hearts as black as hell; many think themselves as surely going to heaven as if they were already dwelling in heaven; many think it shall go well with them hereafter because it is so well with them here; many lie down with such hopes in their beds of rest, which they dare not lie down withal in their beds of

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dust; many appear righteous who are only righteous in their appearance: but such as deceive others with a false show of holiness will deceive themselves with a false show of happiness. Remember, Christians, that the sheep's coat shall be taken off the wolf's back. If there be nothing done by your souls on earth, there will be nothing done for your souls in heaven; there is no making out our salvation but by working out our salvation. God binds up none in the bundle of life but such who are the heirs of life; there is no living a life that is not virtuous, and then dying a death that is righteous. O therefore, examine yourselves. I shall propose four questions to be resolved by your own hearts. 1. What interest have you in him? 2. What influences have you from him? 3. What affections bear you to him? 4. What preparations make you for him? O Christians, that you would consider well these weighty things! Tell me, O soul! what did Judas get by his deceitful dealings? Nothing but a halter, in which his body was hanged; and a fire, in which his soul was burned. Though the earth may keep a wicked man living, yet heaven will not take a wicked man dying. I say, therefore, examine yourselves.

*Secondly*, I shall speak a little by way of exhortation. (1.) If Jesus Christ be so precious, Oh then, open the door of your affections to him, that he may open the door of salvation to you! open to the God of glory, that he may make you glorious. Behold, the God of heaven stands at the door of your hearts and knocks. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and

he with me," Rev. iii. 20. He knocks by his rod, by his Spirit, by his mercies, by his judgments, by his comforts, and all is, that he may come in and sup with you. Now, sinners, will you not open the door of your hearts to Christ, that he may open the door of heaven to you? If you shut out Christ out of your hearts, he will shut you out of heaven; and what will you get by that? He hath gold to enrich you, wine to cheer you, bread to nourish you, righteousness to justify you, mercy to save you, happiness to crown you. (2.) Let all that which is precious to God be precious to you, viz.—the Son of God;—the book of God;—the day of God;—the ordinances of God;—the ministers of God; and the people of God. Oh let these be precious to you! The people of God are very precious to you; a saint is as glorious in his greatest misery as a sinner is miserable in his greatest glory.

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## VII.

## WONDERFUL.

To be in a state of grace is to be miserable no more, is to be happy for ever. It is faith that unites Christ and sanctified souls together on earth; and love that unites God and glorified souls together in heaven. O believers! you are those worthies of whom the world is not worthy. Jesus Christ, from one saint, hath more glory given to him than he receiveth from all the world besides. We owe not only our service to Christ, but we owe also ourselves to him.

I shall now make some entrance upon our Lord Jesus Christ's seventh famous title, which is *Wonderful*. "He shall be called Wonderful," Isa. ix. 6.

The believer's Saviour is a wonderful Saviour. He is wonderful in the eyes of all angels and saints for love. The world and devils, for fear, wonder at him. For the opening of this excellent point, take these particulars:—Christ is Wonderful in his nature—in his person—in his incarnation—in his saints—in his offices—in the miracles that he wrought—in his humiliation—in his conquest—in his ascension—in his exaltation—in his working towards his saints,—Lastly, He is Wonderful in his coming to judgment.

Some have more time than matter, but I have now more matter than time; therefore I must omit much precious matter, for want of precious time. Beloved, I will handle but one of these particulars,



and that is the seventh, viz., That Jesus Christ is wonderful in humiliation. This is the head we shall now insist upon, and indeed this is one of the greatest wonders of all; that he that was so high should be brought so low; that he that was so rich should become so poor; that the Lord of life should die, and the great God become a babe, and the Eternal Word not able to speak a word; that he that made the law should be under the law; that he that was more excellent than all the angels should become less and lower than the angels. O ye angels! how stand ye amazed at this, that the Lord of heaven and earth should become a Servant to his own servants. "He took upon him the form of a servant," Phil. ii. 7. This must needs be wonderful to all the angels in heaven.

*First*, Jesus Christ took upon him our nature, Heb. ii. 16. God could stoop no lower than to become man, and man could be advanced no higher than to be united to God. He that before made man a scul after the image of God, now made himself a body after the image of man; for to be like to God is a wonder, but for God to be like man is a greater wonder. But when was it that Jesus Christ took upon him our nature? When it was in innocency from misery and calamity? No; but when it was at the lowest, after the fall, when it was most beggarly, most wretched, most bloody, most accursed, most sinful, most feeble. "When we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly," Rom. v. 6. That Jesus Christ should take upon him our condition, our frailty, our curse, our nature, when it was thus low, thus poor, thus wretched; Oh! this is a wonder of wonders, and

yet thus you see did Jesus Christ. Oh, wonderful abasement! must God take upon him our frailty? Had we so far run upon the score of vengeance that none could satisfy but God himself? Could he not send his angels or saints, but must he come himself in person? No, no; angels or saints could not do it; but if Christ will save us, he himself must come and die for us.

*Secondly*, Our Saviour's humility descended very low. He was born of a poor maid, of no account or reputation. Was there never a great lady or gentlewoman in Jerusalem for this great Prince of heaven and earth to be born of, but that he must be born of a poor despised virgin? Yea, certainly, there were gentlewomen in store in Jerusalem, but our Lord Jesus Christ regarded not the rich more than the poor. He was revealed to poor shepherds, not to emperors and kings, not to rulers and great men, not to doctors and learned men, not to Cæsar at Rome. I say, the angels did not go and declare these joyful tidings and good news to Cæsar at Rome, but to poor shepherds in the fields, Luke ii. 8. He was born in a stable. Not in a fair house or palace, not in a parlour or chamber; no, but in a stable where horses and beasts are fed. He was wrapt up in clouts, and laid in a manger; they were no clouts of fine linen or silks, no cloths of silver or gold, nor precious robes, but poor and mean, like to beggars' rags. Now, beloved, put all this together, and tell me what is more wonderful than this? O humility, humility, how great are thy riches that are thus commended to us! Thou pleasest men, delightest angels, and confoundest devils, and bringest the Creator to a manger. O sweet Jesus, thou conquerest death by dying!

*Thirdly*, The third wonder in Christ's humiliation is this—he became poor; that he that was so rich became so poor; that he that was Lord of all had nothing at all; he that made heaven and earth had no habitation of his own; he that gives crowns of victory, of life, of glory to others, had no crowns himself here, but a crown of thorns. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Matt. viii. 20. The foxes had holes to lay their heads in, but Christ hath not a place to lay his head on. As he was born in another man's house, so he was buried in another man's tomb. "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet he became poor," 2 Cor. viii. 9. "Yet he became poor;" ay, poor indeed, and so poor that he had not a penny. You will say that a man is very poor that hath not a penny; truly such an one was Christ; he had not a penny to pay tribute till he got it out of a fish, Matt. xvii. 27. And when he was to ride in pomp to Jerusalem he had no coach, no chariot, no horse or beast of his own; he was fain to ride upon another man's ass, Matt. xxi. 2. O ye blessed saints, admire and wonder at this! is not he the brightness of God, the paradise of angels, the beauty of heaven, the Redeemer of man, the destroyer of death, the King of saints? And that he should become so poor for us! Oh! this is wonderful to angels and men.

*Fourthly*, The fourth wonder in Christ's humiliation is this, that he shed his blood six times for poor sinners. The first time was, when he was circumcised at eight days old. Oh what a blessed

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Jesus is this! What! ready for the sacrifice already? What! but eight days old, and shed his blood for the salvation of men's poor souls? The second time was when he was in his agony in the garden. Matthew tells us that his soul began to be sorrowful. Sore amazed (saith Mark), Mark xiv. To be troubled: "Now my soul is troubled;" what shall I say? "save me from this hour," John xii. 27. Troubled, O Lord! What! Thou that bindest up the proud waves of the sea, turnest the hearts of kings as rivers of waters; thou that laidest the foundations of the earth, and spreadest the heavens as a curtain; thou that guidest the stars and thunderest in the clouds; thou that upholdest all things by the word of thy power; and, what! thou troubled! Oh the horror, the terror, the sorrow that seized upon the soul of Christ! saith Luke: "He began to be in agony, and he sweat," Luke xxii. 44. What! no natural sweat, but blood; he was in a bloody sweat all over,—he sweat *clots of blood*, as the original hath it. Oh! how did Christ come swimming to us in blood; and have not we a tear to shed for all these streams of his? We did eat the sour grapes, and his teeth were set on edge; we climbed the tree, and stole the forbidden fruit, and he went up the ladder of the cross and died: Oh how lovely should he be in our eyes! We should wear his cross in our hearts, and treasure it up as Moses did the manna in the pot. Christ's cross, saith he, is the golden key that lets us into paradise, and the angel with the flaming sword is turned out. His blood washed away our sins.

He shed his blood for us when his cheeks were nipt and torn: the pulling off the hair, as the

prophet speaks: "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that pulled off the hair," Isa. l. 6. Some are of opinion that Christ's cheeks were rent to his very chin, and his beard was pulled off: both were very likely to be true: neither of them could be without much blood; for we find that the soldiers did blindfold him, and then smote him on the face, and bade him read who it was that smote; they made sport of it, Luke xxii. 64. Oh how was that face of his lacerated and covered with blood that was brighter than the sun! He that was fairer than the sons of men; he that is the great glittering and sparkling diamond of the ring of glory; how was he bespotted and besmeared with blood! O ye hard of heart, ye stubborn of heart! (and indeed too stubborn are we all, if judgment and the hammer will not break your hearts let love and mercy do it), look unto Christ, and say, Hast thou suffered this for me, and shall I not love thee, O Lord, and serve thee, and obey thee, and honour thee! So say, and so do, and the Lord say, Amen.

Christ shed his blood when the crown of prickling thorns was put upon his head, Matt. xxvii. Some of the fathers say that he received seventy-three wounds in his head; certainly there could not but much blood come out. Oh what a sight was this to behold that head of his, that was as the most fine gold, as the spouse expresseth it to be, now covered with thorns, and rent with thorns; that he should wear the prickly crown of sharp thorns, that was fit to wear the crown of glory! He shed his blood when his hands and feet were nailed to the cross; these

beautiful feet of his that came skipping upon the mountains, bringing the glad tidings of peace and salvation. How were these blessed hands of his nailed and made fast to the cross! O ye blessed spirits, look down from heaven, and you may see even the Almighty kneel at the feet of men! O ye angels, how should you be amazed at this, to see your Lord and Master so far deny himself as to take upon him the form of a servant! "We saw Jesus," saith the apostle, "made a little lower than the angels." To suffer death, the Creator not only became a creature, but inferior to some of the creatures which he had made. O ye blessed saints! why do ye not wonder at this wonder? to see the beauty of heaven, the paradise of angels, the brightness of his Father's glory, the Redeemer of man, thus humble himself, and take upon him man's nature, for the salvation of man's soul. Christ shed his blood when the spear was thrust into his side, out of which presently gushed water and blood, John xix. 34. Some say that the soldier that pierced Christ with a spear was a blind man, but our Saviour's blood spurting out upon his eyes, restored him to his sight, and he became a convert, a preacher, a martyr. You will say a very strange cure that the physician should bleed, and his blood should have the virtue that we should all be saved. Physicians be usually liberal of other men's blood, but sparing of their own; but it is not so with our Physician; instead of the patient's bleeding in the arm he bled in the side: why dost thou shower down thy blood and come swimming in thy blood? Is not a drop sufficient? "One drop," saith Luther, "is more worth than heaven and earth." Oh love

without measure! Oh wonderful redemption! That God should take upon him man's frailty, that is wonderful indeed! It is enough for a king to pardon a thief, but that the king himself should die for the malefactor, that is beyond expression! Thus did our blessed Lord and Saviour: he died that we might live: he went and suffered in his agony, that he might "stay us with flagons, and comfort us with apples:" he endured the greatest pain, that we might enjoy the greatest pleasures. Oh how lovely, how lovely was Christ in his sufferings! "Who would not love thee, thou King of saints!" Christian, consider how much thy dear Lord and Saviour hath suffered and undergone for thee. Oh precious blood! it redeemeth us, it cleanseth us, it washeth us, it justifieth us, it sanctifieth us, it restoreth us to God, and bringeth us to heaven.

*Fifthly*, Another wonder in Christ's humiliation is this—He suffered in his soul: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," Matt. xxvi. 38. Oh what a word was this for God to speak! For a man to say so is no wonder, but for God to say so, oh this is a great wonder indeed! The suffering of his soul was the soul of his sufferings: Christ yielded his soul for our souls, his soul in our souls' stead. Many of his faithful servants have suffered much in their bodies, as the martyrs that were racked, and burnt, and sawn asunder: but they had much freedom in their souls—their souls were full of much spiritual joy and comfort. But now Jesus Christ did not only suffer in his body, but in his soul: and that is it which makes the wonder the greater. He drank the cup of affliction, that we might drink the

cup of consolation; he tasted death for us, that we might taste life through him; he was forsaken, that we might never be forsaken.

*Sixthly*, Another wonder in Christ's humiliation is that he should suffer himself to be so much mocked. He was mocked as Samson was by the Philistines when his eyes were put out. And truly this is a great wonder, if we consider who Christ was; and if we consider who they were that mocked him. He was God, the God-man; they were but dust and ashes. They did spit upon him;—they blindfolded him;—they crowned him with thorns;—they put a reed into his hand, instead of a sceptre;—they clothed him with purple garments;—they bowed their knees to him in scorn;—they saluted him with "Hail, king of the Jews;"—they made him carry his own cross, on which he was to be crucified; as malefactors go with halters about their necks to execution, so they made him carry his cross;—they reviled him, wagging their heads;—they crucified him with two thieves, and him in the midst of them, as though he had been the prince of the thieves, the greatest malefactor of them all;—they exulted over him in his misery. Thus they never left him till his soul left the world: and all this they did in scorn to him, that they might make his death more painful and shameful. Oh, this is no small wonder, if we consider how Jesus Christ was mocked.

*Seventhly*, In the humiliation of Christ he suffered much from his Father; here is a wonder, if you talk of wonders. He did not only suffer from Jews and Gentiles, Scribes and Pharisees, Judas and Pilate, wicked men and devils, but he suffers too from the



Father; and this is that which makes the wonder the greater, Isa. liii. 10, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." Mark, one would have thought, if God would spare any, it should have been his Son, his own Son, his beloved Son, his begotten Son, his bosom Son; and yet God spared him not: "He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all," Rom. viii. 32. Mark, God did not spare him, but delivered him up for us. If Jesus Christ will come and take our sins upon him, God will not spare him, but let out the fulness of justice to the full upon him, till he had paid the uttermost farthing of justice. O blessed Jesus, didst thou undergo so much for our sinning, for our offending, for our rebelling? Oh, then, what infinite cause have we to love thee, and obey thee, and honour thee! For the more he hath done and suffered for us, the dearer he ought to be unto us.

*Eighthly*, The last wonder that I shall mention is, Christ foresaw all this, and yet he willingly undertook it, to save mankind: he knew before he came from heaven how his countrymen the Jews would use him, and that one of his family would betray him: "Jesus knew from the beginning who should betray him," John vi. 64; nothing was in the womb of time that was not first in the womb of Christ; he knew it from the beginning. That our Lord Jesus Christ should foreknow all this most wonderful misery that he endured, yet that he should come freely, willingly, and joyfully from heaven, to die and suffer by and for such poor wretches as we are; here is a wonder to angels and men, "Lo, I come," saith Christ, "to do thy will, O God," Heb.

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x. 9. And what was it he was to do? Why, to suffer for poor man, to redeem poor man. Do you see here, sirs, what great love Christ bore to his people? Rather than they should be in hell, and be damned, Jesus Christ would come from heaven and suffer all this for them, though he knew before how he should be used. Oh this is a great wonder, dear Christians! Methinks such a pearl should sparkle in our eyes. We sail to glory, not in the salt seas of our tears, but in the red sea of Christ's blood. Truly it is wonderful to think how much he did for us, and how little we do for him: the greater his sufferings were, the greater were our sins: the greater his pain was, the greater should our love be to him. I shall make of this point an use of information and exhortation.

*Use 1.* Is it so, that a believer's Saviour is a wonderful Saviour? Then it informs us of eight things.

*First,* My first inference is this, That Christ's sufferings is what he endured from men in his body, and what he suffered from God in his soul: he did not only endure pain in his body, but agony in his soul. Oh the sea of sufferings, the sea of sorrow, the sea of blood, the sea of tears that our blessed Saviour waded through to come and bring peace to our souls, salvation to our souls, grace and glory to our souls! He suffered from devils; he suffered in his name, he suffered in his members, he suffered in his body, he suffered in his soul: the cause was our sins, the effect our salvation. If you look through the chronicle of his life you will find that his whole life was full of sorrow and misery: he was persecuted, he was tempted, he was reproached, he was falsely accused, he was appre-

hended, he was betrayed, he was crucified. What shall we say more? What can be said more? He was full of sorrow: he took his name from sorrow: our Lord Jesus Christ is called a man of sorrows—"A man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief," Isa. liii. 3. Now, judge whether Christ's life was not full of sorrows: he took his name from sorrow. O sweet Jesus! thy sufferings were truly great.

*Secondly*, Jesus Christ suffered by himself. He was alone in his sufferings; neither angels nor saints bore any part with him in them; no, he drank the bitter cup alone; he alone purged our sins: "He alone by himself purged our sins," Heb. i. 3. Christ had none to help to bear his heavy burden with him; he bore it himself alone. But, my beloved, though our Lord Jesus Christ suffered by himself, yet he did not suffer for himself: he suffered for us, he suffered for that which we deserved: "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Do you see here, Christians, how many *ours* are here? Our griefs, our sorrows, our transgressions, our iniquities, our peace. So again, "For our sakes he became poor," 2 Cor. viii. 9. Mark, "for our sakes." Beloved, he was born for us: "Unto us a child is born;" he was given for us: "to us a son is given," Isa. ix. 6. "He was made a curse for us," Gal. iii. 13; the text tells, he was made a curse, but it was for us; he was delivered up for us, Rom. viii. 32. "Who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." Oh, all these things were for us—given for us, made a curse

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 that, my brethren, all that our Lord Jesus suffered,  
 it was not for himself, but it was for us: our blessed  
 Saviour suffered for us, that we might not suffer.

*Thirdly*, It is more for Christ to suffer anything  
 than for all men and angels to suffer all things.  
 Pray mark, if all the kings and emperors should  
 have left their thrones, their crowns, their king-  
 doms, their sceptres, their glory, their honours and  
 princely robes, and have come and took upon them  
 a poor Lazarus condition, to go on poorly, and fare  
 hardly, and die shamefully, why, all this had not  
 been so much as for Jesus Christ, the Son of God,  
 to suffer the least thing he did suffer. Now further,  
 I say, if all the angels in heaven and men on earth  
 had come and suffered, and died ten thousand  
 deaths, it had not been so much, put all together,  
 as it was for Christ to suffer anything. They are  
 creatures, he is the Creator; they the servants, he  
 the Master; they are subjects, he the Prince; they  
 are mean, he is mighty; he is the King of kings  
 and Lord of lords: "He thought it not robbery to  
 be equal with God," Phil. ii. 6. It would not have  
 been half such a wonder if all the angels in heaven  
 and men on earth had come and suffered, as it was  
 for the Son of God. Oh! this is a wonder of won-  
 ders; his sufferings were wonderful, his humility  
 was wonderful, his patience was wonderful, his love  
 was wonderful: greater love could no man show;  
 he loved us so that he died for love. Now, I be-  
 seech you, consider this inference, which was this,  
 That it is more for Jesus Christ to suffer anything  
 than for all men and angels to suffer all things.

And, indeed, I want words to express it or set it forth; for there is both want of words, and want in words to express this matter.

*Fourthly*, In what miserable case lay we, that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ must endure all this, bear all this, undergo all this, for poor sinners? Certainly the misery of man was very great, that man should need such redemption as this. Oh what a breach had sin made between God and us, that the Son of God must come from heaven to earth to suffer all this! Oh! mischievous sin hath undone us; sin hath robbed every one of six jewels, every one of which jewels are more worth than heaven and earth. Would you know what jewels they are that sin hath robbed us of? I will tell you, and then you will say with me that we were in a very miserable case. (1.) It robs us of the image of God. Was this a precious jewel, think you? I say it robbed us of the image of God, and drew in man the devil's picture: Malice is the devil's eye, oppression is the devil's hand, blasphemy is the devil's tongue, and hypocrisy is the devil's cloven foot. (2.) Sin robs us of our sonship, and makes us slaves to the devil, slaves to sin, or slaves to the world, and slaves to ourselves. (3.) It robs us of our friendship with God, and makes us enemies to God and enemies to Christ, enemies to our own soul and enemies to all that is good. (4.) It robs us of our communion and fellowship with the Father, Son, and Spirit, and makes us strangers and aliens. (5.) It robs us of our rights and privileges, of heaven, and heavenly things, and makes us children of wrath, and heirs of hell. (6.) It robs us of our honour and glory, and makes us vile and miserable, as you may see: "There

is no soundness in us; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores," Isa. i. 6. Put all this together, and then see whether or not we are not miserable, and whether we did not need a Saviour to come and deliver us from this misery into which our souls were plunged. Now, here is our happiness, Christians; in Christ we have these jewels again that we lost in the old Adam; the glorious image of God, our sonship, our friendship, our fellowship, our privilege, and our glory and honour, we have all again by Jesus Christ.

*Fifthly*, Jesus Christ brought life to us,—a life of grace, a life of comfort, a life of glory, but we brought death on him; he brought glory to us, but we brought shame on him; he brought riches to us, but we brought poverty on him; he brought joy to us, but we brought sorrow to him—sorrow upon sorrow: we put the crown of thorns upon his head; he put the crown of glory upon our heads. We thought the earth too good for him, and would not let him live here, but put him to death, but he thinks not heaven too good for us; we are ashamed to own him before men, but he is not ashamed to own us before his Father and his holy angels; we condemn him, but he justifies us. Oh think of your unkindness to him, and let the considerations of his infinite love and favour to you draw out your affections after him!

*Sixthly*, All believers have exceeding great cause to bless God for Jesus Christ. God the Father gave him to us, who were not his friends, but enemies: to us, who were not sons, but slaves: to us, who were not angels, but men: to us, who loved not God, but hated him. Oh! have we not cause to

bless God for Jesus Christ? "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 16. Oh what a gift is Jesus Christ!

*Seventhly*, If Jesus Christ be so wonderful, then how vile, how base a thing is it for the hearts of men to prefer anything before Jesus Christ! I beseech you, and beg of you all to mind this inference. Surely if Jesus Christ be so wonderful, so precious, so lovely, so rich, so sweet, so rare, it is a most abominable thing, a wicked thing, a vile thing, to prefer anything before Jesus Christ. Oh! I speak it with grief of heart, there are too many in the world that set light by him, and make nothing of him, and love him not, and prefer every base lust before him: though there is nothing more cursed than this, there is nothing more common than this—for men prefer the vilest things before Christ. The wicked worldling prefers the trash of the world before Jesus Christ; he can leave hearing and praying, reading and fasting, to follow the world: he prefers gold before God, earth before heaven, gain before glory, his corruptible silver before his Saviour. Oh! thou wicked worldling, thou wretched worldling, can thy riches save thy soul? Let me ask thee, Can thy riches deliver thee from hell? Can thy riches bring thee to heaven, that thou preferrest them before Christ? Oh! the Lord Jesus will come in flames of fire to take vengeance on such, and then thou wilt know to thy cost, and pain, and torment, that thy riches cannot keep thee out of hell, much less bring thy soul to heaven: then thou wilt see thy folly when it is too late.

The wicked drunkards prefer their drunkenness before Christ; the drunkard prefers his pots before him, the drunkard wades through the sea of drink to his grave; he can sit a day or a whole night in the ale-house, and think it a little time; but an hour in the service of God, oh how tedious is that! O thou drunkard, that turnest off thy cups so fast, God Almighty has a cup for thee, but not a cup of sack, or a cup of beer, but a cup of wrath, which thou shalt drink to eternity! which is worse than to drink scalding hot lead down thy throat. He hath so much liquor here; not only drink to quench his thirst, but to drink to excess, till he say and do he knows not what; but in hell he shall have little enough; there is never a tavern or ale-house there; no, there is not a drop of water to be got all hell over. O thou wretch! thou shalt live in burning flames, and thy tongue shall cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and if thou wouldest give a thousand worlds for one drop of water, thou shalt not have it. And therefore I beseech you, if any such there are here, in the name of God hear and fear, and do no more wickedly. Oh! I would not be in thy condition for ten thousand worlds; and yet I cannot but have bowels of pity towards thee, which constrains me thus to speak, knowing thy condition better than thou dost thyself. Oh! couldest thou but speak with thy fellow-drunkards that are now in hell, what a dreadful story would they tell thee of their agonies, and suffering, and pain, and torments! Some are in hell already for the same sins you live in; and if you live and die without Christ, you shall be ere long with them.

The swearer, the blasphemous swearer, prefers his



oaths before Christ. Many can swear by their Creator and Maker, and speak proudly, and look highly, and walk contemptuously, as if there were no God to punish, no devil to torment. Well, let me tell thee, O thou swearer, that now delightest in cursing, thou shalt be ere long sent with a curse to a cursed place: "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!" will Christ say to such persons. The proud person prefers his pride before Christ: if a fine suit did lie on the one hand, and Christ on the other, the proud would rather put on the suit of clothes than him. Oh, I beseech you, consider what a vile and abominable thing it is, to prefer anything before Christ! "Consider this," saith the Psalmist, "ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you." O poor wretch! consider of that text. Thou liest open to all the judgments in this life, and to all the torments in the life which is to come, all ye wicked ones that prefer anything before Christ.

*Eighthly*, If Jesus Christ be so wonderful, then every one that heareth of him should think it is a most dreadful thing to miss him. O Christians and friends, consider of it! Certainly that man or woman's condition must needs be sad indeed, that lives and dies without Jesus Christ. O poor sinner! the devil looks but for a look from God to come and rend thee in pieces, and draw thy soul to hell. Poor soul, thy soul is in danger every hour of being arrested by death, and carried prisoner to hell. Oh, I beseech you, do you think and consider with yourselves what a sad thing it is to miss Christ! Until a man is in him, he hath nothing, he knows nothing, he enjoys nothing, can

do nothing, and is fit for nothing, and is worth nothing, Prov. x. 20.

Oh, I beseech you, that you would consider seriously, that of all miseries that is the greatest of miseries to miss of Christ! We are never able to lament the loss of the poor soul that loseth Jesus Christ: all losses be wrapt up in that one loss. And therefore I beseech you all, both good and bad, bethink with yourselves what a sad condition that person is in who misseth Christ.

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*First*, Through a sense of sin, so look on the Lord Christ, as those who were stung with the scorpions in the wilderness did on the brazen serpent.

Next followeth the humbling of the soul, the effects of which are to be seen in these scriptures, to wit, Job xxi. 29; Psal. x. 17; Isa. lv. 5; James iv. 6. Which humiliation begets a self-examination, by which, knowing the holy rule of life, and comparing a man's life to that rule, trying how his case is, he is thereby ready to say (in respect to his misery) as the Apostle doth, Rom. vii. 9-11. He seeth himself a dead man in the sense of the law. Then that works in him a holy sorrow, and that of repentance not to be repented of, to wit, repentance to salvation, 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11. It brings him to see not only that he is a condemned or guilty person, but that he is irrecoverably lost, and must needs perish, without some person as a mediator or redeemer, to undertake for his ransom, or

hath undertaken it; for that God is infinitely just, and he must have his justice satisfied; and all that the poor soul can do is but to mend his life for the future, walking more conformably to the righteous law of God than heretofore. But, alas! that is no more than what we ought to be for the time to come; it will not satisfy Divine justice for the transgression already done against the law of God, any more than a man's paying another an ensuing week, month, or year, for all he is engaged in for within the space of time, doth satisfy and clear the debt which became due in time before that week. Neither, indeed, can a man of himself satisfy for what he shall owe to it in the remaining part of his life. Now this consideration works the soul into a melting frame, brings him on his knees to say, as the poor publican, "Lord, have mercy upon me a sinner;" and as the prodigal humbled, and sees all his rambling shifts in vain for yielding him that solid comfort his soul thirsteth after, therefore resolves to go home to his father; and although he may look upon him as enraged against him (for which his soul knew there was just cause), yet he goes humbling himself to his father, saying, "Father, I have sinned, &c., and am no more worthy to be called thy son." Now observe the success: "When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and fell on his neck, and kissed him;" and further entertained him, not as a servant, as he humbly besought (for the humble shall be exalted), but as a son, and rejoiced in him, Luke xv. 18-20. The Assyrians also well knew what good this humble application was likely to effect in an Israelitish king (1 Kings xx. 31, 32).

And if mercy be expected from one of these kings, then much more may it be from the Supreme, the King of those kings, the Almighty, who hath promised large graces to humble souls. So Esther, at the advice of Mordecai, chap. iv. 5, made good proof of this humble way of addressing for mercy, in a case otherwise desperate; the success whereof was the royal sceptre holden forth with grace, to grant even beyond a petition, though she knew not, when she went about it, but that she should perish: yet, wisely perceiving that she must perish if she had not so applied, she proceeded.

Thus was it with the lepers, 2 Kings vii. 4. If they went into the city they should suffer famine, if they stayed where they were they must die; they therefore would venture for relief among their enemies, being sure they could not be worse than they were, they could but die one way or another: so when the soul is thus brought to see its own misery, and humbleth itself thoroughly, and withal is willing to embrace what means soever presents so much as a possibility of saving it; then God shows his mercy to refresh it, according to Isa. lvii. 15, 16, &c., "To revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the hearts of the contrite ones." So Ps. li. 15; Ezek. xxxiii. 11, and forward. And Christ comfortably invites such a poor sinner, that is weary and heavy laden with the sense of his sin, he invites him to come and receive rest: and thus the Gospel doth in general give encouragement to humble and penitent sinners to expect salvation from the eternal God, the sting before spoken of being taken away. Then being truly humbled under a sense of that miserable condition which sin

hath made a man liable to, and being rightly desirous of salvation, that which is required of him is only to believe that the righteous God, who might have made him eternally miserable, hath, notwithstanding, through his tender compassions (his mercy being above all his works), resolved on a way to satisfy his justice by acquitting the guilty, who was no way able to pay a sufficient ransom for his own redemption, therefore provided a price satisfactory to redeem poor fallen man from the curse; concerning which both the apostles and prophets have witnessed, Isa. liii. and lv. chapters; Micah v. 2; Hos. xi. 1; Ps. xxii.; Acts i. 8 and x. 41, and more scriptures; that price of salvation, Jesus Christ, of whom the angels proclaimed about the time of his entrance into the world, "Glory be to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will towards men," Luke ii. 14. And the evangelist John, chap iii. 16, declares positively, "That God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." This is the term of salvation, to wit, believing in his Son to be that gift and ransom which the Gospel generally holds forth to those who would know what they should do to be saved: withal there must be an obedient conversation, and that universally to all God's commandments, answerable to a poor soul's ability, so long as life may last.

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